

Chapter 1

City Council Procedures and Decorum Policy

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Table of Contents

Section 1-1: Authority.....	1
1-2: City Council Agenda.....	1
1-3: Types of Meetings.....	1
1-4: Quorum.....	2
1-5: Order of Business.....	3
1-6: General Procedures.....	4
1-7: Decorum.....	7
1-8: Staff Relations.....	10
1-9: Council and Media Relations.....	11
1-10: Statements by Public Officials Regarding litigation.....	12
1-11: Non-Exclusive Rules.....	12
1-12: Disbursement of Council Requested Information.....	12
1-13: Policy Enforcement.....	12
1-14: Finance.....	12
1-15: Budget.....	13
1-16: Purchasing.....	14

Chapter 1 - City Council Procedures and Decorum Policy

Sec. 1-1.- Authority.

Pursuant to the provisions of the Charter of the City of Pine Forest, Texas, the City Council shall enact rules of procedure for all meetings of the City Council of the City of Pine Forest, Texas, which shall be in effect upon their adoption by the City Council and until such times as they are amended, or new rules adopted.

Section. 1-2.- City Council Agenda.

- (a) The City Secretary is responsible for creating and processing the agenda and agenda materials for City Council Meetings. The City Secretary will submit agenda materials as appropriate for review by the City Attorney. The City Secretary is responsible for preparing and posting the agenda and assembling and distributing the agenda packets.
- (b) The Mayor or two council members may direct the City Secretary in writing to place an item on an agenda for a regular City Council Meeting, special meeting, or work session for discussion only. Items must be submitted to the City Secretary no later than noon on the Monday preceding the week of the City Council meeting. Items or actions that require execution by specific dates are the only exception to this policy.
- (c) The City Council, during any scheduled regular or special meeting or work session, may direct the City Secretary to place an item on a future agenda.
- (d) Any two Council Members may request an item to be placed on the Agenda for discussion. Should extraordinary staff time be required to address any item, the City Secretary will place the item on future Council agenda for direction and discussion and communicate the agenda change to those requesting the item.
- (e) Agenda items placed on the agenda by the Mayor or members of the City Council previously considered and whereby action was taken by the City Council may not be placed on a future agenda for reconsideration within six months of such action unless either directed by a majority of the City Council to the City Secretary during any scheduled regular or special meeting or work session, directed by the Mayor and one council Member in writing to the City Secretary. In all cases, at least one member of the City Council who is requesting that the item be renewed on an agenda shall have been on the prevailing side of the previous vote on the item.

Sec. 1-3.- Types of Meetings.

- (a) *Regular Meetings:* The City of Pine Forest regular City Council meetings are held on the second Monday of each month, at such time as may be set by the City Council, unless the meeting is rescheduled or cancelled. All regular meetings of the City Council will be held in Pine Forest Town Hall at 305 Nagel, Pine Forest, Texas or at such other location as the City Council may, by motion, resolution or ordinance, designate.
- (b) *Work Session Meetings:* A Work session is a meeting to discuss or explore matters of

interest to the City, review and discuss agenda items, meet with City boards, commissions or committee members, City Staff or officers of civic organizations, governing bodies or individuals specifically invited to the session by the Mayor, City Secretary or the Council. These meetings are informational, and no formal action shall be taken unless the posted agenda indicates otherwise. The Mayor may allow any citizen to participate in the discussion at a work session, but only as recognized by the Mayor. The Mayor may end citizen participation in a work session in order to allow the City Council to proceed with discussion.

- (c) *Special Meetings*: Special meetings may be called by the Mayor or by any two (2) members of the City Council. The call for a special meeting shall be filed with the City Secretary in written form, and the City Secretary shall cause the posting of notice of the meeting as governed by applicable law. The Mayor or two Council Members may designate a location for the special meeting other than Town Hall as long as the location is open to the public and in compliance with applicable law.
- (d) *Emergency Meeting*: In case of emergency or urgent public necessity, as defined by State law and confirmed by the City Attorney when practical, which shall be expressed in the notice of the meeting, an emergency meeting may be called by the Mayor or two members of the City Council, and it shall be sufficient if the notice is posted at least two hours before the meeting is convened.
- (e) *Closed Meeting*: The City Council may meet in a closed meeting but only under conditions allowed by applicable law. Details discussed in closed meetings shall be considered confidential and shall not be discussed or disclosed outside the meeting.
- (f) *Recessed Meetings*: Any meeting of the City Council may be recessed to a later time provided that no recess shall be for a period longer than twenty-four hours from the time the meeting is recessed.

Sec. 1-4.- Quorum.

A majority of the number of alderman established by Section 22.031 for the municipality constitutes a quorum. However, at a called meeting or at a meeting to consider the imposition of taxes, two-thirds of the number of alderman established by that section constitutes a quorum unless provided otherwise.

Sec. 1-5.- Order of Business.

The regular City Council meeting will be generally conducted in the following order, unless otherwise specified. If the Mayor or any member of Council wishes to change the order of business, a proper motion must be made followed by a second, and then passed by the affirmative vote of a majority of the Council Members present and voting. An executive session may be held at any time during a meeting pursuant to applicable State law.

- (1) Presentations- The agenda shall provide a time when proclamations, recognitions, general reports, and updates may be presented to the City Council.
- (2) Persons to be heard- The time for the public to address the City Council on any subject. However, the City Council cannot discuss items presented under "persons to be heard" nor

take any action thereon other than consideration of the placement of said item on a future agenda as a discussion item or refer the item to Staff for research and possible future action. There shall be a cumulative time limit of thirty (30) minutes allotted for the "persons to be heard" portion of any regularly scheduled City Council meeting.

- (3) Consent Agenda- Shall contain routine, non-controversial items that require City Council action but need little or no Council deliberation. An item can be removed from the consent agenda by the City Manager, Mayor, or any two members of City Council, and will be considered after approval of the consent agenda.
- (4) Old Business- Business items pending from previous City Council meetings.
- (5) New Business- New or amended ordinances, resolutions, or policies that City Members or City Staff wish to have the City Council consider.
- (6) Discussion items- Items to be presented or discussed with City Council in order to garner direction from City Council. No action shall be taken on discussion items.
- (7) Executive Session (if needed)- Items to be discussed in closed meeting under conditions allowed by applicable law. The City Council may not take final action during executive session. It is understood and agreed that information discussed in Executive Session is considered confidential and should remain so until the Council takes action in public on the matter. Any final action resulting from an Executive Session discussion must be taken during the open public session.
- (8) Adjourn

(a) *Work Session Agenda:*

- (1) Discussion of consent items – Council review and discussion of items that are by nature routine and typically require little or no Council deliberation.
- (2) Questions regarding regular agenda items – Council review and discussion of regular agenda items. Council may ask questions of Staff, receive a brief presentation, and request additional information prior to consideration during the regular meeting.
- (3) Written or verbal presentations or discussions – Council updates and discussions regarding items, some of which may not be included as part of the regular meeting agenda.
- (4) Executive Session (if needed) - Items to be discussed in closed meeting under conditions allowed by applicable law. The City Council may not take final action during executive session. It is understood and agreed that information discussed in Executive Session is considered confidential and should remain so until the Council takes action in public on the matter. Any final action resulting from an Executive Session discussion must be taken during the open public session.
- (5) Adjourn

(b) *Regular Meeting Agenda:*

- (1) Call to order – Chair officially calls the meeting to order.
- (2) Invocation – Each agenda of a regularly scheduled City Council meeting shall provide an item allowing for an invocation(s).
- (3) Pledge of Allegiance – Each agenda of a regularly scheduled City Council meeting shall provide an item for the recital of the “Pledge of Allegiance” to both the United States flag and the Texas flag.
- (4) Presentations – The agenda shall provide a time when proclamations, recognitions, general reports, and updates may be presented to the City Council.
- (5) Persons to be heard – The time for the public to address the City Council on any subject. However, the City Council cannot discuss items presented under “persons to be heard” nor take any action thereon other than consideration of the placement of said item on a future agenda as a discussion item or refer the item to Staff for research and possible future action. There shall be a cumulative time limit of thirty (30) minutes allotted for the “persons to be heard” portion of any regularly scheduled City Council meeting.
- (6) Consent agenda - Shall contain routine, non-controversial items that require City Council action but need little or no Council deliberation. An item can be removed from the consent agenda by the City Manager, Mayor, or any two members of City Council, and will be considered after approval of the consent agenda.
- (7) Old business – Business items pending from previous City Council meetings.
- (8) New business – New or amended ordinances, resolutions, or policies that City Members or City Staff wish to have the City Council consider.
- (9) Discussion items – Items to be presented or discussed with City Council in order to garner direction from City Council. No action shall be taken on discussion items.
- (10) Executive Session (if needed) – Items to be discussed in closed meeting under conditions allowed by applicable law. The City Council may not take final action during executive session. It is understood and agreed that information discussed in Executive Session is considered confidential and should remain so until the Council takes action in public on the matter. Any final action resulting from an Executive Session discussion must be taken during the open public session.
- (11) Adjourn.

Sec. 1-6.- General Procedures.

- (a) *General Procedure:* General rules of parliamentary procedure as defined herein, consistent with the City Charter and any applicable City ordinance, statute or other legal requirement, shall govern the proceedings of the City Council. To the extent not inconsistent with these rules, the City Council shall use Robert’s Rules of Order as a general guideline for additional rules of parliamentary procedure without being a

procedural requirement. Notwithstanding the above, failure to abide by, or adhere to, these rules shall not nullify or negate any action by the City Council. These rules of parliamentary procedure are intended solely as a guideline.

- (b) *Chair of Meeting:* The Mayor shall preside over all meetings of the City Council as the Chair and enforce these rules and procedures during a meeting. In the absence of the Mayor, the Pro Tempore shall assume the Chair responsibility at the meeting. In the absence of the Pro Tempore, the Council will choose a Chair for the meeting.
- (c) *Authority of the Chair:* The Chair person shall make decisions on questions of procedure subject to review respectively by the Council as a whole.
- (d) *Council Deliberations:* The Chair has the responsibility to control the discussion and the order of speakers. Council Members will generally be called upon in the order of the request to speak. Generally, a Council Member may not be recognized to speak subsequently until each Council Member has had an opportunity to obtain the floor. A Council Member holding the floor may address a question to another Council Member and that Council Member may, should they so choose, respond to the question while the floor is still held by the Council Member asking the question.
- (e) *Limits to Deliberations:* After an agenda item is announced by the Chair, the City Council may discuss the item without the need for a motion on the item. Council Members will limit their comments to the subject matter or motion currently being considered.
- (f) *Repetitious Comments Prohibited:* A speaker or Council Member shall not present the same or substantially the same items or arguments to the City Council repeatedly or be repetitious in presenting oral comments. A speaker or Council Member shall not present an argument on a matter previously considered by the City Council at the same session.
- (g) *Obtaining the Floor:* Any member of the Council wishing to speak shall first obtain the floor by making a request for the floor to the Chair. The Chair shall recognize any Council Member who seeks the floor when appropriately entitled to do so.
- (h) *Motions:* Motions may be made by any member of the Council including the Chair. Any member of the City Council may second a motion.
- (i) *Procedures for Motions:* The following is the general procedure for making motions:
 - (1) The item is presented by Staff or others followed by questions and discussion by Council Members.
 - (2) A Council Member who wishes to make a motion shall first obtain the floor.
 - (3) A Council Member who wishes to second a motion shall do so through a request to the Chair.
 - (4) Before a motion can be discussed, it shall be seconded.
 - (5) Once the motion has been properly made and seconded, the Chair shall open the matter for further discussion offering the first opportunity to the moving party and, thereafter, to any Council Member properly recognized by the Chair.

- (j) *Amendments to Motions:* When a motion is on the floor and an amendment is offered, the amendment shall be acted upon prior to acting on the main motion. No motion of a subject other than the agenda item under consideration shall be admitted as an amendment. A motion to amend an amendment shall be in order, but one to amend an amendment to an amendment shall not be in order. Action shall be taken on the amended amendment prior to any other action to further amend the original motion.
- (k) *Continuance of Discussion or Hearings:* Any item being discussed or any public hearing at a City Council meeting may, by order, notice, or motion, be continued or tabled to any subsequent meeting.
- (l) *Voting:* All Council Members must vote either “yea” in the affirmative or “nay” in the negative. A present member who does not vote will be officially recorded as a “nay” or negative vote. When a Council Member recuses oneself, that Council Member is not counted as present for quorum purposes and is not deemed to be “voting” for purposes of determining whether there has been a “majority vote of those voting and present”.
- (m) *Public Hearings:* The following is the general procedure for conducting public hearings:
 - (1) Staff presents report.
 - (2) City Council Members may ask Staff questions.
 - (3) The applicant then has the opportunity to present comments, testimony, and/or oral arguments.
 - (4) City Council Members may ask questions of the applicant.
 - (5) The Chair opens the public hearing.
 - (6) Upon opening the public hearing, and before any motion is adopted related to the merits of the issue to be heard, the Chair shall inquire if there is anyone present who desires to speak on the matter which is to be heard or to present evidence regarding the matter.
 - (7) Members of the public are provided with the opportunity for comments and testimony in accordance with Section 1-160 (d) of the City Council Procedures and Decorum Policy.
 - (8) A vote by City Council to close the public hearing upon a motion and second.
 - (9) The applicant may be given the opportunity to respond to questions from the City Council and for closing comment or rebuttal.
 - (10) The City Council deliberates on the issue.
 - (11) If the City Council raises new issues through deliberation and a majority of the City Council seeks additional public testimony, additional public comment and

testimony is permitted in accordance with Section 1-160 (d) of the City Council Procedures and Decorum Policy.

(12) The City Council deliberates and takes action as needed.

(13) The Chair announces the final decision of the City Council as applicable.

(n) *Call for Recess*: The Chair may call for a recess of up to fifteen (15) minutes at regular intervals at appropriate points in the meeting agenda, or if requested by any two (2) Council Members.

Sec. 1-7.- Decorum.

(a) General: During Council meetings, Council Members shall preserve order and decorum, shall not interrupt or delay proceedings, and shall obey the rules of the Council. Council Members shall demonstrate respect and courtesy to one another, to City Staff and to members of the public appearing before the Council. Council Members shall seek to phrase and communicate all writings, publications and speeches in a professional and constructive manner.

Council Members may express differing ideas, equitable representation helps promote unity of purpose by allowing the public to be informed of each Member's position during his/her term of office and not only during an election campaign.

Members of the Council will not condone any unethical or illegal activity from any Council Member or members of the Staff. All members of the Council agree to uphold the intent of this policy and to govern their actions accordingly.

(b) Mayoral Responsibilities:

(1) The Mayor shall serve as the Chair of all meetings. The Mayor Pro Tempore shall preside in the absence of the Mayor.

(2) The Mayor shall have a voice in all matters before the Council.

(3) The Chair is responsible for preserving order and decorum and shall keep the meetings orderly by recognizing each Member for discussion, limiting speaking items, encouraging debate among Members, and keeping discussion limited to the agenda item being considered.

(4) The Mayor is the official spokesperson for the Council on all matters unless absent, at which time the Mayor Pro Tempore or appropriate designee will assume the role. The views presented by the Mayor, or the Mayor Pro Tempore in his/her absence, should provide equitable representation of all Council Members.

(5) The Chair will encourage all Council Members to participate in Council discussion and give each Member an opportunity to speak before any Member can speak again on the same subject.

(6) The Mayor is responsible for ensuring that an orientation of all Council Members is conducted following an election. The orientation shall include Council

procedures, staff and media relations, current agenda items, municipal leadership training programs, and legal issues governing the behavior of elected officials, etc.

(c) Council Responsibilities:

- (1) Each Council Member is responsible for being prepared to discuss the agenda.*
- (2) Each Council Member is required to attend a Council Member Orientation and is encouraged to attend at least one Texas Municipal League-sponsored conference each year in order to stay informed on issues facing municipalities.*
- (3) It is the responsibility of Council Members to be informed about action taken by the Council in their absence. In the case of an absence from a work session, the Council Member is responsible for obtaining this information from the City Manager prior to the Council meeting during which said item is to be voted upon.*
- (4) When addressing an agenda item, the Council Member shall first be recognized by the Chair, confine comments to the question under debate, avoid reference to personalities, and refrain from impugning the integrity or motives of any other Council Member or Staff Member during debate or vote.*
- (5) Any Council Member may appeal a ruling by the Chair to the Council as a whole. If the appeal is seconded, the person making the appeal may make a brief statement and the Chair may respond. An appeal may generally be debated by the Members, but each Member may speak only once. The affirmative vote of a majority of the Council Members present and voting shall be necessary to approve the motion.*
- (6) Any Council Member may ask the Chair to enforce the policy established by the Council. Should the Chair fail to do so, a majority vote of the Council Members present shall require the Chair to enforce the policy.*
- (7) When a Council Member is appointed to serve as a liaison to a board, committee or commission, the Council Member is responsible for keeping all Council Members informed of significant activities of that board, committee or commission. The appointed Council Member should report the actions of the board, committee or commission during a work session of the City Council.*
- (8) A member of the Council who wishes to be recognized shall request to speak, but shall not proceed with remarks until recognized and named by the Chair of the Meeting. Remarks shall be confined to the question before the Council.*
- (9) While a member of the Council is speaking, other members shall not hold private discourse or in any manner interrupt the speaker. In all discussions, disrespectful language and behavior shall be avoided.*
- (10) Every member of the Council who shall be present at a meeting, when a vote is called for by the Chair shall vote thereon, unless they have recused themselves due to a conflict of interest. A conflict arises when a City Council Member, a relative of that Member, or an entity in which a City Council Member has a substantial*

interest is actively engaged in an activity that involves the City's decision-making processes. "Decision-making processes" is broader than just voting and includes being involved with any aspect of any decisions the City makes.

- (11) A Council Member may not represent any third party before any City board or commission.
 - (12) All personal communication devices should be placed in a silent mode during any City Council meetings. Personal communication devices shall not be used for communicating City related business during all City Council meetings.
- (d) *Citizens' participation:* The following rules shall be in force for persons in attendance at all meetings of Council:
- (1) Persons wishing to address the Council during "persons to be heard" or "public hearings" shall complete a "request to speak" form and present said form to the City Secretary prior to the beginning of the regularly scheduled City Council meeting or immediately following their address to Council. Speakers shall approach the lectern and give his/her name and address before speaking. Speakers shall address the Mayor and Council with civility that is conducive to appropriate public discussion. All public comments should be addressed through the Mayor. Each speaker will be allowed three (3) minutes to speak. No person shall be allowed to address the Council more than once unless called upon by a City Council Member to do so. There shall be a cumulative time limit of thirty (30) minutes allotted for the "persons to be heard" portion of any regularly scheduled City Council meeting. If the Mayor or any Council Member wishes to extend the time for "persons to be heard", a proper motion must be made followed by a second, and then passed by the affirmative vote of a 3/4 majority of the Council Members present.

City Council Members cannot discuss items presented under "persons to be heard" nor take any action thereon other than consideration of the placement of said item on a future agenda as a discussion item or refer the item to City Staff for research and possible future action.
 - (2) Persons may not engage in discussions with the Council during Council deliberations unless specifically asked a question by a Council Member. Persons who have been asked a question by a Council Member must be recognized by the Chair before being allowed to speak. The Chair may end any question and answer session between Council Members and a member of the public in order to facilitate the order of business.
 - (3) Persons may present printed material to be included in the Council agenda packets one week prior to a meeting. Persons may present printed material to the City Secretary to distribute to the Council during a meeting.
 - (4) Persons attending Council meetings shall remain seated or may stand in the back and come and go so long as it does not disrupt the meeting. Persons in attendance shall not carry signs, placards or other items which could block the view of those behind them or be disruptive to the proceedings. No person attending any Council

meeting shall delay the proceedings or refuse to obey the orders of the presiding officer.

- (5) Disturbances, transgressions of the rules or disorderly conduct in the Council chamber may cause the transgressor to be removed from the meeting. The Chair of the meeting, shall exercise control over persons who disrupt the meeting in the following ascending order of action:
 - a. Call the person to order, advising that person of the infraction.
 - b. Advise the person that the infraction must cease immediately, or the person will be ordered to leave the meeting.
 - c. Order the person to leave the meeting. If the offending person is a member of Council, the Chair shall call for a vote on the expulsion of that member from the meeting, and such vote requires a majority for adoption. A police officer may remove an individual or individuals for disrupting a meeting as authorized by Texas Penal Code Section 42.05.
- (6) Persons are encouraged to attend Council meetings. However, the number admitted shall be limited to the fire safety capacity of the Council chamber as determined by the fire chief or designee. If the capacity is surpassed the Council may adjourn the meeting and move its proceedings to a location that will accommodate a larger number of participants.

Sec. 1-8 - Staff Relations.

- (a) In order to ensure proper presentation of agenda items by Staff, questions arising from Council Members after receiving their information packet should be, whenever possible, presented to the City Secretary for Staff consideration prior to the Council meeting. This allows Staff the time to address Council Member's concern and provide all Council Members with additional information.
- (b) The City Secretary shall designate the appropriate Staff Member to address each agenda item and shall see that each presentation is prepared and presented in order to inform and educate the Council on the issues that require Council action. The presentation should be professional, timely and allow for discussion of options for resolving the issue. As a summary, the Staff Member making the presentation shall make it clear if no Council action is required or present the Staff recommendation as a part of the presentation, and/or present the specific options for Council consideration.
- (c) The City Secretary is directly responsible for providing information to all the Council concerning any inquiries by a specific Council Member that is significant in nature and would be beneficial to all Council Members.
- (d) The City Secretary will exhibit the highest professional and ethical behavior. The City Secretary is responsible for the professional and ethical behavior and discipline of his/her Staff. The City Secretary is also responsible for ensuring that the Staff receives the training and information necessary to address the issues facing municipal government.
- (e) Any conflicts arising between the City Staff and the Council will be addressed by the Mayor.

- (f) All Staff Members shall show one another, each Council Member, and the public, respect and courtesy at all times. They are also responsible for making objective, professional presentations to ensure public confidence in the process.
- (g) The City Secretary, after an election, will make sure that the Staff has prepared information needed for the orientation of new Council Members, and inform Council of any available Texas Municipal League conferences and seminars. The City Secretary will also be responsible for meeting personally with new Members and informing them about City facilities, policies and procedures.

Sec 1-9. - Council and Media Relations.

Since the democratic form of government is only successful when the citizens are kept informed and educated about the issues facing their municipality, it is imperative the media play an important role in the governmental process. It is through an informed public that progress is ensured, and good government remains sensitive to its constituents. These guidelines are designed to help ensure fair relationships with all media reporters. The Mayor and Council recognize that the media provides an important link between the Council and the public. It is desired to establish a professional working relationship to help maintain a well informed and educated citizenry. Actions related to the use of a Social Media will be governed by the Social Media policy in Chapter 5 of this code.

- (a) During the conduct of official business, the news media shall occupy places designated for them or the general public.
- (b) All reporters will have access to an agenda and will be furnished support materials needed for clarification if requested.
- (c) In order to preserve the decorum and professionalism of Council meetings, the media are requested to refrain from conversing privately with other people in the audience and to conduct any interview with the public outside the meeting room while the Council is in session.
- (d) Since each government body conducts business differently, it is requested that all reporters new to Council meetings meet with the City Secretary or the designated media relations representative prior to covering their first meeting to be informed of the policies and procedures to help foster a professional working relationship between the media reporter and the City.
- (e) On administrative matters, the Mayor is the spokesperson, unless he/she has appointed a media relations person to present Staff information on the agenda.

The Mayor, or his/her designee, is the primary spokesperson for the City on matters regarding policy decisions or any Council information pertaining to issues on the agenda. In order to ensure fair treatment of an issue, any clarifications requested by the media on the issue should be addressed after the meeting. When opposing positions have been debated, regardless of the outcome, the public is better informed when all sides have adequate coverage by the media. This lets the public know that the item was seriously debated, and options discussed before a vote was taken, and helps build confidence in the democratic process. In respect to each Council Member and the citizens of the City, the views presented by each Council Member should provide equitable representation of

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all Members. Even though Council Members may express differing ideas, equitable representation helps promote unity of purpose by allowing the public to be informed of each Member's position during his/her term of office and not only during an election campaign.

Sec. 1-10. - Statements by public officials regarding litigation.

When the City of Pine Forest is involved in litigation or a legal dispute, Council Members shall refrain from commenting on settlements, appeals or other issues related to the subject until the matter is resolved. The Mayor or City Attorney shall be authorized to provide any public responses or comments, as needed on matters involving litigation.

Sec 1-11. - Non-Exclusive Rules.

The rules set forth shall supersede the Council related portions of the Council relations policy; however, they are not exclusive and do not limit the inherent power and general legal authority of the City Council, or of its presiding officer, to govern the conduct of the City Council meetings as may be considered appropriate from time to time, or in particular circumstances, for purposes of orderly and effective conduct of the affairs of the City.

Sec 1-12. - Disbursement of Council Requested Information.

As a general courtesy and to maintain equality in the disbursement of information, documentation or data requested by a Council Member from Staff shall be provided to all members of Council.

Sec. 1-13. - Policy Enforcement.

If a Member(s) of the City Council believes this policy has been violated, the topic shall be placed on a meeting agenda following proper procedure (by Mayor, or two members of the City Council).

A determination of violation shall be stated by majority vote of those present during the deliberation.

If it is a Member of the Council who is determined to be in violation of this policy, a standard letter of violation signed by the Mayor (or Mayor Pro Tempore, if the letter is going to the Mayor) shall be issued to the person. A copy of the letter shall become a part of the Council Member's official file with the City.

Section 1-14.-Finance.

(a) Generally

(1) City fee schedule adopted.

(2) The city has developed and adopts by reference, as amended from time to time, a schedule of city fees and charges. A copy of the city fee schedule is available in the office of the city secretary.

(a) Collection fee. In accordance with V.T.C.A., Code of Criminal Procedure

art. 103.0031, there is hereby imposed an additional fee of 30 percent on all debts and accounts receivable, i.e.: fines, fees, court costs, restitution, and other debts that are more than 60 days past due and have been referred to a private firm for collection.

- (b) Authorization. The City of Pine Forest is hereby authorized to enter into a contract with a private firm to provide services for the collection of fines, fees, court costs, and other debts which is made for all purposes of this section.

Section 1-15.- Budget.

- (a) Budgeting responsibility of department supervisors.

- (1) City staff will be responsible for the administration of departmental budget. This includes implementing the goals and objectives established by the city council and adopted as part of the budget and monitoring the department budget for compliance with spending limitations. The critical point of budget control is at the department level budget for all funds.

- (2) Budgets are approved by the city council within a departmental or program budget category (personnel, supplies, maintenance, capital, etc.). Chief Financial Officer shall manage budgets to ensure that appropriations for particular expenditures are not exceeded. No recognized or significant salary or capital budgetary savings in any department shall be spent by the department supervisor without authorization.

- (b) Budget adjustments.

- (1) A department supervisor may request a budget adjustment between line items, or categories of items through the city staff.

- (2) In addition, the city council may authorize the following adjustments:

- (a) Supplemental appropriations. If the Chief Financial Officer certifies that revenues are available in excess of those estimated in the budget, an amendment ordinance may be prepared for city council approval. In general, the supplemental appropriations will be evaluated based on the reason the item was not budgeted in the normal budget process and whether an adjustment can be done within the department to remedy the condition. City staff will be asked to identify potential revenue sources to cover increased appropriations.

- (b) Emergency appropriations. An amendment may be approved by the city council to meet public emergency affecting life, health, property or the public peace.

- (c) Reduction of appropriation. If at any time during the fiscal year it appears probable that expected revenues will be insufficient to finance expenditures for which appropriations have been authorized, the city council may adopt an ordinance to reduce appropriations.

(c) Budget adjustments require approval of City Council in all changes.

Section 1-16.- Purchasing.

(a) Purchasing policy and standards.

- (1) City employees shall solicit professional services, materials and supplies through a process that involves competition, either formal or informal. The process shall be conducted in such a manner that is fair to bidders and provides the city with the best qualified bid and the best product. Each city employee authorized to purchase supplies, equipment or services must be familiar with the city's purchasing procedures and shall adhere to them in order to obtain the best results. All contracted services shall be in accordance with the City Procurement Policy.
- (2) All city purchases of goods or services will be made in accordance with state law and this division, in compliance with the following standards:
 - (a) Purchases under \$1,000.00 shall be made by using the city's purchase order system.
 - (b) Purchases between \$1,000.00 and \$4,999.99 require a tabulation sheet with at least three written and competitive bid quotations.
 - (c) Purchases between \$5,000.00 and \$49,999.99 require at least three written and competitive bid quotations. Purchases over \$25,000.00 must be included in the monthly financial report to the city council.
 - (d) Purchases of \$50,000.00 or more require use of a formal bid process, including, without limitation, development of specifications, publication of the bid notice through the city's website or other media as deemed appropriate, and submission to the city council for approval.

Section 1-17.- Purchasing authority.

Purchase require approval as follows:

<i>Amount:</i>	<i>Requires approval of:</i>
Less than \$1,000.00	Mayor
\$1,000.00 to \$24,999.99	City Council
\$25,000.00 TO \$49,999.99	City Council
\$50,000.00 and greater	City Council by Ordinance