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The City of Vadnais Heights
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Memorandum:

TO: Mayor Gunderson and City Council Members

FROM: Tim Sandvik, Assistant City Administrator

DATE: January 8, 2019

SUBJECT: Elected Official Out-of-State Travel Policy

Recommended Council Action

Approve elected official out-of-state travel policy.

Background

Minnesota Statutes 471.661 requires the governing board of each statutory or home rule charter city, county, school district, regional agency, or other political subdivision, except a town, must develop a policy that controls travel outside the state of Minnesota for the applicable elected official of the relevant unit of government. The policy must be made available for public inspection upon request and reviewed annually. Subsequent changes to the policy must be approved by a recorded vote.

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CITY OF VADNAIS HEIGHTS

ELECTED OFFICIAL OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL POLICY

Purpose: The City of Vadnais Heights recognizes that its elected officials may at times receive value from traveling out of the state for workshops, conferences, events and other assignments. Minnesota Statutes 471.661 requires that the City Council develop and annually adopt a policy that controls travel outside the state of Minnesota for elected officials. The general guidelines below sets forth the conditions under which out-of-state travel will be reimbursed by the City.

General Guidelines:

1. The event, workshop, conference or assignment must be approved in advance by the City Council at an open meeting and must include an estimate of the cost of the travel. A detailed Council resolution must specifically outline the specific expenditures that are being approved. In evaluating the out-of-state travel request, the Council will consider functions such as the following:
 - Whether the elected official will be receiving training on issues relevant to the City or to his or her role as the mayor or as a council member;
 - Whether the elected official will be meeting and networking with other elected officials from around the country to exchange ideas on topics of relevance to the City or on the official roles of local elected officials.
 - Whether the elected official will be viewing a facility or function that is similar in nature to one that is currently operating at, or under consideration by the City where the purpose for the trip is to study the facility or function to bring back ideas for the consideration of the full Council.
 - Whether the elected official has been specifically assigned by the Council to testify on behalf of the City at the United States Congress or to otherwise meet with federal officials on behalf of the City.
 - Whether the City has sufficient funding available in the budget to pay the cost of the trip.
2. No reimbursements will be made for attendance at events sponsored by or affiliated with political parties.
3. The City may make payments in advance for airfare, lodging and registration if specifically approved by the council. Otherwise all payments will be made as reimbursements to the elected official.
4. The City will reimburse for transportation, lodging, meals, registration, and incidental costs using the same procedures, limitations and guidelines outlined in the City's personnel policies. The most cost efficient mode of travel must be used, taking into account reasonable time constraints.
5. Airfare will be reimbursed at the coach rate.

6. Use of a City car is encouraged, however if a personal car is used mileage will be reimbursed at the IRS rate. If two or more council members travel together by car, only the driver will receive reimbursement. The City will reimburse for the cost of renting an automobile if necessary to conduct City business.
7. Lodging and meal costs are limited to those which are reasonable and necessary; daily meal cost limits are referenced in the current personnel policy.
8. Receipts are required for lodging, airfare, and meals and should accompany an expense report form. It is not necessary to have receipts for cabs and tips. The expense report form shall be submitted to the City Administrator for payment.
9. The City will not reimburse for alcoholic beverages, personal telephone calls, costs associated with the attendance of a family member, rental of luxury vehicles, meal expenses included in the cost of registration, or recreational expenses such as golf or tennis.
10. Upon trip completion, returning members of the Council shall provide an oral report on the results of the trip at the next Council meeting.
11. The City Council reserves the right to make exceptions to this policy on a case by case basis for emergency situations.