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	SUBJECT: CITY COUNCIL TRAVEL		

1.0 POLICY

The purpose of this directive is to document the City Council's policy for dealing with attendance at conferences, conventions, training sessions, and other important meetings by City Council members, and to provide administrative control over travel expenses incurred by such attendance.

2.0 ORGANIZATIONS AFFECTED

City Council.

3.0 PROCEDURE

3.1 Travel Request

3.1.1 The Mayor and Council President will have the authority to approve travel requests by City Council members as approved in the current year's budget. Mayor and Council President must be in agreement to approve travel requests.

3.1.2 Council member travel requests shall be submitted to the Mayor and Council President for approval on the appropriate Travel Request Form. Council members shall submit an original of this form to the City Manager's Office. A copy will be returned to the Council member indicating approval/disapproval of request.

3.1.3 Out of State Travel

When an out-of-state travel request is made, the Mayor and Council President will consider the following:

- Whether the elected official will be receiving training on issues relevant to the City or to his or her role as a council member.
- Whether the elected official will be meeting and networking with other elected officials 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 city facility or function that is similar in nature to one that is currently operating at, or under consideration by the City, where

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the purpose of 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 for the cost of the trip.
- Whether an exception to the policy should be recommended to the full Council for approval.
- Whether Council members are required to turn over materials from the approved trip to the City and briefly report on such a trip to the full Council.
- Whether Council members are required to use City owned vehicles as available.

3.2 Expense Guideline

- 3.2.1 All commercial transportation shall be tourist or coach. First-class fare will not be reimbursed.
- 3.2.2 Maximum compensation for use of a private automobile starting January 1, 2011, will be 51 cents per mile for travel. Mileage will be paid for direct route with no deviations.
- 3.2.3 If mileage expense for transportation by personal vehicle (automobile expense, lodging, and meals) exceeds airline or train fare, the lower of travel expense will be reimbursed.
- 3.2.4 Actual costs for lodging will be reimbursed, but charges shall be reasonable and consistent with the facilities available. In order to keep cost at a minimum, City Council members shall stay at host hotel or motel, or one at lesser cost at the discretion of the Mayor and Council member.
- 3.2.5 The City will pay for one personal phone call (length of call within reason) to family or friend during the duration of absence, other telephone and telegram expenses will be permitted only when necessary for City purposes and fully accounted for in the expense report.

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3.2.6 Meal and Incidental Expenses effective **January 1, 2011**:

Meal reimbursement from the City is available if there is an overnight stay.

If no overnight stay, IRS requires meals to be with someone which business was discussed (best to state both the business purpose and who the meal was with on the reimbursement form) and is available for reimbursement only at the actual meal cost. Reimbursement is not taxable income to the City Council member.

If there is no overnight stay, and the meal is not with someone in which business was discussed, the City Council member will be reimbursed at a rate of \$1.00 more than the rates which are not taxable per meal. (Receipts are not required.) However, the reimbursements will be included as gross wages on the City Council member's (Council member's) Form W-2, subject to employment tax withholding. (Taxable Reimbursement Form)

Maximum reimbursement for meals (including tips not to exceed 15%) shall be: (See list of "High Cost Localities")

Non-taxable income reimbursement:

\$52 per day **for all but** "high cost localities":

Breakfast & Incidentals	\$11.00
Lunch & Incidentals	\$11.00
Dinner & Incidentals	\$30.00

Non-taxable income reimbursement:

\$65 per day for a "high cost locality":

Breakfast & Incidentals	\$15.00
Lunch & Incidentals	\$15.00
Dinner & Incidentals	\$35.00

Incidental expenses include fees and tips for services.

Alcohol is not considered an eligible expense; therefore no reimbursement will be provided for any alcohol purchased with or without a meal.

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Attach itemized receipts to Expense Report for all non-taxable reimbursements.

Above rates do not apply when meal expenses are reimbursed through the Mayor's Contingency Fund.

Individual meal rates for a single day's meals may be transferred between breakfast, lunch and dinner. Exception to maximum would be when a meal is served at a meeting for a set ticket price for all attendees. City Council members shall take advantage of all meals that are provided for and included in the registration fee. Itemized receipts shall be presented for all meals.

- 3.2.7 No reimbursement will be made for breakfast if the City Council member is able to leave after 6:00 am to reach the destination on time. No reimbursement will be made for the evening meal if the City Council member is able to return home by 6:00 pm
- 3.2.8 No reimbursement will be made for meals within the city limits unless the meal is part of the authorized meeting the City Council member is attending. If no overnight stay, IRS requires meals to be with someone in whom business was discussed (please state business purpose and whom meal was with on reimbursement form). Only actual meal cost will be reimbursed.
- 3.2.9 Other expenses, such as transportation, parking fees, etc., are eligible for reimbursement only if properly accounted for on the Expense Report.
- 3.2.10 If a Council member wishes his/her family to accompany him/her while a representative of the City of Winona, the City Council member shall accurately distinguish that part of expense incurred which is attributed to himself and will be reimbursed for that part. Reimbursement for lodging under these circumstances will be limited to the single room rate and limited to the minimum number of days to conduct City business.
- 3.2.11 Special approval of any unusual expenses not covered in the general guidelines must be obtained from the Mayor and Council President in advance of the travel anticipated.

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3.3 Cash Advance Policy

- 3.3.1 A purchase order with a copy of the approved Travel Request Form shall be processed for an advance for anticipated travel expenses. A check will be issued to the individual requesting the advance. There will be no advance travel expenses unless the Council member is staying overnight.
- 3.3.2 Within five working days after his/her return, the Council member shall submit to the Finance Director an itemized claim for the actual and necessary expenses incurred and paid by him/her in attending such meeting using the attached Travel Expense Report form.
- 3.3.3 If excess funds are advanced, the excess shall be returned to the City. If expenses exceed the advance, the City shall reimburse the claimant.

3.4 Expense Report

- 3.4.1 Each Council member is to submit his/her own expense claims for reimbursement within 30 days of expense being incurred.
- 3.4.2 Upon completion of Council member's trip, the Council member must file the Travel Expense Report with properly executed receipts for all expenditures such as transportation, hotel accommodations, meals, taxi fare, and all other items of expense to the Mayor and Council President. All expense reports must show the amount of each expense (mileage, meals and incidentals, and lodging), dates of travel, place (city) or travel, and business purpose for travel.
- 3.4.3 All receipts should be issued upon the letterhead of the person or firm furnishing the service to the Council member.
- 3.4.4 When a receipt is lost or cannot be obtained, an affidavit shall be made to that effect stating the purpose for the expenditure. The Mayor and Council President may, at their discretion, refuse to reimburse a Council member without proper receipts.

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3.4.5 Upon approval of the Travel Expense Report by the Mayor and Council President and signed by the Council member, the purchase order may be prepared and sent to the Finance Department for payment with a copy of the Travel Expense Report.

3.5 The Travel Request Form is available from the Secretary to the City Manager.

4.0 FORMS

Forms are available as follows from the City Manager's Office or they may be e-mailed to you upon request:

- City Council Travel Request Form
- City Council Travel Expense Report
- Taxable Meal Reimbursement Without Overnight Stay

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