



Village of Consort
Governance Policy Manual

<p style="text-align: center;">HR 19</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Code of Conduct for Members of Council</p>	<p>Policy No. Function: Authority Approved Date: Supersedes: Amends:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">HR 19 Council</p>
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POLICY STATEMENT:

- a) The Citizens of the Village of Consort are entitled to have a fair, ethical and accountable local government and to expect the highest standards of conduct from the members that it elects to Council. Such a Government requires that a public official comply with both the letter, and the spirit of the laws and policies affecting operations of the government; be independent, impartial and fair in their judgment and actions; use their public office for the public good and not for personal gain; and conduct public deliberations and process openly, unless legally confidential, in an atmosphere of respect and civility.
- b) Improving the quality of public administration and governance can be achieved by encouraging high standards of conduct on the part of all government officials. The Council of the Village of Consort commits itself and its members to conduct that meets the highest ethical Standards. In turn, adherence to these standards will protect and maintain the Village of Consort reputation and integrity.

PURPOSE:

- c) Citizens have a right to expect from its local Municipal Government, actions that are conducted with integrity and in a professional manner. Therefore, it is imperative that there be, nor appear to be, any conflict between the private interests of elected officials and appointed board members of the public and those who hold municipal office, of the standards and expectations of their conduct. Council will govern in accordance with the requirements and obligations set out in the municipal legislation of the Province of Alberta (Municipal Government Act).

RESPONSIBILITIES:

d) Respect for Decision-making Process

- a. All members shall accurately and adequately communicate the attitudes and decisions of the Council or Committee, even if they disagree with the decision, such that respect for the democratic decision-making process is fostered.

e) Release of Confidential Information

- a. Members of Council shall hold in strict confidence all information concerning matters deemed confidential. A Member of Council shall not, either directly or indirectly, release, make public, or in a way divulge any information which is deemed to be confidential unless expressly authorized by Council or requires by law to do so. Confidential information includes;
 - i. Any aspect of an in-camera session deliberations
 - ii. Information identified as confidential within the provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP)*
 - iii. Information subject to solicitor-client privilege
 - iv. Staffing documentation and staffing issues addressed to the council.
- b. Members of Council shall for a period of twelve (12) months after leaving office, abide by the guidelines listed above, except those related to confidential information, which shall be applied in perpetuity.

f) Release information to the Public and Media (including Social Media)

- a. Members of Council acknowledge that official information related to the decisions and resolutions of Council will normally be communicated to the community, and the media by the Chief Elected Official or by his or her designate.

g) Acceptance of Gifts

- a. No Member of Council shall solicit or accept a reward, gift or benefit of any kind, personally or through a family member or friend, which is connected directly or indirectly with the performance or duties of office. Members of Council are not precluded from accepting;
 - i. Rewards, gifts, or benefits not connected with the performance of duties of office;
 - ii. Political contributions that are accepted in accordance with applicable law; ceremonies or similar events;
 - iii. Reasonable quantities of food and beverages at banquets, receptions, ceremonies, or similar events.;
 - iv. Services provided without compensation by persons volunteering their time;
 - v. Food, lodging, transportation, and entertainment provided by other levels of government or by other local governments, boards or commissions; a reimbursement of reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of duties of office;
 - vi. Token gifts such as souvenirs, mementos, and commemorative gifts that normally and are reasonably accompany the responsibility of office.
- b. Members of Council shall not accept invitations from contractors, or potential contractors to the municipality to attend special events that may be viewed as creating an unreasonable level of access or indebtedness;
 - i. Access may be defined as a prolonged period of contact with the Councillor(s) individually;

- ii. Indebtedness is based on the value of the event.

h) Discrimination and Harassment

- a. Members of Council shall not discriminate against anyone on the basis of their race, ancestry, place of origin, color, citizenship, creed, gender, sexuality, sexual orientation, age, record of offenses, marital status, family status, disability, religious beliefs, or source of income (Alberta Human Rights Act as amended).

i) Avoidance of Waste

- a. Members of Council shall avoid waste, abuse, and extravagance in the provision or use of public resources, and shall expose fraud and corruption of which the member is aware.

j) Respectful Work Place

- a. Council is committed to creating and sustaining a vibrant, healthy, safe and caring work environment in all interactions with the internal and external stakeholders and members of Council. Key requirements to support a respectful workplace include but are not limited to the following;
 - i. Be polite, courteous and respectful of others at all times;
 - ii. Treat others equally and fairly;
 - iii. Recognize value and diversity.

k) Conflict of Interest

- a. Members of Council shall not engage in any activity, financial or otherwise, which is incompatible or inconsistent with the internal and external duties in the public interest. These activities include, but are not limited to;
 - i. Use any influence of office for any purpose other than official duties;
 - ii. Act as an agent before Council or any committee, board or commission of Council;
 - iii. Use any information gained in the execution of office that is not available to the general public for any purpose other than for official duties;
 - iv. Place themselves in a position of obligation to any person or organization which might reasonably benefit from special consideration or may seek preferential treatment;
 - v. Give preferential treatment to any individual or organization in which a Member(s) of Council have a financial interest;
 - vi. Influence any administrative or Council decision or decision-making process involving or affecting any person or organization in which a Member(s) of Council have a financial interest;
 - vii. Making unreasonable or unintended use of corporate materials, equipment, facilities or employees for personal gain or for any private purpose.

l) Respect for Separation or Roles of Council and Administration

- a. Members of Council shall at all times conduct themselves in a manner that reflects segregation of roles and responsibilities between Council and Administration. In order to effectively demonstrate respect for the separation of roles, Members of Council shall:
 - i. Refrain from giving direction to any municipal employee or contracted resources, except where that direction is provided to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and represents a position or decision of Council;
 - ii. Convey all concerns or requests for action or information directly to the CAO and, where appropriate, or as agreed by the CAO, copy a department head, without committing the Municipality to any specific course of action, expenditure, or use of municipal resources;
 - iii. Not solicit demand or accept the services of any municipal employee or contracted resource;
 - iv. Avoid situations in which friendship, social relationship or social interaction with a member of administration may be seen to create undue influence, access to information, conflict of interest, or to undermine the authority of the CAO;
 - v. Not express any opinion on the performance of any municipal employee with the exception of the CAO, nor advocate for the promotion, sanction, or termination of any municipal employee.

m) Training

- a. Members of Council will commit to the completion of orientation training within ninety (90) days of being elected to office.

PROCEDURES

- n) Every Member of Council shall be provided with a copy of this policy and will sign the statement of commitment (Appendix A) annually at the organizational meeting as an acknowledgment that he or she has read and supports BY-LAW NO. A-836.
- o) Members of Council shall not assume that any unethical activities not covered by or specifically prohibited by these ethical guidelines of conduct, or by any legislation, are therefore condoned.
- p) Members of Council agree to uphold the intent of this policy and to govern their actions accordingly.

Policy Breaches

- q) Member(s) of Council have a duty to help create a responsive, accessible, transparent and fair municipal government. Accordingly, Members, have a duty to question whether another Member is violating legislation, ethics or respectful behavior as set forth in this policy.
- r) Any member of Council including the Mayor, may submit a confidential written allegation of breach of Code of Conduct for Council Member to the CAO.

- s) The CAO shall hold the allegations in confidence and shall place the personal matter on the next regular Council Meeting or Special Meeting of Council agenda in a Closed Session.
- t) When the matter is addressed at the next regular Council meeting in a Closed Session, the party that is the subject of the allegation may ask to have the matter tabled to allow the said party to obtain legal counsel. In such case, a second meeting of Council will be called no sooner than seven (7) days from the date of the above referenced Council meeting. The Party, so alleged, may then introduce evidence including witnesses and legal counsel to support his or her position.
- u) All discussions surrounding alleged and sustained violations of this policy shall be conducted in a Council Conversation and/or an In-Camera meeting of Council with the intent that the discussion shall remain confidential under the appropriate sections of the *Freedom of Information Protection Privacy Act (FOIP)*
- v) Should Council determine that a member has potentially breached this policy, Council shall report that such a determination has been made and pass a resolution as to the outcome and the consequences of such a violation. The breach shall then be ratified by resolution of Council.
- w) Should a Member of Council breach any of the principals outlined in this policy, the possible courses of action that are available to Council include but are not limited to;
 - a. Demand an apology by the Member of Council to the impacted individual(s);
 - b. Removal of the member from Committee assignments either permanently or for an interim period;
 - c. Dismissal of the Member from a position of Deputy Mayor or Chairperson of a Committee;
 - d. Barring the Member from being circulated/ informed of confidential materials/matters;
 - e. Barring the member from any contact with Town employees outside of scheduled Council or Committee meetings or events;
 - f. Educational training on ethical and respectful conduct provided by a third party at the expense of the member of Council's individual budget.
- x) Any action taken by Council should include a time frame, and what remedial action is expected.

End of Policy

Approved by Mayor

Date

Acknowledgment and Agreement



VILLAGE OF CONSORT
APPENDIX "A"

Annual Statement of Commitment to the Code of Conduct
for Members of Council Policy.

I, _____ declare that as an Elected Official, being a Member of the Village of Consorts Council, acknowledge and support the Code of Conduct for Council Members policy for Members of the Council.

By signing this Code of Conduct, I state that I have received an appropriate amount of time to sufficiently, read and examine, the Code of Conduct for Members of Council Policy. I state that I have read and fully understand the contents of the Code of Conduct. My signature is my contractual agreement that I will follow and abide by the Code of Conduct in good faith.

Signed: _____

Declared this ____ day of _____, 20____.

Witness Name: _____

Witness Signature: _____

Witnessed on this ____ day of _____, 20____.