



Township of East Zorra-Tavistock

General Policy Manual

Title: Council-Staff Relations Policy	
Section: Corporate Policies	Number: 1.08
Version: 1.0	Review Frequency: At least once per Council Term
Approved by: Council	Approval Date: March 6, 2019
Application: Council Members; Officers and Staff Members.	
Notes:	

1. INTRODUCTION

As of March 1, 2019, amendments to section 270 of the Municipal Act, 2001 require municipalities to adopt and maintain a policy with respect to the relationship between Members of Council and the Officers and Staff of their respective municipality.

2. SCOPE AND INTENT

This policy shall apply to all Members of Council, Officers and Staff of the Township of East Zorra-Tavistock.

The intent of this Policy is to ensure that the relationship between Members of Council and the Officers and Staff of the Township is cooperative and supportive, with a clear understanding of the respective roles and responsibilities.

3. POLICY

1. Definitions

“Chief Administrative Officer (or CAO)” means the appointed employee of Township who is responsible for exercising general control and management of the affairs of the municipality for the purpose of ensuring the efficient and effective operation of the Township, and for performing such other duties as are assigned by the Council;

“Member(s) of Council” means a member of members of the elected Township Council of the Township of East Zorra-Tavistock;

“Officers” means a person who holds a position of responsibility with definite rights and duties as prescribed by statute or by-law;

“Staff” means any of the following:

- A person, not including Members of Council, who performs work for the Township for wages;
- A person who supplies services to the Township for wages;
- Such other persons as may be prescribed who perform work or supply services to the Township for no monetary compensation.

“Township” means the Township of East Zorra-Tavistock.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Role of Council** – Policy Focus:
 - a. Represent the Township, provide direction and create policy.
- **Role of Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)** – Direction Focus:
 - a. Liaison between Council, and Staff and Officers, direct implementation of Council’s policies, hire and help develop a team of competent Staff, generally see to the operation of the municipal organization.
- **Role of Officers and Staff** – Implementation Focus:
 - a. Research policy and programs, give best professional advice, implement decisions of Council, fulfil statutory duties, follow direction of the CAO.

5. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1) **Respect the Chain of Command**

Members of Council shall understand they have no individual capacity to direct Staff and Officers to perform - or not perform - functions or duties. The CAO is responsible for Staff and Officers - Members of Council who need to engage with Staff and Officers must do so through the CAO. This would include both in person, verbal, written and electronic messages.

2) Members of Council are Public Figures, not Staff and Officers.

Once a matter is proposed or decided, Staff and Officers should only comment on matters of fact or history in discussing issues with the public and the media and should comply with the Press Releases policy. Dealing with the media is generally part of an elected representative's job.

3) All Members of Council are Equal

Regardless of how they interrelate with Members of Council, Staff and Officers must avoid favouritism and the appearance of favouritism. Differences in experience and abilities amongst Members of Council are irrelevant - they all must be treated equally.

4) Council Time is Valuable

Members of Council should not allow presentations by Staff or Officers, or the Public, to consume all of the time they have to debate various issues. Such presentations should, to the extent possible, be concise. Members of Council can take any one or more of the following actions where appropriate:

- Pass on an audio-visual presentation;
- Urge Staff or Officers to be more concise;
- Require multiple public delegations with essentially the same point to select a spokesperson, or to impose a limited speaking time, or to provide information in advance or in written form; and/or,
- Enact 'curfew' procedures for Council deliberations.

5) Staff and Officer Time is Valuable

Members of Council should use the resources of Staff and Officers judiciously. Reports cost taxpayer money and take Staff and Officer time away from other issues or problems that may need attention. Members should be discouraged from asking for reports as a means of unnecessarily postponing Council decisions.

6) Represent the Whole Community

Members of Council, together with the Township's Staff and Officers, work for the public good. Decision making by Members of Council should be based on complete information and unbiased recommendations from Staff and Officers. Members of Council, in addition to such information and recommendations, may rely on their own judgment and leadership in their decision making.

7) Avoid Public Criticism

Members of Council should avoid the temptation to play up divisions or conflicts. Staff and Officers shall carry out, to the very best of their abilities and without negativity, all decisions and directions of Council. Staff and Officers shall not be targets of derisive/ vexatious comments/ behaviour/ conduct. Comments on Staff and Officer performance shall be directed through the appropriate confidential performance reviews.

8) Politics or Management – Not Both

Council provides direction, and Staff and Officers give professional advice and implement Council's directives. Members of Council are not elected to be technical experts, nor to act in their professional capacities. Likewise, Staff and Officers are not politicians. Advice comes from Staff, with policy and service delivery decisions made by Council.

9) A Formal Relationship

Staff and Officers shall treat Council as a collective decision-making body. Staff and Officers shall not communicate directly with individual Members of Council on municipal business, rather they must communicate on such matters through the CAO. Information from the CAO shall be communicated to all Members of Council. Staff and Officers shall stay out of political lobbying.

10) Professionalism

Members of Council, Staff and Officers shall treat each other with professionalism. When Council requests that Staff and Officers appear before Council, they must comply and be prepared for any questions Council has. Advance notice of questions to Staff and Officers provides an opportunity to provide quality reports and advice to Council.

11) Respect

Members of Council, Staff and Officers shall work hard at fostering a climate of mutual respect. Each shall be respectful of others' intelligence and professional duties. Members of Council, Staff and Officers shall understand that they all face different, and often unique, challenges and recognize their overarching goal is to serve the best interests of the Township.

6. COMPLAINTS AND CONCERNS

The Township Clerk shall be responsible for receiving complaints and/or concerns related to this Policy. Upon receipt of a complaint and/or concern, the Clerk shall notify:

- a. In the case of Staff and Officers other than the CAO, the CAO;
- b. In the case of the CAO, Council; or
- c. In the case of a Member of Council, the Integrity Commissioner.

Handling of complaints and concerns shall be done in the manner set out in the Code of Conduct or other applicable policy.

Where there is a discrepancy between this Policy and the Code of Conduct, the Code of Conduct prevails.

7. POLICY REVIEW

This policy shall be reviewed at least once during each term of Council.