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# Operating Guidelines

*Local Government Affairs Council*

**MISSION**

The Local Government Affairs Council mission is to promote business and economic vitality through effective public policy development and advocacy, consistent with the Chamber Board's strategic direction.

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Local Government Affairs Council revolves around the following:

* Identifying and understanding issues impacting business and the local economy.
* Developing policies and positions that guide Chamber advocacy on issues.
* Build action plans and advocate for Chamber policies and positions.

**MEETINGS**

There will be a meeting every Thursday beginning promptly at 7:30 a.m. and will end at 8:45 a.m.

**MEMBERSHIP**

***Council Make-up:*** The LGAC is composed of 27 individuals appointed by the Chamber Board of Directors from applicants who are Chamber members. The make-up of the 27 individuals from the Chamber membership will be reflective of the general Chamber membership and will be examined annually. LGAC and board leadership will prioritize diversity of membership in order to maintain a broad and relevant representation of industry and perspective.

***Council Terms:*** LGAC members will serve for three years and can serve up to two consecutive terms. After the first term, members will be evaluated by the LGAC Chair and staff and asked to formally reapply for a second term. Once two consecutive terms have been served, members will be required to step off the committee for one full year before being allowed to reapply.

***Vacancies:*** When a vacancy occurs, the LGAC will advertise to the Chamber membership twice per year. Committee members are encouraged to identify individuals in the business community that would be positive contributors to the LGAC.

***Applications:*** Applicants to the LGAC will be requested to complete an application form and may be asked to participate in a brief interview with the LGAC. The LGAC chair will forward all applications, as well as make specific recommendations to fill specific committee vacancies, to the Chamber Board. The Chamber Board reserves the right to make all final decisions and is under no obligation to accept the recommendations of the LGAC regarding membership.

**MEMBER COMMITMENTS**

The purpose of this committee is to identify issues, develop positions, and advocate for strategic outcomes. Members are committing to the time and activity it takes to do so effectively.

* Attendance: Members of the LGAC will attend 75% of scheduled meetings, measured quarterly, in order to promote continuity, understanding and rapport. The first time a committee member misses more than 25% of the meetings in a quarter, the Chairperson will notify the member of his/her attendance status. ***Missing more that 25% of the meetings in any quarter following the attendance notifications will be considered a resignation from the committee, with no further action necessary.***
* Involvement: Each members should commit to at least one activity per month (outside of regularly scheduled meetings) to help forward the work of LGAC and the Chamber. (ie. council meeting, letter to editor, meeting with council liaison, providing testimony, participation on local government body, etc.)
* Elected Liaison Program: Every member of LGAC will be assigned to a city or county elected official or administrator to meet with regularly. At least two members will be assigned to each elected official. You will be responsible for meeting with that elected official at least once per quarter over the course of your term to build relationships, check-in on chamber priorities and learn the priorities of that elected official. Elected Liaison reports will be given to the LGAC each quarter following your meeting. You may be asked by chamber staff to discuss a specific issue that is of importance to the chamber.
* Intent: Each meeting should have an explicit and clearly stated purpose and outcome. Every effort should be made to lead the meeting to that outcome. We will use resources from the community and within LGAC to make certain Chamber positions are well-informed positions.
* Effectiveness: Regular practices that will contribute achieving desired outcomes are:
* Making conscious decisions about departures from the agenda.
* Being aware of the “airtime” we occupy.
* Keeping comments relevant to “what is best for the Chamber” vs. “what is my personal opinion on this issue”.
* Being appropriately respectful with guests who take the time to help LGAC members understand the issues.

**OFFICERS**

***Chair:*** The LGAC will nominate an individual to serve as committee chair by November 1 of the year preceding the term in question. These nominations will be given to the incoming Chair of the Chamber Board. Each nominated individual should be approved by a standard vote of the LGAC. The incoming Chair of the Board will make the final selection, however, if the incoming Chair does not feel that any of the nominees are appropriate candidates, he/she may ask the LGAC to nominate at least one other person for consideration. The chair, if reappointed, may serve up to two consecutive terms.

***Vice Chair:*** A Vice-Chair for the LGAC will be chosen annually by the committee no later than January 1. Individuals will be nominated by members of and voted on by the committee. The Vice-Chair serves in the absence of the Chair, but is not automatically recommended as the Chair for the following year.

***Executive Committee:*** An executive committee will meet as needed. The executive committee will consist of the Board VP of Advocacy, the LGAC Chair, the LGAC Vice Chair, the LGAC Immediate Past Chair, and staff.

**AUTHORITY**

The LGAC will be fully empowered by the Board of Directors to determine Chamber positions on all city and county local legislative issues that pertain to the Chamber’s mission statement and public policy guiding principles. The LGAC may present those positions to those entities dealing with the issues (City Council and County Commission). In addition, LGAC may take positions on state legislation and state agency policies when those matters have a direct impact on city and county government. In those cases, LGAC may present those positions on behalf of the Chamber to the appropriate entities.

The LGAC does not need Board approval to develop policies on behalf of the Chamber when they pertain to city and county issues, unless the issue will be submitted to the voters. On issues requiring a vote of the public, the Board should receive a recommendation from the LGAC, and will then make the final policy decision.

**ORGANIZATION**

* Committee Quorum-half plus one; at least one of the committee members present must be a member of the Chamber Board of Directors.
* A 66% majority vote of a quorum is necessary to take a Chamber position on an issue.
* Action minutes will be taken.

**Voting procedures**

* A voice vote or show of hands is required unless any committee member requests a roll call vote or a written ballot.
* If voice vote does not indicate 66% vote, Chairperson may call for a show of hands, roll call vote or a written ballot.

**IDENTIFYING ISSUES**

Any member of LGAC may identify items, which do not already appear on the annual policy agenda, to be added to the list of issues to be addressed by the group. The appropriate process for doing so is as follows:

* Time will be reserved during each LGAC meeting during which new issues can be identified.
* Members who identify the issues should be prepared to address the following ‘filters’ for the group (in 3 minutes or less):
  + Background- an overview of the issue
  + Relevance- Is the issue consistent with the LGAC mission? How does it impact the local economy?
  + Influence- can LGAC or the Chamber influence the outcome?
  + Timing- are there any relevant time restraints on when this issue should be addressed?
* Following the presentation of the issue, a straw vote of LGAC members will be taken on whether to add the issue to the “plate” of LGAC. In order for the issue to be added to the agenda, there must be a willing “issue champion” in the group, and a vote of support by a simple majority of members present.

**PROCESSING ISSUES**

In developing a position on issues, the following guidelines should be considered:

* Whenever possible, succinctly written background material on the issue should be provided to LGAC members on or before the meeting where the issue is to be discussed.
* So that LGAC can make informed decisions on issue, efforts should be made to a balanced view of an issue is presented. This might include presentations from both sides of an issue or seeking out objective sources to present issues.
* Once an issue has been identified for action, typically no more than three meetings should be required to develop a position and strategy on the issue. One meeting to brief LGAC members, one meeting to develop a position and one meeting to present and agree on the advocacy strategy.