

## MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the City Commission

From: Lisa Agnor, City Manager

Date: June 18, 2015

Subject: Discussion of and consideration of increasing the 2015 conference and training budget for the City Commission

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This item has been placed on the agenda at the request of Mayor Pro-Tem Moon, and will be discussed at the meeting. A copy of the City Commission Travel Policy is attached.

The Commission may also take action regarding this item, if you choose to do so.

## **City Commission Travel Policy City of Marshall, Texas**

**Adopted by the Marshall City Commission on June 9, 2011**

1. Conference registrations will be paid at actual cost. Commissioners must specify to the City Manager's office if they desire extra ticketed events for the conference such as banquets and mobile workshops to be included in their conference registration. The City will not pay for entertainment events such as golf tournaments, sports events, theatrical productions, museum tours, etc. that are mentioned in the conference information as options available for conference attendees while they are at the conference.
2. Airfare will be paid at actual cost for the most economical means of travel, typically coach fare.
3. Lodging will be paid at actual cost. A receipt for lodging must be provided upon return from the trip. The City will not pay for room service, in-room movies, in-room video games, in-room mini-bars, bar tabs incurred at the hotel, food tabs incurred at the hotel restaurant, or similar expenses incurred at the hotel. Laundry expense for one outfit will be considered only if the clothing was soiled as the result of an unexpected incident/accident during the trip.
4. Typically, the City Manager's secretary will handle conference registrations and make airline reservations and lodging reservations for Commissioners. If a Commissioner chooses to make their own arrangements, the City will reimburse these expenses in compliance with this policy upon presentation of a receipt.
5. Taxis and other public transportation to travel to and from the airport, to and from conference sessions, and to and from meals while attending a conference that are not included in the conference package will be reimbursed at actual cost. Receipts must be presented.
6. Rental vehicles may be used when a Commissioner travels by air and subsequent ground transportation is necessary, provided that the rental vehicle is expected to be less expensive and more time-efficient than taxis or other available public transportation. Expenses for a rental vehicle will be reimbursed at the actual cost upon presentation of a receipt.
7. Use of a personal vehicle for out-of-town trips to attend conferences or meetings will be reimbursed at the rate per mile recognized by the Internal Revenue Service at the time of travel.
8. Parking will be reimbursed at the actual cost upon presentation of receipts.

9. Unless extenuating circumstances are found to exist or timing of travel is a consideration, travel to and from a destination will be paid based on the lower cost method of traveling by either plane or personal vehicle. In comparing the cost of travel by air versus travel by a personal vehicle, the City will only pay for the less expensive method to travel to and from the destination. If a Commissioner chooses to utilize the more expensive method of transportation to travel to and from a destination, the Commissioner must pay the difference between the less expensive method and the more expensive method of transportation.
10. The City will reimburse the Commissioners at the currently approved IRS Federal per diem rates applicable to the destination site. The approved IRS Federal per diem rates can be found at <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21287> or the Commissioner may contact the Finance Department for the latest approved rate. On the day of travel departure, if the departure originates after 2 PM, per diem will be paid at 1/3 the rate. On the day of travel return, if the return completes before 2 PM, per diem will be paid at 1/3 the rate. If travel arrangements due to distance or timing of flights are such that travel to and/or from the destination must occur the day before and/or the day after the conference or meeting, the City will pay the per diem expense for one day before and/or one day after a conference or meeting. This per diem rate is to cover meals, all tips, and incidental expenses. If a Commissioner receives a per diem in advance and is unable to attend the event, arrives at the event late, or leaves the event early for any reason, the per diem advanced for the days not present at the conference must be paid back. ***(This amendment to the Travel Policy adopted by the City Commission on July 29, 2011).***
11. The City of Marshall will not pay any travel or conference expenses for spouses, family members, or traveling companions.
12. If, for any reason, the Commission feels that it is necessary to increase the budget for travel/education, the increase must be approved by the City Commission in a properly posted meeting. ***(This amendment to the Travel Policy adopted by the City Commission on April 10, 2015).***
13. Commissioners must complete expense accounts for all travel and/or provide receipts to the Secretary to the City Manager. A 1099 will be issued to a Commissioner for any per diem paid for which an expense account is not completed and filed with the City Secretary. ***(This amendment to the Travel Policy adopted by the City Commission on July 29, 2011).***
14. Any Commissioner attending a conference, seminar, or similar event is encouraged, but not required, to provide a written report or other information to the City Manager. This written report or other information will be distributed to all Commissioners so that all Commissioners may benefit from the learning experience. ***(This amendment to the Travel Policy adopted by the City Commission on April 10, 2015).***

15. To effect equitable utilization of the travel/education budget, each Commissioner will be allocated 1/7 of the approved travel/education budget. Should one or more Commissioners declare that they will not be utilizing any funds from the travel/education budget then the amount allocated to each of the other Commissioners will be 1/number of Commissioners indicating that they will be using funds from the travel/education budget. It is the responsibility of each Commissioner to ensure that they do not exceed his/her budget allocation. No expenses will be reimbursed which exceed the individual Commissioner's allocation of the travel/education budget. Should one or more newly elected Commissioners replace Commissioners who have declared that they will not be utilizing travel/education funds, the allocations will be recalculated by 1/number of Commissioners using travel/education funds. *(This amendment to the Travel Policy adopted by the City Commission on April 10, 2015)*