

Honorable Mayor and Members
of the City Council
City Hall
Torrance, California

Members of the City Council:

SUBJECT: City Council Ad Hoc Ethics Committee - Report and Recommendation on Integrity Statement

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation of the City Council Ad Hoc Ethics Committee that the City Council:

- Adopt the Code of Ethics for Elected and Appointed Officials; and
- Adopt the Commitment to Integrity Statement for Public Officials, elected or appointed, and/or as candidates for public office or a member of a Board or Commission; and
- Require that all members of City Boards or Commissions sign the statement and require the signing of the statement upon successful appointment to a Board of Commission.

Funding

None is required.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

The Blue Ribbon Committee on Ethics and Integrity submitted their final report and recommendation to the City Council on January 15, 2008. At that meeting the City Council accepted the report, and assigned the review and study of the report to the City Council Ad Hoc Ethics Committee.

The Ad Hoc Committee met on March 4, March 18 and March 25, 2008. The Committee reviewed the report and recommendations from the Blue Ribbon Committee and has been seeking more information with regard to a long-term sustainable ethics program.

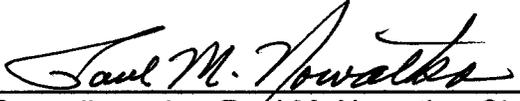
At the March 4, 2008 meeting the Committee voted to recommend adoption of the Preamble; Code of Conduct; Values; and Standards as submitted by the Blue Ribbon Committee on Ethics and Integrity. The Committee wanted to take those statements further by developing an Integrity Statement to be signed by appointed and elected officials upon receipt and review of the Code of Ethics as their commitment to support the values and standards that are contained in that document.

The Committee further recommends that upon approval of the Code of Ethics that each member of the City Council sign the Integrity Statement and that the City Council encourage all candidates for City Council to sign the statement and file it with the City Clerk.

The Council Committee has more meetings scheduled to review information from other cities and develop methods to implement a sustainable program dedicated to training and understanding ethics and integrity in government.

Respectfully submitted,

CITY COUNCIL AD HOC ETHICS COMMITTEE



Councilmember Paul M. Nowatka, Chair



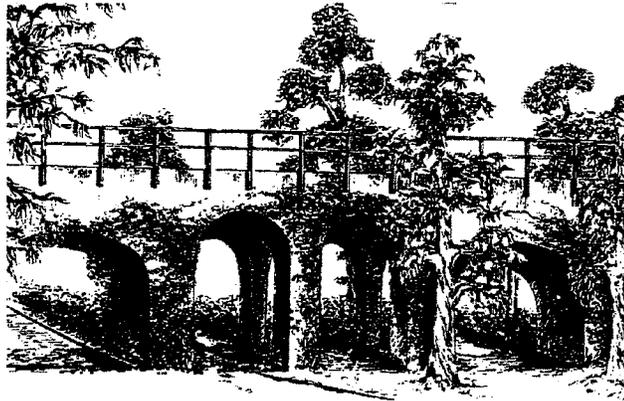
Councilmember Bill Sutherland, Member

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Councilmember Tom Brewer, Member

Attachment:

A. Code of Ethics for Elected and Appointed Officials/Commitment to Integrity Statement

City of Torrance
Code of Ethics
**For Elected
and
Appointed Officials**



April 1, 2008

Preamble

“The ethical person should do more than he is required to do and less than he is allowed to do.”

Michael Josephson
Founder of the Josephson Institute of Ethics

Ethical behavior is the cornerstone for all aspects of city government. The Torrance City Council reinforces the City’s commitment to ethical government by adopting the letter and spirit of this Code of Ethics. It was built around the values that have been embraced by those devoted public servants who have served the public so well. The Code’s aim is to affirm an identity of Excellence and Integrity for our City’s government through our citizens, our employees and our dealings with other communities.

The Code provides guidance in making the right ethical decisions in the conduct of City business. It goes beyond the many laws, rules and regulations that already exist. This Code takes Torrance to the next level of public trust by providing standards of conduct expected of those engaged in City business.

The Code applies to all who represent our City’s government. It includes all elected and appointed officials, citizens campaigning for elective office, city employees and others who participate in city government. As representatives of the City, all are required to subscribe to and understand how the Code applies to them. All must agree to practice the values expressed in the Code in day-to-day service to the City.

Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct provides a framework for making ethical decisions. It should assist people in doing the right thing by identifying not just appropriate behavior but also actions to be avoided.

This framework is expressed in the Values and Standards, which follow.

Values

Honesty

Respect

Responsibility

Transparency

Trust

Standards

Honesty

- I am committed to doing the right thing.
- I speak the truth – even if it is uncomfortable – I am sincere, candid and keep confidences.
- I make decisions based solely on the best interests of the City of Torrance and recuse myself at any instance of potential conflict.

Respect

- I treat my fellow officials, staff and the public with courtesy, compassion and civility, even when we disagree on what is best for the community.
- I actively listen, ask questions, seek diverse opinions and participate in value-added discussion for the purpose of consensus building.
- I respect the right of all employees and the public to fair treatment and equal opportunity, free from discrimination or harassment of any sort.
- I accept individual differences and beliefs without prejudice and judge others based on their character, ability and conduct.
- I gain personal value by respecting others' ideas, diversity, skills and knowledge.

Responsibility

- I take responsibility for my actions regardless of their outcome.
- I am a prudent steward of public resources and consider the impact of my decisions on the City and the community.
- I prepare for meetings, read provided material, research issues and make informed decisions.
- I encourage others to act responsibly by the example I set.
- I never excuse or ignore inappropriate activities.

Transparency

- I will be open in all activities in which I am engaged, making every attempt to keep the public aware.
- I will not maintain nor support any hidden agenda and my decisions/ actions will be based solely on the merits of the matter before me.
- I understand that public perception is important and recognize that I am ethically bound to do more than is required of me and less than is allowed by law.
- I will view my conduct through the eyes of those watching my actions to build and maintain the public's confidence.

Trust

- I will ensure that all my communications, interactions and transactions are open, honest, accurate and have the best interest of the City and the residents in mind.
- I will be fair, impartial and equitable when making decisions, avoiding the temptation to favor those who have supported me and disfavor those who have not.
- I will uphold the public trust by never using City assets, information or relationships for personal gain.

Commitment to Integrity

As a Public Official, elected or appointed, and/or as a candidate for public office or a member of a Board or Commission, I agree to uphold and operate by the Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics for elected and appointed officials adopted by the City Council and sign my name below with full understanding of the expectations that the Citizens of Torrance hold for me.

I will conduct myself according to the Values outlined in the Code of Ethics as I carry out business for the City, represent the City to the public and in my workings with other elected and appointed officials both within the City of Torrance and with other Agencies;

I will embrace the Standards included in the City of Torrance Code of Ethics and use them as guiding principles to assist me in conducting myself as a representative of the City of Torrance;

I am committed to acting with Honesty and integrity;

I will treat people with Respect;

I will take Responsibility for my actions;

I will act with Transparency as I do the City's business;

I will uphold the public Trust.

I have received and read the City of Torrance Code of Ethics for Elected and Appointed Officials and fully understand the principles as set forth and agree to abide by them.

Signed this date _____ by (print and sign)

Name of Office _____