

DATE: November 2, 2005

TO: City Council

FROM: Councillor Evelina Halsey-Brandt

RE: Policy 1004

Council Policy 1004 “Invitations to Council to Attend Fund-Raising Events for Non-Profit Organizations” was adopted on February 25, 1991.

The intent of Policy 1004 was to identify if more than one ticket was required to an event and to coordinate the purchase of multiple tickets. In addition the policy was meant to assist the organizations by identifying which Councillors would be in attendance.

During this past year I realized that the Policy is not being followed.

The practise now seems to be:

- a) Someone decides that the “City” will purchase one or more tables to an event
- b) Councillors are then informed that City has purchased one or more tables and are asked if they will be attending and if so how many tickets they will require
- c) If not enough Councillors will be attending then it appears that “Staff” are asked to fill any vacant seats

Using this method the “City” absorbs the cost into some department or other and the final result is that there is no public accountability for these expenditures. In addition “Staff” may feel pressured to attend an event on their own time that they would not have chosen to attend otherwise.

It was never the intent of Policy 1004 to purchase “City” tables to each and every event that is held in the City by Non-Profit Organizations. Neither was it the intent of the policy to have those expenditures buried in some corporate account that is not easily identifiable or available for public scrutiny.

Prior to the adoption of Policy 1004 individual Councillors had to pay for their tickets and other Council related expenses personally and then submit receipts for reimbursement. That method was quite onerous and even financially difficult depending on the cost of the expenditure (sometimes thousands of dollars if travel was involved).

In late 1991 Councillors were issued individual corporate credit cards. Councillors were then able to charge Council associated expenses directly to their corporate credit card and then submit their receipts to the Finance department for reconciliation. All charges were attributed to their expense account and subject to public scrutiny.

When a Non-Profit Organization is having a gala fund raising dinner or other event a Council member wants to attend they should do so on their own expense accounts.

City funds should be given to Non-Profit Organizations through the Grants Budget process. The Grants Budget has specific criteria that need to be met prior to an organization receiving tax monies. The current practise of purchasing "City" tables bypasses this process and creates an uneven playing field for those Organizations that do not have gala dinners or are unaware that the "City" purchases tables.

I therefore recommend that Council direct staff to:

Review Policy 1004 and present various alternatives for Council to discuss and decide on a new or amended policy.

Councillor Evelina Halsey-Brandt



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Adopted by Council: Feb. 25/91

POLICY 1004

File Ref: 0105-00

INVITATIONS TO COUNCIL TO ATTEND FUND-RAISING EVENTS FOR NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

POLICY 1004:

It is Council policy that:

All invitations received by Council members to attend fund-raising events by non-profit organizations and **requiring payment by the City** be reviewed informally by a committee of the Mayor, Acting Mayor (for the period in which the event is to be held) and the Administrator, with a report and recommendation **directly** to Council, to enable these requests to be dealt with as expeditiously as possible.

(City Administrator's Office)