

TOWN OF IRRICANA

POLICY NUMBER 3.5

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TITLE: Collaborative Relationships
/Dispute Resolution

EFFECTIVE:

The Town values healthy working relationships among and between staff, elected officials, citizens and other stakeholders.

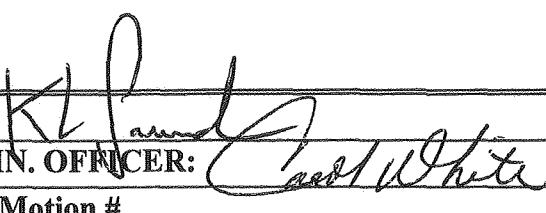
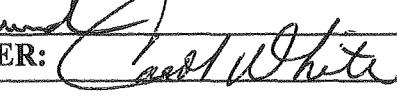
The operation of the Town involves managing potentially competing interests that arise. The purpose of this policy is to have staff and council deal with differences, disputes and conflict using collaborative interest based methods that focus on the importance of sustaining healthy and productive relationships as well as resolving issues.

In the Town of Irricana:

1. Town employees and elected officials will strive for appropriate organizational conduct. This includes:
 - Being polite, courteous and respectful of others
 - Treating others equitably and fairly
 - Listening to what others have to say
 - Being open minded to other's ideas, comments and suggestions
 - Involving the appropriate people in planning, decision making implementation
 - Being respectful and supportive of others' roles, responsibilities and decision making duties and authority
 - Valuing diversity
 - Taking appropriate responsibility to restore a collaborative relationship if you think your actions may have offended a colleague

Town employees and elected officials will avoid inappropriate organizational conduct which includes:

- Degrading or offensive remarks or behavior
- Intimidation or coercion
- Shouting or swearing
- Deliberate exclusion of a colleague from relevant activities
- Attempts to discredit a colleague by providing false information about them.

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CHIEF ADMIN. OFFICER:		DATE: March 3/09
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EFFECTIVE:

2. Town employees and elected officials will address issues early and use their best efforts to prevent disputes from escalating. Demonstrated efforts will be made to resolve difference and disputes in an interest based and collaborative way through direct contact, informal discussions, negotiation or mediation. The following process for reaching understanding and resolution can be used:

Step 1: Establish a positive environment

- Use collaborative language
- Describe overall goal
- Establish appropriate guidelines and process
- Confirm time available, any need for confidentiality, decision making authority

Step 2: Clarify issues and set agenda

- Identify the mutual issues that need to be resolved
- Describe issues: use brief, clear, neutral language
- Avoid categorizing issues as "your issues" or "my issues"
- Establish priority for discussion

Step 3: Clarify interests

- Develop understanding of each other's interests.
- Active listening skills
- Use "I" statements to disclose your interests
- Identify and build on common ground
- Summarize interests

Step 4: Find Solutions/Build Agreement

- Mutually generate options that can meet interests
- Select options which meet interests as much as possible
- Evaluate for fairness and feasibility
- Develop action plan/agreement
- Plan for evaluating agreement

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EFFECTIVE:

When agreement can not be achieved through the Town's own resources, seek advice and assistance from Alberta Municipal Affairs Dispute Resolution staff or a private facilitator or mediator.

3. The Town respects the clear roles and responsibilities of staff and elected officials.
4. The Town will continue to support healthy staff and council relationships through annual team strengthening sessions.
5. The Town will inform its clients and citizens of the usefulness of appropriate collaborative dispute resolution processes.
6. Town Council and staff will be provided with training opportunities for enhancing their skills and understanding in managing conflict.

Responsibilities:

1. To be aware of and understand this policy.
2. To endeavour to conduct Town business and operations using interest based skills and processes.

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