MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Rich Olson, City Manager

Date: March 6, 2020

Subj: Consideration – City Letterhead Policy

BACKGROUND:

Following each municipal election, the City Clerk oversees the purchase of updated City letterhead, which bears the City seal and names of the governing body and administrative team. This letterhead is specifically used in the context of conducting City business and may not be distributed, copied, duplicated or otherwise utilized by any non-City agency or individual. As such, any and all communication by means of City letterhead is classified as a public record, as defined in NCGS 132-1 and therefore subject to Local Records Retention Laws as established by the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.

ANALYSIS:

City employees who are granted use of City letterhead are advised they must adhere to the proper Records Retention schedule. Depending on the type of communication, the retention period generally falls between one and three years, though it may be longer in certain instances. Members of the City Council may also contact the City Clerk if they have communications they wish to have appear on City letterhead. Many Councilors have requested letters of greeting, condolence, or congratulations placed on letterhead, which are subsequently properly retained by the City Clerk.

Attached is a City of Elizabeth City policy regarding the use of City letterhead. While what is contained therein has always been proper protocol and shared with employees and the Council, there has never been a formal, written policy in place. Since this is a longstanding City-wide procedure necessitated by General Statute, staff feels that it is pertinent to develop official, written protocol for reference.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

By motion, adopt the attached policy for usage of City letterhead and/or stationary.

CITY OF ELIZABETH CITY USAGE OF CITY STATIONARY AND LETTERHEAD POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

Following each municipal election, City letterhead and stationary is produced, and on which the City seal and names of the governing body and administration team are emblazoned. This letterhead is used specifically in the context of conducting official City business and may not be distributed, copied, duplicated or otherwise utilized by any non-City agency or individual. As such, any and all communication by means of City letterhead is classified as a public record as is defined in NCGS 132-1.

CRITERIA FOR CONSIDERATION / GUIDELINES FOR USE

1. City letterhead and stationary may only be used by authorized individuals and in conjunction with official City business. Letterhead may not be copied, duplicated or otherwise modified without express knowledge and approval of the City Clerk, subject to review by the entire City Council.

2. Any and all communications produced on City letterhead and/or stationary shall constitute a public record, as defined in NCGS 132-1, and as such, are subject to the Local Records Retention Schedule established by the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

3. If a member of the City Council wishes to have communication placed on City letterhead for distribution, they shall present their request to the City Clerk, who shall be responsible for preparation of the document. The Councilor may also provide the Clerk with any wording or general direction they would like included in the document's production.

4. Proper use of City letterhead and/or stationary by members of the City Council shall always be used in conjunction with official City business, which may also include matters such as letters of condolence or congratulations, greetings and welcoming remarks. Documents may be prepared for presentation by the full Council, a part of the Council, or a single member.

5. The City Clerk shall maintain copies of all official communication as required by the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources until such time that the document may be destroyed, as stated by the North Carolina Local Records Retention Schedule.

Adopted by the City Council of the City of Elizabeth City on March 9, 2020.