

GOVERNMENT

E - Neighborhood Associations

COUNCIL POLICY NO. E-1

TITLE: NEIGHBORHOOD COMMUNICATIONS

POLICY: To provide direction to neighborhood associations and to staff regarding the content of neighborhood newsletters and fliers.

The city coordinates the publication of neighborhood newsletters and fliers and pays for printing and distribution of one newsletter per neighborhood. The policy reflects the limitations placed on publicly funded publications and issues of concern to the city.

REFERENCE: Adopted by City Council motion in 1984; Amended by Community Services Staff Report dated December 9, 1996, Agenda Item No. 9.2.i

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMUNICATIONS

PURPOSE

The purpose of the policy is to provide a framework for the publication of neighborhood newsletters using initial City resources. The intention of the policy is to provide clear, specific guidelines which provide flexibility in administering the program and which are easily understood. Neighborhood newsletters published without use of City funds are not covered by this policy.

DEFINITIONS

Neighborhood Newsletters: An annual publication designed to distribute neighborhood news for broad distribution announcing the neighborhood annual meeting and funded by the City.

Neighborhood Newsletter Committee: A group of people designated by the neighborhood association to have responsibility to oversee the editing and publication of the neighborhood newsletter and other communications. The neighborhood newsletter editor is a member of that committee and six direction for the newsletter from that committee.

AVAILABILITY OF CITY RESOURCES

1. In dance initial cap each neighborhood association shall publish at least one neighborhood newsletter to announce the neighborhood annual meeting each year, utilizing the neighborhood association's allocation for newsletters (as determined by the printing and postage budget for neighborhood newsletters in the initial cap community image initial cap involvement initial Division budget). This publication shall be sent to all residents, businesses, and non-resident vacant lot property owners, as outlined in SRC 64.320.

NEIGHBORHOOD AND CITY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Neighborhood Association responsibilities are:
 - A. To provide research, writing, editing for articles submitted for the newsletter.
 - B. To appoint a commission Newsletter Editor/Newsletter Committee to oversee the Neighborhood's responsibilities.
 - C. To provide copies of neighborhood newsletters to anyone requesting them.
 - D. Subject to the limitation specifically prohibited by law, neighborhood association (NA) boards must have final approval of neighborhood newsletters prior to printing:
 - i. NA boards should decide which articles are included;
 - ii. NA boards need to know before printing what City staff wants to add, modify or delete or have legal concerns about, and

- iii. More lead time is needed (60-90) days to prepare newsletters so there is adequate time for preparation and reviews of the product.
2. The City's responsibilities are:
 - A. To provide coordination of publication done by the City.
 - B. To provide typesetting, graphics support, and coronation for neighborhood newsletters solely funded by the City.
 - C. To provide mailing lists of absentee owners and businesses when required for notification in SRC 64.340 and in A above.
 - D. To provide occasional educational assistance in the production of neighborhood newsletters. City staff should include information on NA newsletters for new NA board members as part of their orientation.
 - E. To review content for such things asked: basic election hearing, libel/slander, accuracy of facts relating to city projects/studies.
3. Review of newsletter content is the shared responsibility of NA Boards and City staff.

CONTENT

1. Material included in newsletters is subject to the limitations outlined in the policy. Each NA will determine the content of its own newsletter.
2. Material can be submitted from the following sources:
 - A. The neighborhood association or any of its general members may submit material to the neighborhood Newsletter Editor/Newsletter Committee. Anyone in the neighborhood can submit opinion (or other) articles.
 - B. City departments or agencies contracting with the City to provide City services may submit material directly to the neighborhood Newsletter Editor/Newsletter Committee or to the Newsletter Coordinator and Community Development.
 - C. Other organizations or agencies, such as schools, community schools, churches or civic groups, may submit material to the neighborhood Newsletter Editor/ Newsletter Committee or, if submitted to the Newsletter Coordinator, is subject to the approval of the neighborhood Newsletter Editor/Newsletter Committee.
3. Material from City sources that is required by agencies providing funds for neighborhood newsletters will have priority for up to 1/4 of the usable space.
 - A. Upon request, the Newsletter Coordinator who provide other City-originated material to the neighborhood association. The neighborhood association will determine its relevancy to the individual neighborhood, timeliness, and conciseness.

4. City staff and City Council members should encourage persons concerned with NA newsletter content to resolve the issue directly with the author and/or the NA.

EDITORIAL GUIDELINES

1. Editorial guidelines are intended to allow publication of all materials except those limited by this policy or specifically prohibited by law. Neighborhood Newsletter Editors/ Newsletter Committees should use common sense, responsible judgment, and good taste in determining the content of neighborhood newsletters and other communications.
2. Election material may include an impartial (equitable, fair, unbiased and dispassionate) simple, factual description of the issue. It must not advocate about (promote or oppose) a measure or candidate. The material must contain a balance of factual information. It cannot lead the reader to support or oppose a measure or candidate by selective use of factual material, even in this material does not expressly urging yes or no vote.
3. Neighborhood newsletters should include a complete list of the officers and/or members of the executive board with addresses and/or phone numbers. Other communications should include the name of at least one contact person in the neighborhood association. The name of the neighborhood association shall be included in all newsletters. Schedules of regular meetings of the neighborhood should be included in newsletters.
4. Neighborhood newsletters must include a summary of neighborhood actions and activities. The summary may appear in an article on the by-line of neighborhood association share or other neighborhood person.
5. It is the NA's discretion as to whether to include an opinion article. If opinion articles are to be included, we recommend to NA boards that they consider having a separate page or sections specified as "opinion". All opinion articles should include the author's name.
6. NA's should include a disclaimer in the newsletters that these opinions do not necessarily represent the opinion of the neighborhood association; the City should continue its disclaimer and enlarge the print size.
7. All materials submitted must include the author's name, including official titles to any elected or appointed governmental or political positions. The author's name may be published with the article as directed by the Newsletter Editor/Newsletter Committee.
8. Any individual who feels that he/she has been misquoted may submit material for the correction to appear in the following communication.
9. When any question arises as to whether or not material may be libelous, the material will be submitted to the City Attorney for an opinion, whose decision shall be final.
10. No advertising should be included in the City-funded newsletters in order to maximize room for articles. Public service announcements can be included.

11. No copyrighted material from other publications may be reprinted except with written permission of the appropriate party or except where it specifically states that the material may be reprinted without permission.

NEWSLETTER POLICY CHANGES

1. When changes in this policy document are needed, a newsletter task force will be formed to provide guide guidance and advice on newsletter policy. The task group will be composed of:
 - A. any representatives from different neighborhood associations, with at least three neighborhoods represented, Salem Neighborhoods, Inc.;
 - B. the Public Information Officer, as a representative of the City Manager's office;
 - C. the Community Services Administrator, the shall be responsible for calling the meetings;
and
 - D. the Newsletter Coordinator.