

Professional Development Policy Review

Presented to Schertz City Council
Workshop

Discussion Items

- Review of Councilmember Professional Development Training requests
- Analysis of City Charter, Council Rules, and Travel Policy.
- Focus: fairness, transparency, and codified governance process.

Governing Documents

- City of Schertz Charter – 2024 Edition
- City Council Rules of Conduct and Procedure – Ordinance 23-M-28
- City of Schertz Travel Policy

Document Takeaways

- Charter Section 4.08: Powers vested in Council
- Charter Section 4.09(d): Council sets its own rules.
- Council Rules: No unilateral authority to Mayor.
- Travel Policy: No mention of Councilmembers—creates ambiguity.

Core Talking Points

- Councilmembers trusted to manage city policy and budgets.
- Denying autonomy in training contradicts trust in Council members judgment
- Cities advocate for local control, certainly council members should have a say in their own professional development
- Lack of policy invites inconsistency and selective treatment.

Additional Talking Points

- No codified authority grants the Mayor approval power.
- Travel Policy only addresses staff, not elected officials.
- Denial implies governance training lacks municipal relevance.
- Leadership development improves public service and trust.

Comparison Matrix: TML vs. Harvard Kennedy School

Criteria	TML Annual Conference	Harvard Kennedy School
Target Audience	Local Elected Officials	Local Elected Officials
Program Goals	Municipal Governance Skills	Executive Public Leadership
Duration	3-4 Days	3 Weeks
Accreditation	State-level Support	Harvard Certification
Funding Decision	Approved	Denied

Anticipated Questions & Key Answers

- Does the Mayor have unilateral authority?

No—Council holds the authority per the Charter.

- Is denying training fiscally responsible?

Only with clear policies; not through subjective decisions.

Additional questions

- Is Harvard training relevant to Council duties?
Yes—It supports governance and leadership roles.
- How does it differ from the TML Conference?
It doesn't—Both serve elected officials; approval inconsistency shows policy gaps.
- Can Councilmembers place agenda items?
Yes—Council Rules allow this without Mayoral override but has to be requested during an open session meeting.

Questions

- Will this invite excessive requests?

Not with a clear policy including limits and criteria.

- Is the current Travel Policy only for employees?

Yes—Which underscores the need for a Council-specific policy.

Policy Recommendations

- Codify a policy for Councilmember professional development.
- Define eligibility and approval processes.
- Use Council vote or matrix based on training relevance.
- Review of current authority limits.

Recommendations for Agenda Discussion

- Request criteria for Council training in Council Rules or Travel Policy.
- Propose amendments allowing independent requests.
- Establish review mechanism: vote or relevance matrix.
- Seek City Attorney opinion