

Draft for Council Discussion Potential Attachment to Travel Policy

December 3, 2024

Guideposts for initial staff review of small-scale conference/meeting/travel opportunities in the context of open meetings, conflict of interest, and gift restriction factors:

	Yes*	No	Unknown
The function is likely to have fewer than 100 participants.			
The participation of Salt Lake City officials is a key component of the function.			
The topics relate directly circumstances, opportunities, or possible improvements in Salt Lake City, and may require action by the Salt Lake City Council to achieve.			
One or more of the sponsoring organizations, or the hosting organization, is likely to have business related to the topics of the conference before the City Council in the coming year.			
Conference participants are invited to attend a sponsored function with a value that may exceed the \$50 State Statute threshold (sports event, theatre performance, elaborate meal, etc.)			
Meals, functions, events or sessions at the conference are hosted by specific sponsors			
The sponsors will participate in panel discussions, tours, or as presenters at the conference, meeting or function.			
The public is not easily able to participate due to cost, distance, limited attendance, etc.			
A conference jacket, bag or other item that may exceed the \$50 State Statute threshold is provided to participants by one or more sponsors			
Other – TBD by City Council			

Process for staff, Chair and Vice Chair, or full City Council to evaluate potential concerns:

*Yes answers on the chart should be double checked by Council staff with the Executive Director to determine next steps:

1. Review by the Chair and Vice Chair. Council Chair and Vice Chair may elect to refer any travel item to the full Council for review at any step of this process. Council Members may request full review of the issue by the full City Council once the Chair and Vice Chair have gathered full information. The Council staff will be available to assist with steps as requested.
2. Determination by Chair and Vice Chair whether to request legal review of whether the conference format or substance suggests that precautions may be necessary to enable attending Council Members to assure compliance with State Statutes, Salt Lake City Ordinances and Salt Lake City Council policies.
3. The Chair and Vice Chair, in collaboration with the City Attorney, may elect to identify adjustments that could be suggested to conference organizers to address any potential issues related to the legal requirements. After an effort is made to suggest adjustments, the Chair and Vice Chair will report to the full Council.

Potential adjustments to address potential issues with open meetings, conflict of interest, and gift restriction factors:

The Chair and Vice Chair could consider suggesting that the hosting organization consider the following, or other measures identified as credible by Council Members:

- a. Include speakers, panelists and conference participants who have who have an advocacy interest that is not directly aligned with the messaging of the conference hosts and sponsors, so that a variety of views are represented and both pros and cons are identified.
- b. Assure that the sponsorship program is general in nature and is provided to support the hosting community organization, rather than tied to specific meals, functions or materials; assure that the sponsorship program is not tied to accessing the time of City Council or other Salt Lake City decision makers:
 - i. To avoid any appearance that businesses are providing 'gifts' to government-related attendees that could conflict with State Statute or City ordinance.
 - ii. To avoid any appearance that the sponsors are given exclusive access to elected officials that is not available to the public, those business or community members with opposing views, or members of the community who cannot afford the expense or take the time to attend.
 - iii. To avoid any perception by businesses, organizations and the public that a conference sponsorship provides an opportunity to influence

- a majority of the City Council Members informally to benefit private interests.
- c. Facilitate the production of audio or video recordings of the sessions and make them publicly available on a web site.
 - d. Announce the conference to the public and the news media and allow news media attendance if requested.
 - e. The conference host organization could collaborate with the City Legislative Branch well before the conference agenda is set to give Council Members the opportunity to:
 - i. Know whether topics scheduled for the conference and sponsors of the conference are likely to come before the Council with directly related budget, taxation, zoning or regulatory requests.
 - ii. Understand whether the conference sponsors will participate in panel discussions, speak at sessions, or have a direct interest in tours or functions made available to conference participants.
 - iii. Seek legal advice to identify any potential conflict of interest, open meeting, or gift restriction situations that could be perceived by the public.
 - iv. Suggest adjustments by the Council Members or the conference host to address any potential concerns.
 - v. Determine as a group whether it is most appropriate to send a small group of Council Members, or whether a majority could attend.