**City of Gregory - City Council Absentee Policy**

**Section 1. Policy.** The purpose of the policy established by this policy is to guide the members of the City Council of the City of Gregory in the duties as a council member. The City recognizes the commitment made by council members to volunteer their time and energy to provide leadership and guidance to the city. Their input allows the council to manage city business and work to improve the lives of EVERYONE within the City of Gregory.

**Section 2. Authority.** The City Council is authorized by Texas Local Government Code, section 22.038(c) and Texas Local Government Code, section 22.041(b) to adopt the absentee policy established in this document.

**Section 3. Attendance.** The council recognizes that there are instances where life events happen that cannot be foreseen. For this reason, the City Council has determined to allow absence(s) from council meetings under certain circumstances without being penalized. The following provisions are established to delineate the procedures for implementing this policy:

1. A council member who knows they will not be able to attend a meeting must notify the city secretary, mayor, or city manager of their absence at least 2 (two) hours prior to the meeting by phone or text and give notice of the reason they will be absent.
2. A council member who has missed a meeting must attend the following meeting unless there is a valid reason for the continued absence. For purposes of this policy a valid reason includes hospitalization or extended illness that makes that person physically unable to participate or providing care for a family member that is hospitalized or has an extended illness.
3. In the event of a work conflict or temporary orders to work in a remote location, a copy of the notice or orders must be submitted to the city secretary, mayor or city manager.
4. A leave of absence may be requested in the case of extended leave for medical or work reasons. A request for a leave of absence must be submitted to the mayor, city secretary or city manager along with documentation supporting the request for city council approval.
5. Requests for a leave of absence will be placed on the first available city council meeting following receipt of the request.
6. For documented emergencies or the city council is unable to meet timely to consider the request, a leave of absence may be granted retroactively to a period of not more than 30 days.
7. Attendance by videoconference (Zoom meeting) is permitted and will not count as an absence so long as the meeting agenda contains the required videoconference attendance language.

**Section 4. Penalty.** The following provisions are established to as penalties for non-compliance:

1. A city council member may be fined three dollars ($3.00) for each unexcused absence from a city council meeting.
2. The city council member’s office will be declared vacant if a member of the governing body is absent for three regular consecutive meetings unless the council member has complied with the provisions of this policy.

**Section 5. Declaration of Vacancy.** The following provisions set for the procedure for declaration of a vacancy due to non-compliance with this policy:

1. An agenda item for city council consideration must be posted on a meeting notice that complies with the Texas Open Meetings Act in order to declare a council member’s office vacant.
2. In the event, the declared vacancy creates a second vacant position on city council, the city council will take action to call for a special called election in accordance with the Local Government Code and state election law requirements.