TOWN OF MANSFIELD
POLICY MEMORANDUM

To: All Citizens& Town Employees
From: Mansfield Town Council and Matthew Hart, Town Manager
Date: November 22, 2010
Subject: Accountability and Transparency Policy

I. PURPOSE

Accountability, transparency and openness are standards of good government that enhance public trust. In order to maintain the public trust, the Town of Mansfield ("Town") has adopted measures that ensure, to the best of its ability, that all activities and services undertaken use a process that is open and accessible to the public. In accordance with law, the Town will engage the public throughout its decision making process, in the spirit of open, visible and transparent government. The Town's official website, www.mansfieldct.gov, will be used to promote these goals, communicate with the public, and provide services.

II. DEFINITIONS

A) Accountability: The principle that the Town is responsible to residents, business owners, and all stakeholders in the community for decisions made and policies implemented.

B) Transparency: The principle means that the Town's decision making process by elected officials and Town employees is, to the extent permitted by law, open and clear to the public.

C) Constituents: Residents, business owners, and stakeholders who comprise the community of the Town of Mansfield.

D) Public Access: Encouraging and facilitating public access to information about the Town's services and programs and encouraging public participation to ensure that decision-making is responsive to the needs, and receptive to the opinions, of the constituents.

E) Service Delivery: Delivering high quality services to constituents and actively seeking input for enhancing service delivery and achieving best practices.

F) Efficiency: Promoting the efficient and effective use of public resources.

III. SCOPE

The principles of accountability and transparency shall apply to the Town's decision making as well as to the decisions of administrative management. In keeping with the Town's commitment to the principles of transparency and accountability, the following measures, initiatives and activities will be adopted:

A) FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Town will be accountable and transparent in its financial dealings. Practices and procedures supporting

this principle include the following and will be available to the public:

i) External audits: The Town accounts are audited on an annual (fiscal year) basis by an external auditor appointed by the Town Council.

ii) Budget Process: The Town budget process complies with applicable state law, the Town Charter, and the Town's budget and financial policies.

iii) Financial Reports: Quarterly financial reports provide reporting on budget variances.

iv) Annual Budget: The annual budget (Manager's proposed, Council adopted, Citizen adopted).

v) Purchasing Policy: The Town's procurement practices shall comply with the Town's Purchasing Policies. Purchasing policies and procedures establish a process for the purchase of goods and services in order to ensure competitive procurement. Requests for qualifications, requests for proposals, and bid awards shall be available to the public as specified in the purchasing policies and in accordance with freedom of information laws.

B) ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES

The Town establishes accountability on the part of its elected officials and employees through the following initiatives:

i) Conflicts of Interest. Elected and appointed officials and employees are subject to the Town's Ethics Ordinance. The Ethics Code is available to the public and posted on the Town's website.

ii). The Town's administrative practices work to ensure accountability on the part of its employees through the following initiatives:

a) Codes of Professional Responsibility and Town Policies: Employees of the Town are subject to state regulations and Town policies governing their professional conduct.

b) Hiring Policies: The Town does not make employment decisions (including decisions related to hiring, assignment, compensation, promotion, demotion, disciplinary action and termination) on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, disability or genetic information, except in the case of a bona fide occupational qualification. Positions are posted in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements.

c) Employee Evaluations: The Town Council evaluates the Town Manager's performance annually. Annual evaluations for other employees will be conducted by the appropriate authority to promote effectiveness and best practices in delivery of services.

d) Human Resources: The Town has approved policies governing employment for its staff, as well as collective bargaining agreements. The collective bargaining agreements are posted on the Town's website.

e) Public Participation: The Town complies with the Freedom of Information Act with respect to posting meeting notices and agendas and permits members of the public to address the Council in accordance with its Rules of Procedures.