

3.

ACCOUNTING

3.8 Expenditures

3.8.13 Memberships in Civic and Service Organizations

3.8.13.10 There has been a dramatic shift in business, social, and governmental cultures which has impacted the way the legal community views implied powers of municipal corporations. Included in this contemporary analysis is recognition that membership in a local civic or service organization may; indeed, benefit a municipal corporation.

3.8.13.20 The AGO and SAO has concluded that the intent of membership payments by a municipal corporation should be considered. However, payments of memberships to fraternal organizations, or community/social organizations such as golf and country clubs, should continue to be questioned. While municipal corporations have no obligation to pay for employee and officer memberships, should they choose to do so, a formal policy should be adopted to include:

1. The legislative body's intent that officers and employees be active participants in service and civic organizations.
2. Those services and civic organizations to which membership fees will be paid on behalf of officers and employees.
3. The limit on the number of individuals for whom membership payment will be made to any on organization, and a delineation of criteria for multiple memberships.
4. The benefit, which the municipal corporation will derive from the membership in an organization and the authorized activity to which such benefit, is related.
5. Those municipal corporation positions for which membership fees will be paid.
6. Ancillary costs of membership which the municipal corporation will or will not pay, or provide reimbursement (i.e. meal costs incurred during meeting, costs incurred traveling to and from meetings, costs incurred as a result of the employees membership such as, time required to attend meetings or for committee participation and time required to perform duties of appointed/volunteer/elected positions) or time and expenses incurred as a result of attendance at related meetings such as regional, state, or national conventions.
7. Approval authority for payment of expenses incurred as a result of membership in civic or service organizations, or for deviation from established policy.
8. Limitations on the dollar amount that will be paid to a single organization or on behalf of an individual.
9. A prohibition of employee or officers, whose civic or service organization dues are paid in whole or in part by the municipal corporation:
 - a. Exerting influence on other employees or officers to provide financial contributions or other support to the civic or service organization.
 - b. Using the civic or service organizations as a forum for lobbying in support of or opposition to political or legislative actions, or the promotion of endeavors in which the officer or employee may have a direct or indirect financial interest or may acquire a personal benefit or gain.