

RESOLUTION NO. 2021- 2777

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF SURFSIDE, FLORIDA, ADOPTING A CIVILITY PLEDGE FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS ENGAGED IN PUBLIC DISCOURSE; PROVIDING FOR IMPLEMENTATION; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, in Florida, county and municipal governments feature elected legislative and representative bodies known as commissions and councils, that meet regularly in public in accordance with state public meeting laws to conduct business, govern collectively and administer as necessary; and

WHEREAS, public meetings have on occasion included unnecessary and improper displays of temper and other actions causing dismay to the elected officials, town staff and residents in attendance and those observing via electronic means and have led to many solicitations for codes of conduct to be enacted to ensure an improved and efficient public meeting process for all involved; and

WHEREAS, elected officials, citizens and residents now routinely communicate and engage in public dialogue via electronic communications such as social media posts and public discourse has upon occasion included unnecessary and improper displays of temper and other actions causing dismay to the elected officials, citizens and residents; and

WHEREAS, one means for this improvement is a civility pledge, wherein the Mayor and the Town Commission of the Town of Surfside (“Town”) adopt the pledge toward one another, toward the public, and toward staff with an understanding that the public and staff will further abide by the same pledge and in doing so ensure a civil discourse at public meetings or when communicating utilizing Town resources or communication means; and

WHEREAS, the Town wishes to adopt a civility pledge so that public discourse and communication focuses on the governmental issues and not personal issues, and to ensure that the elected officials treat one another with respect and courtesy and extend the same behavior and attitude toward citizens, residents and observers of such public discourse; and

WHEREAS, the result of this pledge and its enactment will be the promotion of thoughtful debate and discussion of legislative issues facing the Town and that in setting this public example there will be more deliberative, thoughtful and issue-based consideration of the matters before the Town Commission, and that better policies will result along with a more informed electorate; and

WHEREAS, the Town Commission is committed to the practice of civility in government and wishes to adopt a pledge of civility to be adhered to by all elected officials of the Town.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND TOWN COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF SURFSIDE, FLORIDA, AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Recitals Adopted. The above recitals are true and correct and incorporated into the Resolution by this reference.

Section 2. Adoption of Civility Pledge. The Mayor and Town Commission hereby adopt the following civility pledge:

“To my colleagues and to all those whom I represent and serve, I pledge to conduct all public discourse at public meetings and when communicating utilizing Town resources or communications, with fairness, integrity, and civility in all actions taken and all public discourse made by me as a public servant. Furthermore, I pledge to promote and act with courtesy and respect towards all members of the Commission, Town staff, and the public, and ask the public to do the same toward the Commission, each other, and toward Town staff. I will be respectful of my colleagues, even when we disagree. I will direct all comments toward the issues and will avoid personal attacks towards my colleagues and the public.”

This civility pledge will be communicated to all those in attendance at public meetings including the elected officials, staff and audience, both physically in attendance and virtually.

Section 3. Implementation. The Mayor and Town Commission have adopted a civility pledge and do hereby commit to its full enforcement for all public discourse.

Section 4. Effective Date. This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

PASSED AND ADOPTED on this 13th day of April, 2021.

Motion By: Vice Mayor Paul

Second By: Commissioner Kesl

FINAL VOTE ON ADOPTION:


Commissioner Charles Kesl Yes

Commissioner Eliana R. Salzhauer Absent

Commissioner Nelly Velasquez Yes

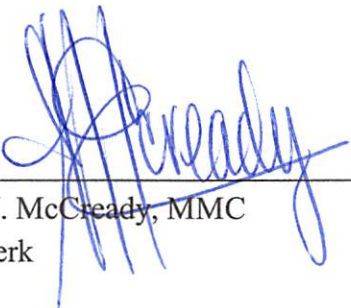
Vice Mayor Tina Paul Yes

Mayor Charles W. Burkett Yes




Charles W. Burkett, Mayor

Attest:



Sandra N. McCready, MMC
Town Clerk

Approved as to Form and Legal Sufficiency:



Weiss Serota Hellman Cole & Bierman, P.L.
Town Attorney