

RESOLUTION 2009-12

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF ST. PETE BEACH, FLORIDA CREATING A POLICY THAT GOVERNS ACTIONS AND DELIBERATIONS DURING CITY COMMISSION MEETINGS IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN DECORUM; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, it is necessary that the City approve a policy of decorum that governs actions and conduct at Commission meetings to maintain order and ensure public deliberations and actions are conducted in an atmosphere free of hostility; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF ST. PETE BEACH, FLORIDA, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. BALANCE OF RIGHTS AND DECORUM. The City is afforded the means to ensure that individual's right to participate in a public meeting is balanced with maintaining decorum during that meeting. The right of the individual to express his or her thoughts will generally prevail over restrictions on public participation.

SECTION 2. ADDRESSING THE COMMISSION

1. Any person desiring to address the Commission shall first secure the permission of the presiding officer to do so.

2. The remarks of each speaker are limited to three (3) minutes. The presiding officer shall be responsible for tolling the time and advising the speaker when

their time has run out. When the speaker's time is finished he or she shall leave the lectern.

3. When the person is recognized by the presiding officer, each person addressing the Commission shall step up to the microphone and shall give his or her name and address in an audible tone of voice for the records. During all quasi-judicial and public hearings on comprehensive plan amendments each speaker is also required to record this information with the City Clerk.

4. If requested by the presiding officer, the person may be required to state whether the person speaks for a group of persons or a third party, if the person represents an organization, whether the view expressed by the person represents an established policy or position approved by the organization and whether the person is being compensated by the organization.

5. All remarks shall be addressed to the Commission as a body and not to any member thereof.

6. No person, other than a member of the Commission, and the person having the floor, may be permitted to enter into an discussion, either directly or through a member of the Commission, without the permission of the presiding officer. No question may be asked except through the presiding officer.

7. Speakers should make their comments concise and to the point, and present any data they wish the Commission to consider.

8. During Audience Comments the discussion cannot include issues on the agenda or previously acted on by the Commission at the same meeting. If the matter was not listed on the meeting agenda, the members of the Commission must limit their participation to listening to the speaker and asking questions of the speaker and/or appropriate City staff for clarification only. Under no such circumstances may the Commission discuss or take any action on matters presented under such circumstances.

SECTION 3. SIGNS, PLACARDS, BANNERS. For public safety purposes, no signs or placards mounted on sticks, posts or similar structures shall be allowed in the City Commission meeting rooms. Other signs, placards, banners, shall not disrupt meetings or interfere with others' visual rights.

SECTION 4. DECORUM. While the Commission is in session, the members must preserve order and decorum and a member will neither, by conversation nor otherwise delay or interrupt the proceedings or the peace of Commission or disturb any member while speaking or refuse to obey the orders of the Commission or the presiding officer, except as otherwise permitted herein.

1. All those in attendance must be respectful of others' opinions and refrain from making personal attacks. Any person who becomes disorderly or who fails to confine remarks to the identified subject or business at hand shall be cautioned by the presiding officer and given the opportunity to conclude remarks on the subject in a

decorous manner and within the designated time limit. Any person failing to comply as cautioned may be barred from making any additional comments during the meeting by the presiding officer, unless permission to continue or again address the Commission is granted by the majority of the Commission members present.

2. If the presiding officer or a majority of the Commission members present declares an individual out of order, he or she may be requested to relinquish the podium. If the person does not do so, he or she may be subject to removal from the Commission Chamber.

3. Any person removed from the Commission Chamber is barred from speaking at future meetings unless permission to address the Commission is granted by the majority vote of the Commission members present.

4. Clapping, applauding, heckling or verbal outbursts in support or opposition to a speaker or his or her remarks shall be discouraged. Persons exiting the Commission Chamber shall do so quietly.

5. The City Commission reserves the right to designate the placement of video, still or phone cameras within the commission chamber to minimize disruptions at the public meeting. The use of cell phones in the Commission Chamber is not permitted. Ringers must be set to silent mode to avoid disruption of proceedings. Individuals, including those on the dais, must exit the Commission Chamber to answer incoming cell phone calls.

SECTION 5. ENFORCEMENT OF DECORUM. The Mayor, or anyone acting in his or her stead, shall preserve order and decorum, prevent clashes of personalities or the impugning of members or motives, confine members in debate to the question under discussion and shall decide all points of order to an appeal to the Commission. The Chief of Police, or such member or members of the St. Pete Beach Police Department as the Chief of Police so designates, shall be the Sergeant-at-Arms of the Commission meetings. He, or they, will carry out all orders and instructions given by the presiding officer for the purpose of maintaining order and decorum of the Commission meetings.

PASSED AND DULY ADOPTED, with a quorum present and voting, this 14th day of July, 2009.

CITY OF ST PETE BEACH, FLORIDA, BY AND THROUGH THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF ST PETE BEACH.

By: Michael Finnerty
Michael Finnerty, Mayor

ATTEST:

By: Teri McMaster
Teri McMaster, City Clerk