

ORDINANCE 04-2024

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF LAKE PARK, FLORIDA, AMENDING ARTICLE II, TOWN COMMISSION”, DIVISION 2 “MEETINGS” TO PROVIDE FOR CREATION OF A NEW CODE SECTION 2-54 ENTITLED “CIVILITY AND DECORUM”; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR THE REPEAL OF LAWS IN CONFLICT; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION, AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the Town of Lake Park, Florida (“Town”) is a duly constituted municipality having such power and authority conferred upon it by the Florida Constitution and Chapter 166, Florida Statutes.

WHEREAS, the Town Commission has previously adopted general provisions regarding Town Commission meetings in Article II, Division 2, entitled “Meetings”; and

WHEREAS, during the past year board members, staff and the commission have been subjected to inappropriate and untrue remarks regarding their character in public meetings; and

WHEREAS, the Town Commission believes that it will be in the best interest of the public and its employees to adopt rules of decorum governing public conduct during any public meeting or workshop.

WHEREAS, the purpose of the ordinance is not to deny the public their First Amendment Rights at local public meetings. The information and restrictions deal primarily with the conduct of Commission Members, Staff and Residents. The Town Commission intends to enact viewpoint-neutral restrictions on speech. The compelling reason for the ordinance is to effectively, efficiently and productively conduct the business of the Town of Lake Park

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE TOWN COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF LAKE PARK, FLORIDA.

Section 1. The whereas clauses are incorporated herein as the legislative findings of the Town Commission.

Section 2. Article II, Division 2, Section 2-54 is hereby amended to read as follows:

Sec. 2-54. Civility and decorum.

The Town of Lake Park is committed to civility and decorum to be applied and observed by its elected officials, advisory board members employees, and members of the public who attend town meetings. The following rules are hereby established to govern the decorum to be observed by all persons attending public meetings of the commission and its advisory boards:

- (1) Those persons addressing the commission or its advisory boards who wish to speak shall first be recognized by the presiding officer. No person shall interrupt a speaker once ~~he or she~~ **the speaker** has been recognized by the presiding officer. Those person addressing the commission or its advisory boards shall be respectful and shall obey all directions from the presiding officer.
- (2) Public comment shall be addressed to the commission or its advisory board and not to the audience or to any individual member on the dais.
- (3) **Displays of disorderly conduct or** ~~Displays of anger, rudeness, ridicule, impatience, lack of respect or~~ personal derogatory or slanderous attacks of anyone in the assembly is ~~are~~ **prohibited discouraged**. Any individual who does so may be removed from the meeting.
- (4) Unauthorized remarks from the audience, stomping of feet, clapping, whistles, yells or any other type of demonstrations are **prohibited discouraged**.
- (5) A member of the public who engages in debate with an individual member of the commission or an advisory board is **prohibited discouraged**. Those individuals who do so may be removed from the meeting.
- (6) All cell phones and/or other electronic devices shall be turned off or silenced prior to the start of the public meeting. An individual who fails to do so may be removed from the meeting.

Section 3. Severability. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase or portion of this Ordinance is for any reason held invalid or unconstitutional by any Court of competent jurisdiction, such portion shall be deemed a separate, distinct and independent provision and such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions thereof.

Section 4. Repeal of Laws in Conflict. All Ordinances or parts of Ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

Section 5. Codification. The sections of the Ordinance may be made a part of the Town Code of Laws and Ordinances and may be renumbered or relettered to accomplish such, and the word “ordinance” may be changed to “section,” “article,” or any other appropriate word.

Section 6. **Effective Date.** This Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon execution.