



VILLAGE OF BISCAYNE PARK
Village Commission Agenda Report

#Item 7.b

REGULAR MEETING

TO: Honorable Mayor & Members of the
Biscayne Park Village Commission

FROM: Commissioner Roxanna Ross

DATE: December 6, 2016

TITLE: Resolution 2016-42

Request

AFFIRMING COMMITMENT TO CULTURAL DIVERSITY, HOSPITALITY AND CIVILITY

Background

President Obama stated in his recent Thanksgiving message: “Never doubt, that is what makes us American — not where we come from, what we look like, or what faith we practice, but the ideals to which we pledge our allegiance. It’s about our capacity to live up to the creed as old as our founding: “E Pluribus Unum” – that out of many, we are one.”

Following this example, today it seems appropriate to emphasize our commitment to celebrating cultural diversity, hospitality and civility in our Village generally and in the manner in which we conduct the business of the Village.

This Commission is the body of elected government representatives closest to the people. We are elected to serve and vested with all legislative powers of the Village. In the exercise of those powers Commissioners bring varying perspectives and will, no doubt, disagree. How we make our views known impacts upon our community. We are in a unique position to lead by example, instill confidence and create a positive environment, which reflects appreciation of diversity and respect of the purity of each other’s motives as we discuss the orders of the day during Commission Meetings and in the manner in which we conduct ourselves in matters concerning the Village.

I present the attached draft resolution and encourage everyone to consider and contribute to this draft in order to reach approval of a final resolution that represents the greatest ideals and goals of the Commission and this community going forward.

Resource Impact

There will be minimal expenses related to the reading, posting and docketing of this Resolution. The positive impact is difficult to quantify, but believed to be significant in setting a tone and environment of positive collaboration.

Attachment

Exhibit 1 – Resolution 2016-42

Prepared by: Commissioner Roxanna Ross

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4 **RESOLUTION NO. 2016-42**
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6 **RESOLUTION OF THE VILLAGE**
7 **COMMISSION OF THE VILLAGE OF**
8 **BISCAYNE PARK AFFIRMING OUR**
9 **COMMITMENT TO CULTURAL DIVERSITY,**
10 **HOSPITALITY AND CIVILITY; PROVIDING**
11 **FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE**
12

13 WHEREAS, our Village officials are the elected leaders closest to the people; and
14

15 WHEREAS, our elected Village officials are thus in a unique position to have a positive
16 impact on behavior, both individually and collectively and to lead by example;
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18 WHEREAS, we find that the threat of discrimination or harassment against any person or
19 group of people intolerable, and we seek to preserve and protect the rights of all individuals
20 regardless of origin or identity;
21

22 WHEREAS, social media displays of anger, rudeness, ridicule, impatience, lack of
23 respect and personal attacks are below human dignity, detract from the open exchange of ideas,
24 and prevent fair discussion of the issues;
25

26 WHEREAS, we find negative public and political rhetoric exceeding results in
27 confrontational atmosphere which often prevents the development of solid solutions to the
28 problems facing our community;
29

30 WHEREAS, the Village embraces, and stands proud of the broad cultural, ethnic, gender,
31 orientation, racial, religious, social diversity represented by our many Village residents,
32 contributors and visitors to our community;
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34 WHEREAS, the Village believes in the essential worth and dignity of every human
35 being, promotes fair and equitable treatment of all residents, and encourages kindness,
36 compassion, understanding and cooperation among all people;
37

38 WHEREAS, civility is a cornerstones of community building and can assist in reaching
39 consensus on diverse issues and allow for mutually respectfully ongoing relationships;
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41 WHEREAS, we therefore hereby commit ourselves to preserving a hate-free zone, where
42 all people are welcome and celebrated without regard to ancestry, national origin, color, race,
43 religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, age, medical condition or disability, or
44 economic status;
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46 WHEREAS, we further commit ourselves to maintaining civility in our public and
47 political discourse and we hereby pledge our commitment to the following principals:
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- 49
- We will respect the right of all citizens in our community to hold different opinions;

- We will avoid rhetoric intended to humiliate, illegitimate or question the wisdom of those whose opinions are different from ours;
- We will strive to understand differing perspectives;
- We will choose our words carefully;
- We will speak truthfully without accusation and we will avoid distortion; and
- We will speak out against violence, prejudice and incivility in all of their forms, whenever and wherever they occur; and

WHEREAS, we pledge to exhibit and encourage the kinds of personal qualities that are emblematic of our community in general: openness, passion for service to others, propriety yet grateful, humility, kindness, caring, faith, sense of duty, and a commitment to doing what is right for everyone.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE VILLAGE COMMISSION OF THE VILLAGE OF BISCAYNE PARK, FLORIDA:

Section 1: That the foregoing findings, conclusions and statements of fact contained in the preamble are hereby adopted, ratified and incorporated herein.

Section 2: That this resolution shall take effect and be in force from and after adoption.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this ____ day of _____, 2016.

The foregoing resolution upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

Mayor

Attest:

Maria C. Camara, Village Clerk

Approved as to form:

John J. Hearn, Village Attorney

Commissioner Coviello: ____
Commissioner Johnson-Sardella: ____
Commissioner Ross: ____
Commissioner Truppman: ____
Commissioner Tudor: ____