

# **TOWN COUNCIL DECORUM & ORDER POLICY**

## **TOWN OF GRAY**

*April 2, 2019*

Whereas, the conduct of public officials can be perceived as effectively representative of the norms and values of the community, and

Whereas, the Town Council wishes to express and demonstrate its commitment to demonstrating a high standard of Norms and Values, and

Whereas, it is the will of the Gray Town Council to memorialize acceptable and expected behavior by elected officials and those participating in town governance, and in conducting town business,

Therefore, the following “Decorum & Order Policy Addendum, shall be enacted:

- A. During the Town Council meetings, Councilors shall preserve Order and decorum and shall neither by conversation or otherwise delay or interrupt the proceedings nor refuse to obey the order of the Chair or the rules of the Town Council.
- B. All Town Councilors shall conduct themselves such as to serve as role models of leadership and civility to the community, as well by acting in such ways as to inspire public confidence in the municipal government they represent.
- C. Town Councilors desiring to speak shall address the Chair, and upon recognition by the Chair, shall confine themselves to the question under debate and shall avoid all personalities and indecorous language.
- D. A Councilor, once recognized, shall not be interrupted while speaking unless called to order by the Chair, unless a point of order is raised by another member or unless the speaker chooses to yield to questions from another member.
- E. If a Councilor is called to order while speaking, the Town Councilor shall cease speaking immediately until the question of order is determined.
  - a. If ruled to be in order, the Town Councilor shall be permitted to proceed.
  - b. If ruled to be not in order, the Town Councilor shall remain silent or shall alter the remarks so as to comply with policy of this Town Council.
- F. Every Councilor shall have the opportunity to speak to an issue once, prior to any one Councilor being allowed to contribute a second time.
- G. All members of the Town Council shall accord the utmost courtesy to each other, to Town employees, and to public members appearing before the Town Council and shall refrain at all times from rude and derogatory remarks, reflections as to integrity, abusive comments, and statements as to motives and personalities.
- H. Town Councilors shall confine their questions as to the particular matters before the assembly and in debate shall confine their remarks to the issues before the Town Council.
- I. Councilors should refrain from restating already stated positions and strive to discuss rather than debate issues.
- J. Members shall be asked to leave the meeting for failure to comply with decisions of the Chair or for continued violations of the rules of the Town Council.

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- K. If the Chair fails to act, any member may move to require the Chair to enforce the rules and the affirmative vote of a majority of the Town Council shall require the Chair to act.
- L. Members of the administrative staff and employees of the Town shall observe the same rules of procedure and decorum applicable to members of the Town Council while within Council Chambers.
  - a. While the Chair shall have the authority to preserve decorum in meetings as far as staff members and Town employees are concerned, the Town Manager shall also be responsible for the orderly conduct and decorum of all Town employees under the Town Manager's direction and control.
  - b. The Town Manager shall take such disciplinary action as may be necessary to ensure that such decorum is preserved at all times by Town employees in Town Council meetings.
- M. Staff members or the Town Manager desiring to address the Town Council or members of the public shall be recognized by the Chair, shall state their name for the record, and shall limit their remarks to the matter under discussion. No staff member, other than the staff member having the floor, shall enter into any discussion either directly or indirectly without permission of the Chair.
- N. All remarks and questions addressed to the Town Council shall be addressed to the Town Council as a whole and not to any individual member thereof.
- O. Public members attending Town Council meetings also shall observe the same rules of propriety, decorum and good conduct applicable to members of the Town Council.

Failure to comply with any of the above may result in the violators being asked to leave the Council Chambers, as well as, the loss of the privilege of re-entry until such time as a majority of the Town Council receives and believes reasonable assurances that proper decorum and order will be displayed by the violator.