



Legislation Text

File #: 21-0072, **Version:** 1

TO:

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

FROM:

Bruce's Beach Task Force Co-Chairs

SUBJECT:

Bruce's Beach Task Force.

DISCUSS AND CONSIDER TAKING APPROPRIATE ACTION TO ADDRESS DECORUM AND CIVILITY AT ALL MEETINGS

RECOMMENDATION:

Discuss and consider taking appropriate measures to address decorum and civility.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no fiscal implications associated with the recommended action.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:

The City Council created and appointed 13 members and two alternates to the Bruce's Beach Task Force in October 2020, with Councilmembers Napolitano and Stern serving as co-chairs.

The co-chairs initially created three subcommittees (history, community forum, resolution of apology); a fourth subcommittee--the final report subcommittee--was formed later. The subcommittees, as well as the full task force, have had meetings to discuss these topics. These subcommittees have been meeting on these topics and reporting back to the full task force at each task force meeting since November 2020. The full task force will be making recommendations to the City Council in the upcoming weeks.

The City Council adopted the attached Rules of Decorum and Civility Policy at its meeting on August 6, 2019. The Civility Policy promotes mutual respect, civility, and orderly conduct among City employees, commissioners, elected officials, and the public. The City adopted this policy in order to maintain a safe, productive, and harassment-free work environment for all of its employees, appointed officials, and elected officials, free from disruptions.

The Rules of Decorum were adopted to ensure that all public meetings are conducted democratically and effectively, and so that all people in attendance have a full, fair, and equal opportunity to be heard. According to this policy, all persons attending public meetings in Manhattan Beach, including appointed and elected officials, should strive to:

- Treat everyone courteously;
- Listen to others respectfully;
- Exercise self-control;
- Give open-minded consideration to all viewpoints;

- Focus on the issues and avoid personalizing debate; and
- Embrace respectful disagreement and dissent as democratic rights that are inherent components of an inclusive public process and tools for forging sound decisions.

The Rules of Decorum specifically prohibit persons from engaging in disorderly conduct, “including... threatening, profane, abusive, personal, impertinent, or slanderous utterance-that disturbs, disrupts, or otherwise impedes the orderly conduct of the meeting.” These policies were reviewed at the task force meeting held on October 27, 2020. As part of the task force, each member is held to a high standard of conduct that is consistent with both the Rules of Decorum and the Civility Policy.

It has come to the attention of the co-chairs that one or more task force members have not treated other members courteously, have personalized debate, and have not listened to others respectfully. The co-chairs respectfully request that the Council discuss and take appropriate measures to address decorum and civility. The Manhattan Beach Municipal Code § 2.44.010 states, “All actions of the Commissions, Boards and Committees established by the City Council shall be subject to the review, modification and approval of the City Council.” The Council has a wide range of actions it may take to maintain decorum and civility, including: providing an oral warning, counseling, removing members from subcommittees, suspension, replacing members with alternates, or removal. In addition, the co-chairs request that the Council confirm that the co-chairs have the authority to take these measures, whenever immediate action is necessary.

ATTACHMENT:

1. List of Bruce’s Beach Task Force Members
2. Civility Policy
3. Rules of Decorum