

**RESOLUTION NO. 4990**

**PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 12-028**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF LAKELAND, FLORIDA;  
AMENDING RESOLUTION 4827; AMENDING RULES OF  
CONDUCT AND DECORUM FOR PUBLIC MEETINGS;  
ESTABLISHING TIME LIMITS FOR SPEAKERS; MAKING  
FINDINGS; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

**WHEREAS**, the City Commission of the City of Lakeland, Florida, as the duly elected governing body for the City of Lakeland, holds regularly scheduled public meetings to discuss, review and act upon items of concern which affect the residents of the City; and

**WHEREAS**, the Mayor and City Commission desire to establish its policy in support of open and participatory government while conducting business in an efficient and orderly manner; and

**WHEREAS**, in furtherance of those objectives, the City Commission of the City of Lakeland desires to express its policy and establish rules of conduct and decorum that will determine how City Commission meetings are conducted; and

**WHEREAS**, in order to accomplish the above objectives, the City Commission of the City of Lakeland adopted Resolution 4827 on May 3, 2010; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Commission now wishes to revise the time limits for speakers referenced in Resolution 4827.


**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF LAKELAND, FLORIDA:**

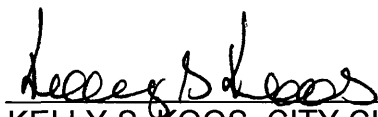
**SECTION 1.** The foregoing findings are incorporated herein by reference and made a part hereof.

**SECTION 2.** The revised rules of conduct and decorum for City of Lakeland public meetings, attached hereto as Exhibit "A", are hereby adopted.

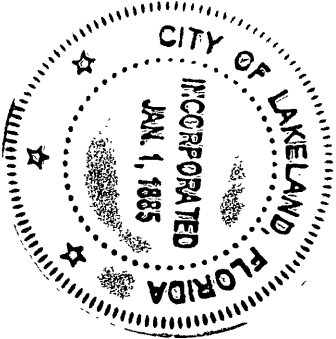
**SECTION 3.** This resolution shall take effect immediately upon its passage.

**PASSED AND CERTIFIED AS TO PASSAGE** this 4th day of June, A.D. 2012.

  
GOW B. FIELDS, MAYOR

ATTEST:   
KELLY S. KOOS, CITY CLERK

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND CORRECTNESS:   
TIMOTHY J. McCAUSLAND  
CITY ATTORNEY



**EXHIBIT "A"****POLICY STATEMENT**

The City Commission of the City of Lakeland is committed to inclusive and participatory decision making and invites citizens to provide input in all phases of the decision making process. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines to encourage public comment and participation while respecting the City Commission's obligation for the orderly conduct of government business. This policy shall provide rules of conduct and decorum for members of the public who may appear to offer public comment so that all those wishing to provide input to the City Commission in their deliberations have an opportunity to do so consistent with the Commission's obligation for orderly and efficient governmental decision making.

**REQUEST TO APPEAR FROM THE GENERAL PUBLIC**

At the direction of the City Commission, the City Manager and City Attorney prepare an agenda for all items that are necessarily required to be acted upon by the City Commission. That agenda shall contain a section entitled "Request to Appear from the General Public" to allow those matters of general City-wide interest a forum for information and comment from the City Commission. Those wishing to appear under this portion of the agenda shall advise the City Manager, in writing, no later than noon on the Monday prior to a City Commission meeting. Requests to Appear involving matters seeking deviations from administrative actions or inactions shall require the exhaustion of all available administrative reviews and/or remedies prior to being placed on the City Commission Agenda pursuant to this policy. The request shall state the name of those persons wishing to appear and the subject matter intended to be presented and discussed. In order to allow a sufficient opportunity for staff response, a synopsis of the speaker's intended remarks shall be provided. The subject matter of the request should be of general City-wide interest and the City Manager may deny a request that is not in accordance with these guidelines. Individual issues, comments, or concerns will be heard under the "Audience Participation" portion of the agenda. All speakers shall be subject to the guidelines for decorum and conduct contained herein.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

Any matters of individual concern to a citizen or group of citizens shall be heard under the audience participation portion of the agenda. The City Commission desires to balance the interests of individuals wishing to address them, and others in attendance at meetings who may be interested in the numerous public hearings, or other items under consideration at a typical meeting. As a result, the audience participation shall be at the conclusion of the meeting but shall be afforded the amount of time necessary for all citizens wishing to speak to be

heard. All speakers shall be subject to the guidelines for decorum and conduct contained herein.

### **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Public hearings are typically required by law where members of the public interested in a particular item are invited to provide comment prior to a decision by the City Commission. Those hearings will be conducted as informally as the interests of due process of the parties will allow. Those hearings will often include a presentation and testimony by the City staff or testimony from a petitioner. Questions from the City Commission may be directed to either the staff or the parties prior to inviting comments from other interested persons. The purpose of public hearings is to assist the City Commission in reaching a decision.

In all public comment by persons wishing to speak at a public hearing, remarks should be directed to the Mayor, and not to City staff or individual Commissioners. The Mayor will conduct the hearing in a manner as to provide ample opportunity for public comment consistent with maintaining civility and the dignity of the hearing. Multiple speakers appearing on a single subject are encouraged to appoint a single representative spokesperson to deliver a unified message on behalf of the group. Spokespersons will be given additional time consideration. The Mayor may ask questions on behalf of individual Commissioners or permit them to ask questions directly. A record of the hearing is required and those offering comment should be conscious of their obligation to assist in preserving an accurate record. All speakers shall be subject to the guidelines for decorum and conduct contained herein.

### **RULES OF DECORUM AND CONDUCT**

Each person who is recognized to speak shall address the City Commission by approaching the podium and providing his or her name in an audible tone for purposes of the record. If a number of persons wish to speak on the same subject, they are encouraged to appoint a spokesperson who can express the sentiment of the group provided, however, any individual that desires to speak will be afforded an opportunity to do so. Speakers will be allowed five minutes to deliver their comments but may be allotted additional time at the discretion of the mayor or at the request of any city commissioner. When addressing the Commission, please observe the time limit of five minutes and address the City Commission from the podium microphone. In order to assist the speaker, there is a light system on the podium that will indicate green when the speaker's time begins. The light will indicate yellow advising the speaker has thirty seconds remaining during which the speaker should conclude their remarks. At the conclusion of their time, the speaker should yield the podium. Any person who has been advised that his or her allotted time has elapsed shall conclude their remarks and yield the podium.

All remarks should be addressed to the City Commission as a body and not to any member nor to any members of the audience. No person shall be permitted to enter into a debate without permission of the presiding officer, nor will displays of anger or attempts to incite others or disrupt the orderly conduct of the meeting be tolerated. Any person who becomes overly animated, boisterous, or disrespectful of the City Commission or its individual members or staff will be asked to refrain from such conduct. Speakers whose allotted time has ended shall yield the podium. Any speaker who, after being advised to yield the podium, may be removed from the Commission Chambers. Speakers shall likewise refrain from profanity, rude or belligerent remarks and personal attacks directed toward individual members of the Commission, members of the audience, or City staff.