

**A RESOLUTION
PLEDGING TO PRACTICE AND PROMOTE CIVILITY IN ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY**

WHEREAS, the Athens-Clarke County Commission is a governing body that recognizes that robust debate and the right to self-expression, as protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, are fundamental rights and essential components of democratic self-governance; and

WHEREAS, the Athens-Clarke County Commission further recognizes that the public exchange of diverse ideas and viewpoints is necessary to the health of the community and the quality of governance in the Municipality; and

WHEREAS, the members of Athens-Clarke County Commission, as elected representatives of the community and stewards of the public trust, recognize their special role in modeling open, free and vigorous debate while maintaining the highest standards of civility, honesty and mutual respect; and

WHEREAS, Athens-Clarke County Commission meetings are open to the public and thus how elected officials execute their legal duties is on public display; and

WHEREAS, civility by elected officials in the execution of their legislative duties and responsibilities fosters respect, kindness and thoughtfulness between elected officials, avoiding personal ill will which results in actions being directed to issues made in the best interests of residents; and

WHEREAS, civility between elected officials presents an opportunity to set a positive example of conduct and promotes thoughtful debate and discussion of legislative issues, resulting in better public policy and a more informed electorate while also encouraging civil behavior between residents; and

WHEREAS, civility between elected officials is possible if each member of the elected body remembers that they represent not only themselves, but the constituents of their district and county; and

WHEREAS, models of civil engagement were highlighted in a January 27, 2023 Mayor and Commission retreat with a set of behaviors to follow and a set of behaviors to avoid [see attached exhibit #1]

WHEREAS, a civility pledge will be read at the start of Mayor and Commission meetings [see attached exhibit #2]; and

WHEREAS, in order to publicly declare its commitment to civil discourse and to express its concern for the common good and well-being of all of its residents, the Athens-Clarke County Commission has determined to adopt this resolution.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION ONE

The Athens-Clarke County Commission pledges to practice and promote civility within the governing body as a means of conducting legislative duties and responsibilities.

SECTION TWO

The elected officials of the Athens-Clarke County enact this civility pledge to build a stronger and more prosperous community by advocating for civil engagement, respecting others and their viewpoints, and finding solutions for the betterment of Athens-Clarke County.

SECTION THREE

This pledge strives to ensure that all communication be open, honest, and transparent as this is vital for cultivating trust and relationships.

SECTION FOUR

This pledge strives to show courtesy by treating all colleagues, staff and members of the public in a professional and respectful manner whether in-person, online or in written communication, especially when we disagree.

SECTION FIVE

This pledge strives to ensure mutual respect to achieve municipal goals, recognizing that patience, tolerance and civility are imperative to success and demonstrates the Commission's commitment to respect different opinions, by inviting and considering different perspectives, allowing space for ideas to be expressed, debated, opposed, and clarified in a constructive manner.

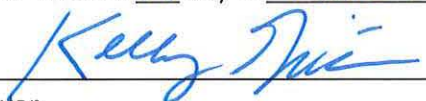
SECTION SIX

This pledge demonstrates our commitment against violence and incivility in all their forms whenever and wherever they occur in all our meetings and interactions.

SECTION SEVEN

The Athens-Clarke County Commission expects members of the public to be civil in its discussion of matters under consideration by and before the Commission, with elected officials, staff, and each other.

ADOPTED this 14 day of March, 2023



Mayor

Vacant


District 2 Commissioner



District 4 Commissioner



District 6 Commissioner



District 8 Commissioner



District 10 Commissioner



District 1 Commissioner



District 3 Commissioner



District 5 Commissioner



District 7 Commissioner



District 9 Commissioner

ATTEST:



Clerk of Commission

10 Actions to **FOLLOW**

1. Be present
2. Be prepared
3. Be positive
4. Be patient
5. Focus on the topic
6. Authentically share
7. Actively listen
8. Agree to disagree
9. Remember team goals
10. Move forward with action

10 Actions to **AVOID**

1. No cursing
2. No name calling
3. No personal attacks
4. No monologues
5. No bickering
6. No rehashing
7. No vendettas
8. No gossiping
9. No rushing process
10. No inflammatory, extreme, unverified claims

EMBRACE CIVILITY

CIVILITY PLEDGE

The way we govern ourselves is often as important as the positions we take. Our collective decisions will be better when differing views have had the opportunity to be fully vetted and considered. All people have the right to be treated with respect, courtesy and openness. We value all input. We commit to conduct ourselves at all times with civility and courtesy to each other.

