

Adopted September 26, 2012

# **Bel-Air Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council Code of Civility**

*The Bel Air Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council adopts the DONE Code of Civility Collectively and individually, the members of the Governing Board of the Bel Air Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council agree to abide by this Code of Civility to ensure that the Council's business is conducted in a respectful, courteous, and effective manner, and in a way that will generate respect and credibility for our Neighborhood Council.*

## **Meetings**

All sign in sheets shall state that furnishing of any information is voluntary.

Speaker cards shall have an 'in lieu of speaking' option and shall become part of the permanent record. Choice of the 'in lieu of speaking' option means that opposition or support will be tallied and the tally shall be announced to the board prior to any action by the board; comments may or may not be read out loud.

The Bel-Air Beverly Crest meeting agendas shall contain the following statement:

In compliance with Government Code section 54957.5, non-exempt writings that are distributed to a majority or all of the board members in advance of a meeting may be viewed at:

## **Meetings: Code of Civility**

- a. Collectively and individually, the members of the Board of Officers of the BABCNC agree to abide by the following Code of Civility to ensure that our BABCNC's business is conducted in a respectful and courteous manner, and in a way that will generate respect and credibility for our Bel-Air Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council.
- b. The freedom to express one's views about public matters is a cornerstone of the democratic process. The BABCNC welcomes the diverse views and opinions of our board members and stakeholders as they relate to the issues before us without fear of litigation. In order for these discussions to be meaningful and effective, we must treat others with respect and dignity.
- c. We collectively and individually agree to abide by the following Code of Civility to the best of our abilities.
  1. I will conduct myself in a professional and civil manner at all times as a representative of the Bel-Air Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council.

2. I will treat each member of the board, staff and members of the public with respect at all times, regardless of an individual's opinion, ethnicity, race, sexuality, gender, age, disability, or religion.
3. Even in the face of disagreement or differences of opinion, I will demonstrate esteem and deference for my colleagues and the public.
4. Under no circumstances during Neighborhood Council meetings, functions, or events will I engage in or threaten to engage in any verbal or physical attack on any other individual.
5. I will commit to communicate my ideas and points of view clearly, and allow others to do the same without interruption.
6. I will not use language that is abusive, threatening, obscene, or slanderous, including using profanities, insults, or other disparaging remarks or gestures.
7. Derogatory language about an individual's ethnicity, race, sexuality, gender, age, disability, or religion is not acceptable.
8. I will take responsibility for my own actions, and will work to fulfill my role and responsibilities as specified in the bylaws.
9. I will commit to learn the applicable laws that govern Neighborhood Councils, including bylaws, standing rules, the Brown Act, ethics rules, city ordinances, and the City Charter, and will not knowingly violate any of the above. I will commit to uphold the bylaws.
10. I will abide by the Neighborhood Council's meeting procedures or rules in order to create a safe and effective environment for conducting business.
11. I will promote and enforce a safe meeting environment at all times. At moments when members of the public, and or Board members become disruptive and violate the rules of civility that we have pledged to follow, I will join my fellow board members in demanding that the persons conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner even if I agree with the point of view that is being expressed.
12. I will seek to present information truthfully, and will not knowingly misrepresent, mischaracterize, or misquote information received from others.
13. I pledge to truly listen to and hear other points of view.
14. I will practice the art of being able to disagree without being disagreeable.
15. If I find myself representing my personal interests before my community's interests, I will publicly disclose the differences and recuse myself from voting on such matters and leave the room.
16. I will commit to good faith efforts to resolve any grievances that come before the board as or when specified in the bylaws and standing rules.

17. I owe it to my fellow board members, the public, stakeholders, and the decision-makers who we are trying to influence to make the best possible effort to understand the issues before me. I will “do my homework”.

### **Meetings: Code of Ethics**

Any member of the Board of Officers of the BABCNC who has a financial or material pecuniary interest (insert definition of term) in an item, as defined by State, Federal or local laws, shall recuse themselves from voting on any item in question.\*

Any Board member who has not received a certificate of completion for the mandated ethics training within 55 days of taking office, whether by appointment or election, will be prohibited from voting on any Board or Committee issues land use issues or financial expenditures of any city funds effective.

### **Meetings: Rules of Decorum**

- a. Rules of Decorum. During a meeting of the Bel-Air Beverly Crest Neighborhood Council or any of its Standing or Ad Hoc Committees, there is the need for civility and expedition in the carrying out of public business in order to ensure that the public has a full opportunity to be heard and that the Council or Committee has an opportunity for its deliberative process. While any meeting of the BABCNC or any of its Standing or Ad Hoc Committees is in session, the following rules of decorum shall be observed. All remarks shall be addressed to the Council or Committee as a whole and not to any single member, unless in response to a question from a member. Persons addressing the Council or Committee shall not make personal, impertinent, unduly repetitive, slanderous or profane remarks to the Council or Committee, any member of the Council or Committee, staff or general public, nor utter loud, threatening, personal or abusive language, nor engage in any other disorderly conduct that disrupts, disturbs or otherwise impedes the orderly conduct of any Council or Committee meeting. No person in the audience at a Council or Committee meeting shall engage in disorderly or boisterous conduct, including the utterance of loud, threatening or abusive language, whistling, stamping of feet or other acts which disturb, disrupt or otherwise impede the orderly conduct of any Council or Committee meeting. Signs, placards, banners, or similar items shall not be permitted at any time in the Council or Committee meeting room. Unless addressing the Council or Committee or entering or leaving the Council or Committee meeting room, all persons in the audience shall remain sitting in the seats provided. No person shall stand or sit in the center aisle, nor shall the doorways be blocked. The Chair of the Council or Committee, with the assistance of a Police Officer of the Los Angeles Police Department, shall be responsible for maintaining the order and decorum of meetings, as set forth more fully below.
- b. Enforcement of Decorum of Speakers and Audience. The Chair may request that a member of the audience or a person speaking during a public comment period who is violating the rules of decorum, comply immediately. If, after receiving a warning from the Chair, a person persists in violating the rules of decorum, the Chair shall order him or her to leave the Council or Committee meeting. Any person so ordered removed shall be excluded from further attendance at the meeting from which he or she has been removed, unless permission to attend is granted upon motion adopted by a majority vote of the

Council or Committee. If that person does not remove himself or herself, the Chair may request a Police Officer of the Los Angeles Police Department to remove that person from the Council or Committee meeting room pursuant to his or her lawful authority as a peace officer.

- c. Penalties. Any person who has been ordered removed from a meeting may be charged with a violation of Penal Code Section 403, or other appropriate Penal Code or Los Angeles Municipal Code sections. The Council or Committee by majority vote may prohibit a person removed on the basis of disruptive conduct from addressing the Council and its Committees for up to 30 days. The length of time of the prohibition shall be based on the number and severity of prior incidents of disruptive conduct.

### **Principles of Representation**

- I. The Board trusts and expects Board Officers and Committee Members to adhere to the following principles of representation:
  - a. No Board Officer or Committee Member, unless authorized in writing by the board of the BABCNC to do so, may in any way:
    - (i) Use the BABCNC logo or letterhead or stationery for any purpose; or
    - (ii) Claim to represent the BABCNC in any forum except:
      - to present, verbatim, motions that have been considered and acted upon by the Board and which have not been subsequently repealed by the Board or superseded by a subsequent motion of the Board; and
      - to correct misunderstandings or to respond to questions related thereto.
  - b. Any Board Officer or Committee Member may identify themselves as such in any forum. If doing so in support of or in opposition to a matter being considered in a non-BABCNC forum, s/he shall make clear that s/he is representing her/himself personally and is not representing the BABCNC or a BABCNC Committee. If the Board has considered and acted upon a motion dealing with a matter under consideration in a non-BABCNC forum, the nature and disposition of the motion considered by the Board shall be disclosed.

**Robert A. Ringler, President BABCNC**

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**Gary Plotkin, Parliamentarian BABCNC**

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