



## **Library Board Meeting**

**January 05, 2023 at 7:00 PM**

**Marianne Beck Memorial Library -  
112 W. Central Ave**

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### **AGENDA**

#### **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

- 1. Discussion: Sunshine Laws, Ethics, Public Record Laws Training**
- 2. Discussion: Code of Core Values for Civility and Ethics**
- 3. Discussion: Poet Laureate Event**

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

- 4. Discussion: Update on Drone Program**
- 5. Discussion: Update on Email Blast**
- 6. Discussion: Update on Lake County Library Impact Fee Submission Deadline**

#### **FRIEND OF LIBRARY (FOL) BUSINESS**

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

#### **To Comply with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):**

Qualified individuals may get assistance through the Florida Relay Service by dialing 7-1-1. Florida Relay is a service provided to residents in the State of Florida who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Deaf/Blind, or Speech Disabled that connects them to standard (voice) telephone users. They utilize a wide array of technologies, such as Text Telephone (TTYs) and ASCII, Voice Carry-Over (VCO), Speech to Speech (STS), Relay Conference Captioning (RCC), CapTel, Voice, Hearing Carry-Over (HCO), Video Assisted Speech to Speech (VA-STTS) and Enhanced Speech to Speech.

Please Note: In accordance with F.S. 286.0105: Any person who desires to appeal any decision or recommendation at this meeting will need a record of the proceedings, and that for such purposes may need to ensure that a verbatim

record of the proceedings is made, which includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is based. The Town of Howey-in-the-Hills does not prepare or provide this verbatim record. Note: In accordance with the F.S. 286.26: Persons with disabilities needing assistance to participate in any of these proceedings should contact Town Hall, 101 N. Palm Avenue, Howey-in-the-Hills, FL 34737, (352) 324-2290 at least 48 business hours in advance of the meeting.

# **Government in the Sunshine Public Records Ethics Gifts**

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**Howey-in-the-Hills Library Board  
January 5, 2023**



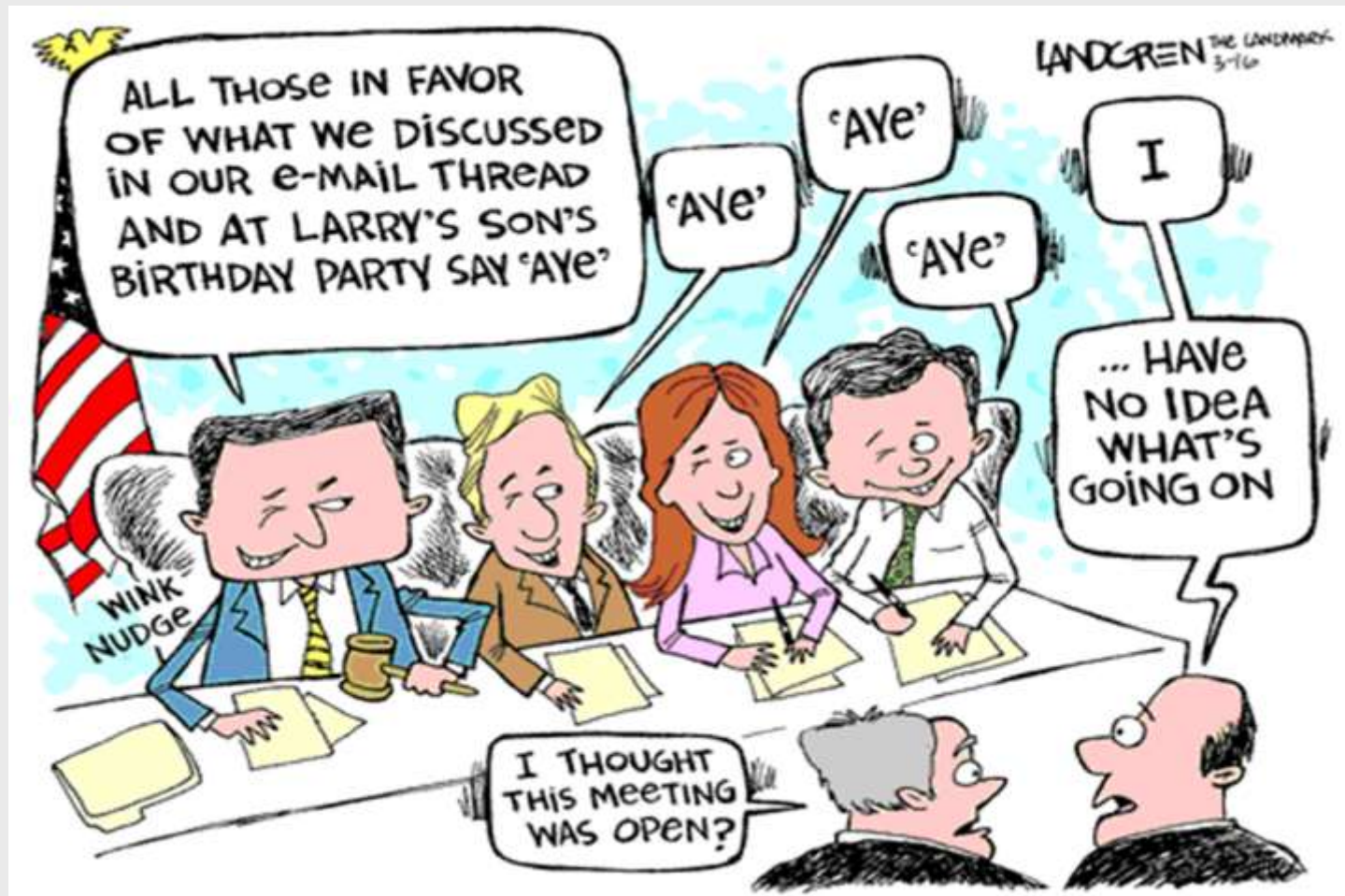
# Overview

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1. Government in the Sunshine Law – *Chapter 286, Fla. Stat.*
2. Public Records Law – *Chapter 119, Fla. Stat*
3. Ethics, Gifts – *Part III of Chapter 112, Fla. Stat.*



# SUNSHINE LAW



# SUNSHINE LAW

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## Applicable to:

- **Advisory boards**
- **Committees**

When such boards or committees have been delegated “**decision-making authority**” as opposed to mere “**information gathering or fact-finding authority**”.

# SUNSHINE LAW

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## Basic requirements:

1. Meetings must be open and accessible to the public.
2. Meetings must be noticed.
3. Written minutes must be taken.

*§286.011 Florida Statutes*

# SUNSHINE LAW

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## Things to remember:

- If 2 or more council/committee members need to discuss council/committee related business, a meeting must be officially noticed.
- Do not call, text or e-mail each other on town related business -- all discussions must be in an open, noticed meeting.
- You cannot have a person act as a “go-between”.
- Whispering and passing notes at a noticed meeting could be considered an unnoticed meeting if discussing town business.
- Once a meeting is adjourned, don’t talk about town business on your way out of the room.
- Members of the public must be provided an opportunity to address the council/committee during the decision-making process, and **before** a decision is made.



# SUNSHINE LAW

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## PERMISSIBLE CLOSED SESSIONS:

- *Pending* litigation [direction only 286.011(8)]



# SUNSHINE LAW

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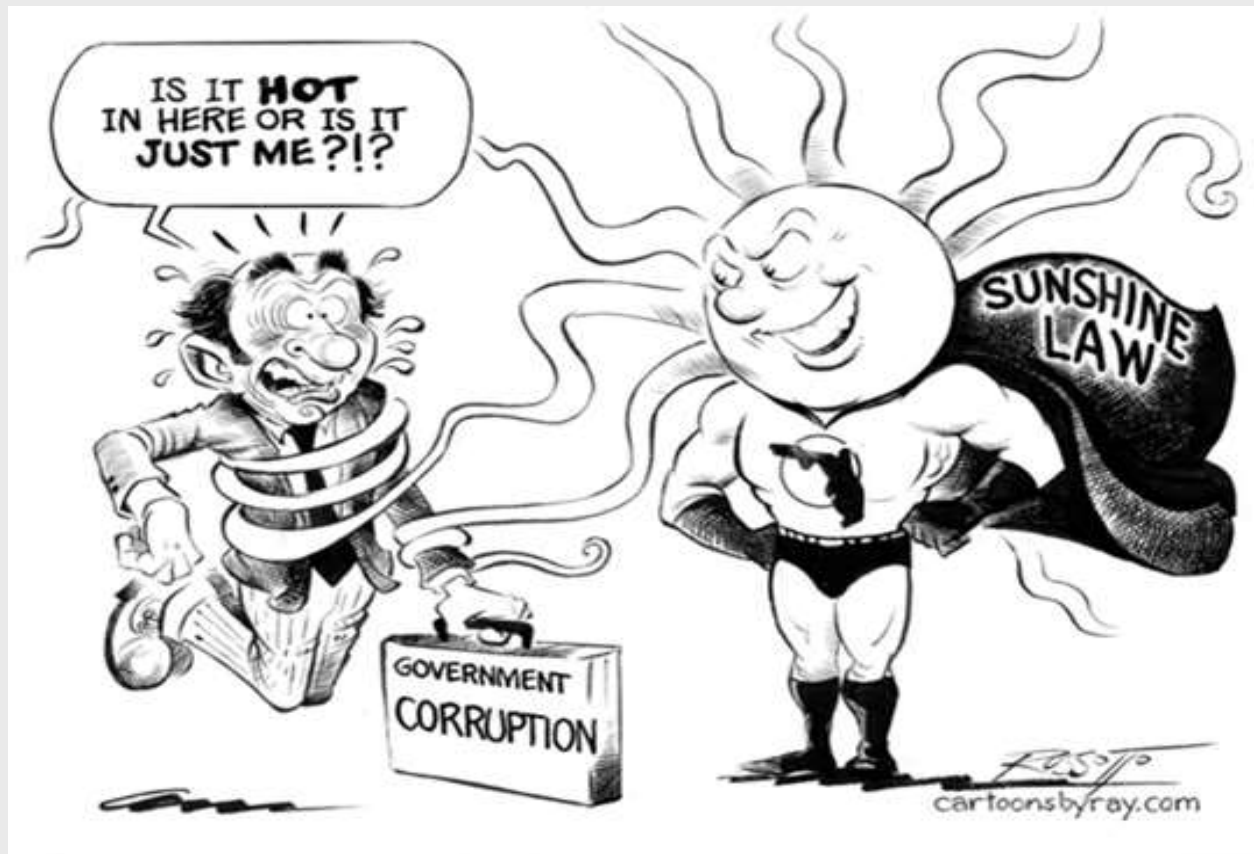
## **City of Belle Isle “Roundtable”:**

- Group of citizens and Belle Isle City Commissioners met to discuss strategy for campaigning and recruiting people to run for the Belle Isle City Commission.
- Meetings held in a commission member’s home.
- State Attorney’s office found a violation, but unclear whether charges will be brought.

# SUNSHINE LAW

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Questions?



# PUBLIC RECORDS



# PUBLIC RECORDS LAW

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## Applicable to records of:

- Town employees
- Town Council
- Advisory Boards
- Committees
- All town records



# PUBLIC RECORDS LAW

## Important things to know:

- Every record made or received in connection with town business.
- All elected and appointed officials and town employees must permit inspection and copying of public records.
- NOT limited to traditional written documents.
- Includes [texts](#) and [emails](#) made or received in connection with official business.
- Includes YouTube videos, Facebook posts, tapes, photographs, videos and sound recordings.



# PUBLIC RECORDS LAW

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## Important things to know:

- Public records can only be destroyed in accordance with a specific process under state law.
- Public records must be retained for certain periods of time.
- The law applies to communications with residents, members of the public, employees, consultants, contractors and legal counsel and others involving town business, **even if it is on your private computer, laptop or phone**. It is the nature of the record – not the location.
- Purely personal e-mails are not public records, but there is no “expectation of privacy” for communications on a town owned computer.

# PUBLIC RECORDS LAW

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## Important things to know:

- Public records include metadata.
- There is no “unfinished business” exemption – drafts and notes can be a public record.
- A public records request may be verbal, written, e-mailed, by any person at any time for any or no reason.
- You cannot require the requester to provide his or her name, and he or she does not have to say why the records are requested.
- **If you receive a public records request, let the Town Clerk know immediately.**



# PUBLIC RECORDS LAW

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## Orange County “textgate”:

- Public-records scandal -- Orange County Mayor and Commissioners each fined \$500.00.
- 2012 political fight over a referendum for paid sick-time.
- Mayor and Commissioners exchanged texts with lobbyists and citizens opposed to the measure during a public hearing on the issue.
- Public records request was made for the texts.
- They **lost** or **deleted** the texts.
- State Attorney Jeff Ashton concluded the mayor and four commissioners had violated public records laws but **unintentionally**.

# PUBLIC RECORDS LAW

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## Statutory exemptions:

*The entire record is a public record unless there is an express statutory exemption.*

- Exemptions must be **explicitly** provided by statute.
- Exemptions must be **narrowly applied**.
- All exemptions must be **stated in writing** to a requestor.

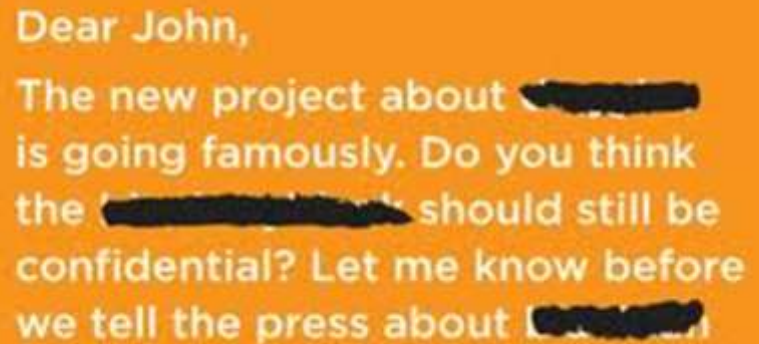


# PUBLIC RECORDS LAW

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## Statutory exemptions:

- Sealed bids and proposals (for a certain period of time). [119.071(1)(b), Fla. Stat.]
- Information relating to a facility's security system plans. [119.071(3)(a), Fla. Stat.]
- Building plans and drawings depicting the internal layout and structural elements of a building owned or operated by an agency. [119.071(3)(b), Fla. Stat.]
- Many more....



Dear John,

The new project about [REDACTED]  
is going famously. Do you think  
the [REDACTED] should still be  
confidential? Let me know before  
we tell the press about [REDACTED]

# SUNSHINE AND PUBLIC RECORDS LAW

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*For violations of the law -*

- **The State Attorney or a Grand Jury can be involved**
- **Private parties can sue**
- **Penalties can include:**
  - Jail time – 1 year in jail for a knowing violation
  - Fines -- \$500 for an unintentional violation
  - Attorney's fees
  - Trial
  - Nasty press coverage



# PUBLIC RECORDS LAW

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## Questions?



# ETHICS



# ETHICS

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## Basic principle of Ethics in Florida

*Legislative Intent – Part III of Chapter 112:*

“It is declared to be the policy of the state that public officers and employees, state and local, are agents of the people and hold their positions for the benefit of the public. . . . promoting the public interest and maintaining the respect of the people in their government must be of foremost concern.”



# ETHICS

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## Applies to:

- Town Council members
- Committee members
- Advisory-board members
- Town employees





# ETHICS

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\*\*\*The following is a [brief summary](#) of the Ethics Code. If you are in a situation where something may apply to you, please ask!\*\*\*



# ETHICS

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## What to remember:

Do not use your position at the town to secure anything special for yourself, your family, friends, or anyone else.



# ETHICS

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## Caution areas:

- Doing business with the town – you or your family should not do business with the town. *[Sec. 112.313(3), Fla. Stat.]*
- Secondary employment – there cannot be any conflict with your town position. You cannot take a job with a company doing business with the town. *[Sec. 112.313(7), Fla. Stat.]*
- Using information -- Don't use information (now or in the future) which you learned from your town position to gain a special advantage for you or your family or anyone else. *[Sec. 112.313(8), Fla. Stat.]*

# ETHICS

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## Caution areas:

- Honoraria – you cannot accept a payment to speak or write for an organization. Reasonable expenses can be paid. [Sec. 112.3149, Fla. Stat.]
- Nepotism – you cannot hire, promote, or advocate for your relatives to get a job with the town. [Sec. 112.3135, Fla. Stat.]



# ETHICS

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## GENERAL RULE ABOUT VOTING:

- You **must vote** on all Board items.
- *Unless* you have “conflict of interest” or there appears to be a “possible conflict of interest”.  
[Sec. 286.012, Fla. Stat.]
- “Abstentions” are not allowed.



# ETHICS

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## VOTING CONFLICTS:

- Must disclose if, on *any* issue, the Board's vote would benefit ... or hurt ...
  - You
  - Your relative
  - Your business partner
  - Your employer
  - Your client/customer
  - The parent company, subsidiary company, or sister company of ...
    - Your employer
    - Your client

# ETHICS

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## VOTING CONFLICTS:

- Must not vote
- Must file Form 8B (with the Town Clerk) within 15 days after the vote
- May participate in the discussion if the conflict is first disclosed (but why would you?)



# ETHICS

## VOTING CONFLICTS

- **MUST** abstain:
  - conflict of interest
- **MAY** abstain:
  - appearance of a conflict of interest
- If you abstain for either reason, file Form 8B

<b>FORM 8B MEMORANDUM OF VOTING CONFLICT FOR COUNTY, MUNICIPAL, AND OTHER LOCAL PUBLIC OFFICERS</b>	
LAST NAME—FIRST NAME—MIDDLE NAME	NAME OF BOARD, COUNCIL, COMMISSION, AUTHORITY, OR COMMITTEE
MAILING ADDRESS	THE BOARD, COUNCIL, COMMISSION, AUTHORITY OR COMMITTEE ON WHICH I SERVE IS A UNIT OF:
CITY	<input type="checkbox"/> CITY <input type="checkbox"/> COUNTY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER LOCAL AGENCY
COUNTY	NAME OF POLITICAL SUBDIVISION
DATE ON WHICH VOTE OCCURRED	MY POSITION IS: <input type="checkbox"/> ELECTIVE <input type="checkbox"/> APPOINTIVE

**WHO MUST FILE FORM 8B**

This form is for use by any person serving at the county, city, or other local level of government on an appointed or elected board, council, commission, authority, or committee. It applies equally to members of advisory and non-advisory bodies who are presented with a voting conflict of interest under Section 112.3143, Florida Statutes.

Your responsibilities under the law when faced with voting on a measure in which you have a conflict of interest will vary greatly depending on whether you hold an elective or appointive position. For this reason, please pay close attention to the instructions on this form before completing the reverse side and filing the form.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 112.3143, FLORIDA STATUTES**

A person holding elective or appointive county, municipal, or other local public office **MUST ABSTAIN** from voting on a measure which inures to his or her special private gain or loss. Each elected or appointed local officer also is prohibited from knowingly voting on a measure which inures to the special gain or loss of a principal (other than a government agency) by whom he or she is retained (including the parent organization or subsidiary of a corporate principal by which he or she is retained), to the special private gain or loss of a relative, or to the special private gain or loss of a business associate. Commissioners of community redevelopment agencies under Sec. 163.266 or 163.267, F.S., and officers of independent special tax districts elected on a one-acre, one-vote basis are not prohibited from voting in that capacity.

For purposes of this law, a "relative" includes only the officer's father, mother, son, daughter, husband, wife, brother, sister, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, and daughter-in-law. A "business associate" means any person or entity engaged in or carrying on a business enterprise with the officer as a partner, joint venturer, coowner of property, or corporate shareholder (where the shares of the corporation are not listed on any national or regional stock exchange).

\* \* \* \* \*

**ELECTED OFFICERS:**

In addition to abstaining from voting in the situations described above, you must disclose the conflict

PRIOR TO THE VOTE BEING TAKEN by publicly stating to the assembly the nature of your interest in the measure on which you are abstaining from voting; and

WITHIN 15 DAYS AFTER THE VOTE OCCURS by completing and filing this form with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting, who should incorporate the form in the minutes.

\* \* \* \* \*

**APPOINTED OFFICERS:**

Although you must abstain from voting in the situations described above, you otherwise may participate in these matters. However, you must disclose the nature of the conflict before making any attempt to influence the decision, whether orally or in writing and whether made by you or at your direction.

**IF YOU INTEND TO MAKE ANY ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE THE DECISION PRIOR TO THE MEETING AT WHICH THE VOTE WILL BE TAKEN:**

- You must complete and file this form (before making any attempt to influence the decision) with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting, who will incorporate the form in the minutes. (Continued on other side)



# ETHICS

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## **Penalties** (*employees, officers, candidates*):

Impeachment, removal from office or employment, suspension, public censure, reprimand, demotion, reduction in salary level, forfeiture of one-third salary per month for twelve months, a civil penalty up to \$10,000, restitution of any pecuniary benefits received, and triple the value of a gift from a political committee.

# ETHICS

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Questions?



# GIFTS

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# GIFTS

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## What is a “gift”?

- money
- real estate
- use of real estate
- tangible personal property
- intangible personal property
- use of personal property
- food or beverages
- membership dues
- transportation
- plants & flowers
- admission tickets (sports, concerts, cruises, theme parks, etc.)
- forgiveness of debt
- a preferential rate or price on a debt, loan, goods or services
- any other thing having value
- any other service having value

# GIFTS

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## Caution areas:

- Taking gifts – taking anything of value for you or your family **over \$100** can be an ethics violation.

*[Sec. 112.3148, Fla. Stat.]*

- Asking for gifts – don't ask people **working with** or **associated with** town business for anything -- lobbyist, vendor, customer, or anyone doing business with the town. *[Sec. 112.313(2), Fla. Stat.]*

# GIFTS

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## DISCLOSURE OF GIFTS BY YOU:

- Any gift which is accepted AND worth **over \$100**
- Exceptions:
  - Gifts from relatives
  - **Prohibited** gifts (*i.e.*, from lobbyists and vendors)



# GIFTS

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## GIFTS DISCLOSED ... BY LOBBYISTS AND VENDORS:

- All gifts to you worth **over \$25**
- Disclosed quarterly ... by the lobbyist or vendor, not you



# FLORIDA COMMISSION ON ETHICS

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- Available for advice: ethics / gifts / financial disclosure
- Phone: 850-488-7864
- Website: [www.ethics.state.fl.us](http://www.ethics.state.fl.us)



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# Questions?



# Library Board

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- **Per Code, Chapter 18, Article II:**
  - **Five members (3 Members must be resident, 2 Members may be residents of 34737, 34797, or Royal Harbor subdivision in Tavares)**
  - **Chair & Secretary annually chosen in January**
  - **Board Members have Two-year terms**
  - **Three member quorum**
  - **Missing three meetings in a calendar year (regardless of notice) is an effective resignation**

# Library Board

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- What the Library Board is NOT
  - The Friends of the Howey Library
  - The County Library Advisory Board
  - Program Specialists/Library Staff
  - Budget Department

# Library Board

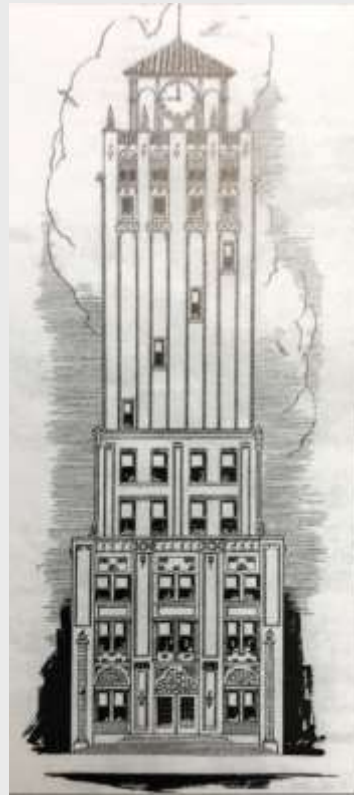
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- **What the Library Board IS**
  - “...shall control the operation of the library according to the authority provided herein...”
  - Establish and enforce library policies (Sect. 18-1)
  - Creating and maintaining the library collection
  - Creating and maintaining circulation records
  - Establishing and maintaining regular library hours (Section 18-5)

**(*De facto* also makes recommendations regarding programming.)**

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# Questions?



## RESOLUTION 2019-001

**A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS, FLORIDA, ADOPTING A CODE OF CORE VALUES FOR CIVILITY AND ETHICS; PROVIDING FOR INITIAL AND ANNUAL REVIEW BY COUNCIL MEMBERS, BOARD MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND REQUIRING AN ATTESTATION STATEMENT; PROVIDING FOR REMOVAL OF BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

*Whereas*, the Town Council of the Town of Howey-in-the-Hills finds it necessary and important to adopt a code of core Values for Civility and Ethics for the elected members of the Town Council and appointed members of Town boards and committees.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS, FLORIDA, THAT:**

**Section 1. Adoption.** The Town of Howey-in-the-Hills Code of Core Values for Civility and Ethics (the “Code of Core Values”) is hereby adopted as follows:

*It is the policy of the Town of Howey-in-the-Hills to uphold, promote and demand the highest standards of civility and ethics from all of its citizens and officials, whether elected or appointed. Accordingly, members of the Town Council, Boards and Committees should maintain the utmost standards of personal honesty, civility and fairness in carrying out their public duties, avoid any improprieties in their roles as public servants, and never use their Town position or powers for improper personal gain.*

### **Implementation**

*The Code of Core Values for Civility and Ethics is intended to be self-enforcing. It therefore becomes most effective when members are thoroughly familiar with it and embrace its provisions. For this reason, the Core Values of Civility and Ethical standards shall be included in the regular orientations for the Town Council, Boards and Committees.*

### **Code of Core Values for Civility and Ethics:**

#### **Ethics**

*I pledge to maintain the highest standards of professional behavior and to comply with the laws, regulations, and policies under which we operate. I shall make no promises or commitments I cannot reasonably expect to fulfill, and I shall maintain appropriate social, ethical, and organizational norms in Town related activities.*

#### **Civility**

*I pledge to help create an atmosphere of respect and civility where individual councilors, department heads, staff, committee and board members, and the*

*public are free to express their ideas and work to their full potential. I pledge to be open, consistent, truthful, and respectful in all communications, written and verbal, as this is vital for reflective and sound decision making for the Howey-in-the-Hills community.*

***Respect for the Individual***

*I respect the diversity of councilors, staff, committee members, and citizens, to provide fair and equitable treatment in all areas, and to encourage personal and professional growth. I shall recognize and value individual contributions to the Howey-in-the-Hills community, as the Town's mission and vision are pursued.*

***Teamwork***

*I shall work together with others, with mutual respect, to achieve organizational goals, recognizing that unity of purpose and effort leads to increased productivity and greater accomplishments.*

***Leadership***

*I shall lead by example, using appropriate interpersonal skills, and shall strive to maximize citizen and staff involvement to further the vision of Howey-in-the-Hills' quality community.*

***Creativity and Innovation***

*I shall strive to stimulate and appreciate new concepts and solutions suggested by all, as Howey-in-the-Hills' creative community is enriched. I shall respond efficiently and effectively to the needs of our citizens as well as to changes in our environment.*

***Stewardship***

*I shall strive to make a positive contribution to our Town and to enhance the quality of services throughout the Howey-in-the-Hills community and strive for excellence in every phase of our work. I shall work to attain our goals by optimizing the use of our energy, time and resources and consider the impact of all decisions on resources and to recognize the limitations imposed by our environment.*

**Section 2. Review by Town Council and Board and Committee Members.** Upon taking office, and each year thereafter, the Town Clerk shall provide each Town Council member, Board Member and Committee Member a copy of the Town's Code or Core Values for review.

**Section 3. Attestation Statement.** Each time a Town Council member, Board Member or Committee Member receives a copy of the Code of Core Values, an attestation statement in the form attached hereto as **Attachment A** shall be signed and delivered to the Town Clerk and kept on file at Town Hall.

**Section 4. Removal of Board and Committee Members.** In the event that the Mayor or Town Council member becomes aware that an appointed member of a Board or Committee


has violated the Code of Core Values, the Town Clerk shall notify the appointed individual and the Town Council may take action to remove that Board or Committee member at the next Town Council meeting.

**Section 5. Conflicts.** All resolutions or parts of resolutions in conflict herewith shall be and hereby are repealed.

**Section 6. Effective Date.** This resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

**PASSED AND RESOLVED** this 13<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2019, by the Town Council of the Town of Howey-in-the-Hills, Florida.

Attest:



Dairian Burke, Town Clerk

**Town of Howey-in-the-Hills, Florida**

By: Town Council

By:   
Mayor David Nebel



**Attachment A**  
**Form of Attestation Statement**

**Town of Howey-in-the-Hills**  
**Code of Core Values for Civility and Ethics Attestation Statement**

I hereby affirm by signing this Attestation Statement that:

- a. I have received a copy of the Town of Howey-in-the-Hill's Code of Core Values for Civility and Ethics (the "Code of Core Values") governing my service on the Town Council or Town Board or Committee;
- b. I have read and understand the Code of Core Values; and
- c. I agree to comply with the Code of Core Values and not engage in any activity in violation of the Code.

I further understand that if I am an appointed member of a Town Board or Committee that my failure to comply with the Code of Core Values may result in (i) my removal from the Board or Committee by the Town Council, or (ii) my removal from a Town Council meeting by majority vote of the other Town Council members.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Print  
Name \_\_\_\_\_



## **Town of Howey-in-the-Hills**

### **Code of Core Values for Civility and Ethics**

*It is the policy of the Town of Howey-in-the-Hills to uphold, promote and demand the highest standards of civility and ethics from all of its citizens and officials, whether elected or appointed. Accordingly, members of the Town Council, Boards and Committees should maintain the utmost standards of personal honesty, civility and fairness in carrying out their public duties, avoid any improprieties in their roles as public servants, and never use their Town position or powers for improper personal gain.*

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## Town of Howey-in-the-Hills

### Code of Core Values for Civility and Ethics Attestation Statement

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Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

Print  
Name\_\_\_\_\_