

**RESOLUTION NO. 1095**

**A RESOLUTION** allowing an invocation at the opening of public meetings of the Washougal City Council.

**WHEREAS**, an invocation is the act or process of petitioning for help or support, usually in the form of a prayer of entreaty to a higher authority;

**WHEREAS**, public meetings often open with a brief invocation to a higher authority asking for blessing and wisdom;

**WHEREAS**, beginning with Benjamin Franklin, who called for prayer to open each meeting of the Continental Congress, and proceeding to the present day, such invocations have been a traditional and institutional act of local, state, and national legislative bodies;

**WHEREAS**, the Washougal City Council fully supports and upholds the First Amendment to the United States Constitution which guarantees freedom of religious expression;

**WHEREAS**, by this resolution the Washougal City Council intends to open public meetings of the Washougal City Council with an invocation for the benefit of the Council that is fully open to and reflective of the rich diversity of faith present within the City;

**WHEREAS**, this resolution is not a violation of any constitutional principle based upon previous rulings of various courts, including the United States Supreme Court's recent decision in *Town of Greece v. Galloway*, 572 US \_\_\_\_ (2014), that invocations to open public meetings are not in violation of the Constitution, but are deeply rooted in the history of our great nation from its inception to the present time;

**WHEREAS**, by enacting this resolution the Washougal City Council does not intend to establish a religion; to advance, disparage or exclude one religion over another; nor to show preference to or persuade any person concerning the beliefs of the volunteer providing the invocation or the content of the invocation.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WASHOUGAL as follows:**

**Section I**

That the Washougal City Council invites persons of all faiths and persuasions to join with them in presenting an invocation to open its regular public Council meetings, pursuant to the procedures outlined in the attached Exhibit "A," incorporated herein by this reference.

**PASSED** by the Council of the City of Washougal at regular meeting on the **22nd** day of **September, 2014**.

City of Washougal, Washington



\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

**ATTEST:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Finance Director / City Clerk

**APPROVED AS TO FORM:**

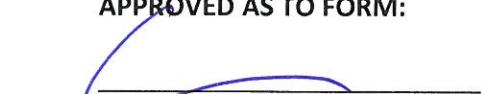
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Assistant City Attorney

EXHIBIT "A"

Council Meeting Invocation Procedures

1. There shall be available one invocation on the agenda at each regular City Council meeting preceding all legislative business, which invocation should not exceed sixty (60) seconds.
2. Invocations shall not be used to proselytize or disparage any faith or belief, which may be or include, quotes or inspirational phrases, from within or without, any religious doctrine or literature.
3. Any person may volunteer to provide an invocation.
4. Invocations shall be scheduled on a 'first come, first serve' basis, except as described below for repeat participants.
5. Anyone interested in providing an invocation may contact the City Clerk to be placed on the calendar.
6. The person who will be providing the invocation must be the one who contacts the City Clerk to sign up. A third party may not sign up others to provide an invocation.
7. To allow opportunity for persons of different beliefs to participate, preference shall be given to persons who have not yet given an invocation over persons who have already done so.
8. The name of the person providing the invocation shall be placed on the agenda, unless the person does not wish to be listed.
9. To avoid the appearance of establishing or promoting a certain religion or belief, if a city employee or elected city official desires to provide an invocation, the agenda shall state the following near his/her name on the agenda: "Mr/Ms. [name] is delivering the invocation today in his/her capacity as a private citizen, and not in his/her official position as a city employee/elected city official."
10. No city employee, elected city official, or anyone else in attendance shall be required to participate in an invocation.
11. No city employee or elected city official shall screen, inquire about, or prescribe the content of invocations to be given.
12. No city employee, elected official or attendee shall be required to stand during an invocation. Persons scheduled to provide an invocation shall be informed that they should not request that those present at the meeting stand for the invocation.
13. No compensation shall be given for providing an invocation, nor shall any fee be required to participate.