

RECORD OF RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 2024-R-07

February 12, 2024

City of Bellbrook State of Ohio

Resolution No. 2024-R-07

TO REFORM CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND INCREASE EFFICACY THROUGH ESTABLISHING A PUBLIC PARTICIPATION POLICY

WHEREAS, direct and active participation in self-governance is a widely held value in the United States; and

WHEREAS, knowledge and talent are widely dispersed in society, and all benefit when those skills and abilities are directed toward common goals; and

WHEREAS, public participation and collaboration may enhance local government's effectiveness, expand its range of options, improve the quality of its decisions, and enlist the problem-solving capacities of the general public; and

WHEREAS, public agencies and municipal authorities may collaborate with the general public and state, regional, and local government agencies, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and other nongovernmental stakeholders to accomplish public work and deliver public services more efficiently and effectively; and

WHEREAS, there have been dramatic changes in the techniques of public participation and the technology allowing for greater transparency of government both through broadcast media and the internet.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY OF BELLBROOK HEREBY RESOLVES:

Section 1. For all purposes under this Resolution and policy, the phrase "public participation" is defined to include "public engagement," "community engagement," "citizen engagement," "public hearing," and "public comment" and includes, but is not limited to, any form of in-person, technology-aided, or online communication that provides for discussion, dialogue, or deliberation among participants, allowing residents to engage meaningfully in local problem identification, and/or problem solving related to community challenges, problems, and opportunities. "Policy process" means any action in developing, implementing, or enforcing public policy, including but not limited to identifying and defining a public policy issue, defining the options for a new policy framework, expanding the range of options, identifying approaches for addressing an issue, setting priorities among approaches, selecting from among the priorities, implementing solutions, rulemaking, project management, and assessing the impacts of decisions.

Section 2. It is hereby declared a matter of public policy that the active public participation of community members to offer comments, ideas and recommendations, both individually and collectively, on public challenges, problems and opportunities is a public good and will be pursued in the interest of the health, prosperity, safety, and welfare of the community, and in the pursuit of

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effective and trusted governance. Further, as these ends are best achieved by community members who have the opportunity to become informed and to jointly deliberate on public matters prior to offering their ideas and recommendations, that such deliberative opportunities are to be offered when and where possible, and public input received will be considered in final decision making by the appropriate agency body. The city and its municipal departments may use any process that meets the principles for public participation set forth in section 3 in addition to statutorily required forms of public input such as notice and comment or public hearings for public participation.

Section 3. The following Principles for Public Participation are hereby established to govern meaningful and effective public participation:

- a) **Planning Ahead:** Public participation is an early and integral part of challenge and opportunity identification, planning and design, budgeting, and implementation of city policies, programs, and projects.
- b) **Inclusive Design:** The design of a public participation process includes input from appropriate local officials as well as from members of the participant community.
- c) **Authentic Intent:** a primary purpose of the public participation process is to generate public views and ideas to actually help shape local government action or policy.
- d) **Transparency:** Public participation processes are open, honest, and understandable. There is clarity and transparency about public participation process sponsorship, purpose, design, and how decision makers will use the process results.
- e) **Inclusiveness and Equity:** Public participation processes identify, reach out to, and encourage participation of the community in its full diversity. Processes respect a range of values and interests and the knowledge of those involved. Historically excluded individuals and groups are included authentically in processes, activities, and decision and policymaking. Impacts, including costs and benefits, are identified and distributed fairly.
- f) **Informed Participation:** Participants in the process have information and/or access to expertise consistent with the work that sponsors and conveners ask them to do. Members of the public receive the information they need to participate effectively with sufficient time to study.
- g) **Accessible Participation:** Public participation processes are broadly accessible in terms of location, time, and language, and support the engagement of community members with disabilities.
- h) **Appropriate Process:** each public participation process uses one or more engagement formats that are responsive to the needs of identified participant groups and encourage full, authentic, effective and equitable participation consistent with process purposes. Participation processes and techniques are well-designed to appropriately fit the legal authority, scope, character, and impact of a policy or project. Processes adapt to changing conditions as projects move forward.
- i) **Use of Information:** The ideas, preferences, and/or recommendations contributed by community members are documented and given consideration by decision makers. Local

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officials communicate decisions back to process participants and the broader public, with a description of how the public input was considered and used.

- j) **Building Relationships and Community Capacity:** Public participation processes invest in and develop long-term, collaborative working relationships and learning opportunities with community partners and stakeholders. This may include relationships with other temporary or ongoing community participation initiatives.
- k) **Evaluation:** Evaluating the public participation process with the collected feedback, analysis, and learning shared broadly and applied to future public participation efforts for continuous improvement.

Section 4. That it is found and determined that all formal actions of the City Council relating to the adoption of this Resolution were adopted in an open meeting of this Council, and that all deliberations of this Council and any of its committees that resulted in such formal action, were in meetings open to the public, in compliance with all legal requirements, including §121.22 of the Revised Code of the State of Ohio.

Section 5. That this resolution shall take effect and be in force forthwith.

PASSED BY City Council this ____ day of _____, 2024.

____ Yeas; ____ Nays.

AUTHENTICATION:

Michael W. Schweller, Mayor

Robert Schommer, Clerk of Council