

ORDINANCE NO. 57

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WALLIS, TEXAS, PROHIBITING AND MAKING IT UNLAWFUL FOR ANY PERSON OR PERSONS TO DISRUPT AND INTERRUPT CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS, AND OTHER MEETINGS, HEARINGS AND CONFERENCES OF CITY ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF OR COMMITTEES.

WHEREAS, the City Council of Wallis, Texas, finds that it is in the interest of the Citizens of Wallis and the City Council, that the handling of City affairs and determination of City actions and policies be discussed and approved from time to time in various meetings of the City Council, city staff, administrative aides and committees. AND WHEREAS, it is found to be necessary that all of such meetings whether regular, special or called, be held without disruption, interruption or interference by persons in attendance or by persons authorized as participants in such meeting and same shall be held and conducted in an orderly fashion in order to be effective, efficient and proper.

WHEREAS, it appears that on various occasions, several such meetings have been disrupted, and interrupted by private citizens or persons in attendance or by persons authorized as participants, to such an extent that normal reasonable persons could not continue the orderly conduct of the meeting and thus prevented the effective completion of the purposes for which said meetings were held.

BE IT THEREFORE ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WALLIS, TEXAS:

1) That it is hereby prohibited and made unlawful for any person or persons to knowingly or negligently cause a disruption of any public or closed meeting of the City Council of Wallis, Texas, whether such meeting is a regular meeting or specially called meeting; any regular or called meeting of a committee that is duly appointed by the City Council, Mayor, or Councilman; any meeting of the city administrative staff or aides; any public meeting or hearings called by the Mayor, City Council, or Committee Chairman; or any other duly authorized meeting called by city officials to conduct legitimate city affairs of business.

- 2) "Persons" are defined herein, and shall include individuals, singular or plural, that are private citizens who are in attendance at such meetings or who make an appearance at such meetings. "Persons" shall also be any elected or appointed officials, committee members, advisors, councilmen, mayor, administrative staff or aides or other authorized participants in such meetings. All references to persons are masculine and/or feminine.
- 3) Disturbance or interruption of such meeting shall be defined as any and all acts by any person knowingly designed or perpetrated and committed negligently at such meeting place, as as to cause the cessation of the normal business affairs conducted in such meetings or so as to otherwise interrupt such meeting to the extent that normal and reasonable individuals are prevented from conducting and completing the usual and ordinary affairs and purposes of such meeting. Acts of unreasonable or excessive interruption of the designated agenda or usual order of business shall be included and covered by this ordinance.
- 4) Any such person causing a disturbance or interruption of such a meeting, will upon direction and instruction of the mayor, chairperson, or primary responsible participant, cease and desist from further disruption or interruption of such meeting. If such person or persons continues his or her disruptive actions, the mayor, chairperson or primary responsible participant is hereby authorized to immediately direct any duly authorized officer of the City of Wallis Police Department to forthwith remove such disturbing person from the meeting place either temporarily or permanently for the remainder of the meeting, whichever in the judgment of the police officer is appropriate.
- 5) Any participant in such disrupted meeting may thereafter file with the Clerk of the Municipal Court, a Municipal Jurisdiction, misdemeanor charge against such offending person and if such person should be subsequently found guilty of violation of this ordinance, a fine from \$25.00 to \$200.00 may be levied against such offender. Such a charge may also be filed by any person in attendance at such disrupted meeting or by the police officer or officers directed to remove such offending party from the meeting place.
- 6) This ordinance in no manner shall ever be used to prevent or stifle the vigorous exchange of opinions between persons and/or participants in such meetings. Nor shall it be used to limit or eliminate the criticism of participants or their actions by persons in attendance and generally is shall never

be used to deny the rights of free speech, right to hold and participate in public meetings, or any other basic constitutional right. This ordinance shall and may be used, and is applicable to persons whose actions are excessive, disruptive, and interruptive, under the reasonable man standard, as to vigorous debate and criticism of officials; and excessively extending the right of free speech and the right to attend and participate in public meeting so as to prevent other persons from participating in such meeting and preventing other persons from exercising their right of free speech.

PASSED AND APPROVED the 11th day of March, 1980.

CITY OF WALLIS

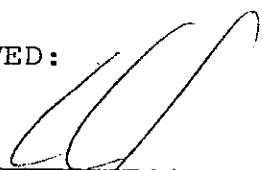
BY:


MAYOR CHARLES DUSEK

ATTEST:

BY: Betty Marek
BETTY MAREK,
City Clerk

APPROVED:

BY: 
V. O. "BUTCH" CARDEN, JR.,
City Attorney