

Resolution #2020- ___Reinstatement of the Pledge of Allegiance at Town Board Meetings

WHEREAS, the Enfield Town Board has, for many years, led its meetings by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, and;

WHEREAS, Enfield residents attending those meetings have joined Town Board members in reciting that Pledge as a means of recognizing their patriotic respect for this nation, its Constitution and laws, as well as the liberties and freedoms which permit the Enfield Town Board to convene openly, debate thoroughly, and decide conscientiously this community's issues through the practice of Representative Democracy, and;

WHEREAS, the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution provides that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," and;

WHEREAS, the Enfield Town Board, on January 8, 2020, amended its "order for conducting business" at Town Board meetings by deleting recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, the Board's action in response to some members' concerns that reference to "God" within the Pledge may violate the prohibitions enshrined in the First Amendment's Establishment Clause as well as the time-honored Separation of Church and State, and;

WHEREAS, subsequent to the referenced Town Board decision, many Enfield residents have come forth and urged this Board to reconsider its action, and;

WHEREAS, this Town Board has chosen to acknowledge those concerns, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Enfield Town Board hereby reinstates the Pledge of Allegiance to its customary place within the Outline for both regular and special Town Board meetings, and;

RESOLVED, further, that to demonstrate proper respect to those who choose to recite the Pledge of Allegiance, the meeting's presiding officer will, hereinafter, at the appropriate time, request all Board members and meeting attendees who are able to stand and face the flag in respectful reverence, and to designate a Board member to lead in that Pledge, and;

RESOLVED, further, that in full recognition of every person's right to exercise his or her constitutional prerogatives freely and to decline participation based on his or her political, ethical, or religious beliefs, or for any reason whatsoever, neither the meeting's presiding officer, nor any member of this Board, shall coerce, pressure, or compel any Board member or meeting attendee to recite the Pledge of Allegiance, or any portion thereof, and;

RESOLVED, further, that this Resolution, and the provisions contained herein, shall take effect immediately.