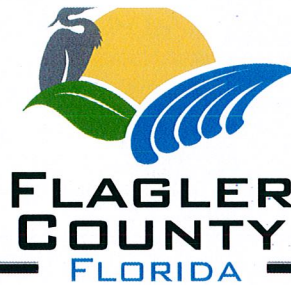


**Administration**  
1769 E. Moody Blvd Bldg 2  
Bunnell, FL 32110



[www.flaglercounty.org](http://www.flaglercounty.org)

Phone: (386)313-4001

Fax: (386)313-4101

---

TO: Flagler County Board of County Commissioners  
FROM: Craig Coffey, County Administrator *CMC*  
DATE: August 4, 2014  
RE: Affixing Private Signage on Public Facilities

---

I am writing today as several people working with the Supervisor of Elections are claiming that we need to allow candidates to affix and install signage to public property because it will reduce the physical presence of supporters at the polling location. The Supervisor or the individuals she is working with are likely to appear before you today with this claim/request. I told her that I appreciate her opinion, but disagreed with her claim and would not change unless directed to do so by the Board of County Commissioners. Below is brief explanation of the rationale staff has followed in not allowing any signs to be affixed, attached, or installed on County Property unless specifically approved by the Board of County Commissioners or through permit or by ordinance.

Many years ago and several elections ago staff was faced with an ever increasing disregard of the public's property and a proliferation of signs everywhere. We were accused of not protecting the public's property, favoritism for selective enforcement, and we received complaints about the appearance of our community and specifically regarding the public properties where the abuses were the worst. Also we do not allow random signs to be painted, affixed or otherwise physically installed in our road rights-of-way, parks, and other public facilities.

Please keep in mind, this does not prohibit any free speech issues of speaking, signs on cars, carrying signs, signs on people, T-shirts, buttons, etc. It only prohibits painting, affixing and installing signs to public property. This policy of course has no effect for signage on private property.

These are just a few of the many issues we will quickly run into if we allowed such signs:

How many signs? How big a sign or signs? Who pays for damage (sprinklers, grass, etc)?

---

**Charles Ericksen, Jr.**  
District 1

**Frank Meeker**  
District 2

**Barbara Revels**  
District 3

**Nate McLaughlin**  
District 4

**George Hanns**  
District 5

What other signs could be put up as you do not regulate content or free speech?

How do you handle blocking by candidates and sign relocations between candidates or do you just let them argue it out or resort to self resolution?

How do you police violators? Who enforces? That will take away from other duties one month a year every other year as we have only 2 code enforcement officers (two weeks for early voting and two weeks for the primary and general elections).

How do we staff the administration side of the issue? Is there an application process? Are there fees?

What are the time frames? Year round?

Will that bring different legal challenges? Code violation cases? Will someone seek to make this a new campaign issue next time?

As your County Administrator and day-to-day custodian of the public's property, after consulting with the County Attorney and rather than deal with all the issues raised and creating First Amendment problems, we have to continue to prohibit signage from being affixed, attached, and installed to any public property and avoid damage/destruction of public property at all county facilities; whether it is a right-of-way, park, library, community center, or main government offices.

In the elections approximately four years ago, and again during the elections two years ago, this seemed to work very well. To help voters and working with Mrs. Weeks, staff also designated short-term voter-only parking and asked candidates and their supporters to try to remain in a designated area. Most abided by these requests in a civil and respectful matter as we continued to conduct the daily operations and business of the community's residents. It is staff's belief that prohibiting affixed, attached, and installed signage on all public property is straightforward, clear, and equally fair to everyone.

/CMC