

TOWN OF BELLEAIR

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October 16, 2018

To Whom It May Concern,

On Friday, September 28, 2018, two employees from our solid waste staff discovered a noose tied to an oak tree with an orange on the ground below it near the dumpsters by the Belleair Country Club's maintenance facility. This noose was positioned openly and in plain view, and while we cannot ascertain its purpose or its creator, we do choose to recognize the hateful symbolism of the act. As a result, we the Commission wish to reiterate our values as they pertain to this topic.

Discrimination and bigotry in any form contradict who we are, who our residents are, and what we, as a community, will stand for. This Commission and the people it represents condemns all forms of intolerance. Very publicly and very loudly, we are raising our voices to reject prejudice. We rebuke this act and refuse to be intimidated by the hateful ignorance that breeds such actions. Instead, we accept and welcome diversity of race, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, sexual preference, ability, and all other identities into our community.

We, the Commission, recognize that this conversation is difficult. Discussing discrimination and the wounds that it creates is never easy, but having this dialogue is necessary as we bring awareness to issues surrounding diversity and inclusion.

As the governing body for the Town of Belleair, it is not only our job as elected officials, but our responsibility as leaders of this community to take charge of this topic. Every day, we see our town act in wonderful ways as we look out for one another. We show our neighbors, family, coworkers, and friends our love, our acceptance, and our kindness. It is these acts of compassion and generosity that are our legacy. And as we move forward, it is the utmost priority of this Commission that we remember and teach that to others.

We stand as a united town in this issue. Every detail of this incident will be fully investigated, and the law enforced, and we ask that any individual with information on this act come forward. We will not accept discrimination against any person or group.

We ask that our residents and community partners support us and stand with us to ensure that hateful acts of discrimination have no place here or anywhere.

Sincerely,

The Town of Belleair Commission