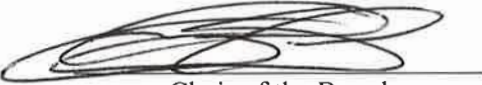
 <p style="text-align: center;">Pueblo County Government</p>		Policy 100
		Chapter: 05
		Subject: Legislative Prayer Before Public Meetings
		Effective Date: March 18, 2025
		Resolution (Reso) # 25-067
Primary Responsibility (PR): BOCC	Review Month: March	 Chair of the Board

I. PURPOSE

Legislative bodies in the United States have a long tradition of solemnizing public meetings by allowing for an opening prayer or invocation before such meetings for the benefit of the governing body. The United States Supreme Court has determined that, if conducted appropriately, prayer before public meetings may be consistent with the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment of the United State Constitution. The Pueblo County Board of County Commissioners desires to allow prayer before public meetings for the purpose of lending gravity to the proceedings and uniting the Board in its common purpose of leading Pueblo County.

This policy is not intended and shall not be implemented or construed in any way to affiliate Pueblo County Government with or endorse or express preference for any faith or religious denomination. This policy is intended to acknowledge and express the respect of the Board of County Commissioners for the diversity of religious denominations and faiths of those who believe, represented and practiced by citizens in Pueblo County.

II. POLICY

1. The prayer must be delivered at the beginning of the meeting for the purpose of solemnizing the work of the governing body.
2. No member of the Board of County Commissioners, Elected Officials serving within Pueblo County Government, or Pueblo County employees may deliver the invocation.
3. No member of the Board of County Commissioners, Elected Officials serving within Pueblo County Government, Pueblo County employees, or public attendees at the meeting shall be required or coerced to participate in any prayer that is offered, and no person shall be treated differently for choosing not to participate in prayer. No adverse action may be taken against any individual for refusing to or desiring not to participate in an invocation.

4. The BOCC serves constituents of all faiths and beliefs, expresses no faith or belief preference, and recognizes no faith or belief as superior or inferior to others.
5. The County may not review or approve a prayer in advance of the meeting or otherwise direct the content of the prayer.

III. PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES FOR PRAYER LEADERS

6. The BOCC shall designate staff to schedule individuals from any religion or faith to offer an invocation on a voluntary basis. Individuals that provide the invocation shall be referred to as a prayer leader. Prayer leaders wishing to provide the invocation may submit a statement of interest via a web form available on Pueblo County's website at county.pueblo.org. Staff designated by the BOCC shall schedule prayer leaders on a rotating basis using their best efforts to provide all interested prayer leaders an opportunity to provide the invocation.
7. Invocations shall be given by one person and may not exceed two minutes.
8. No remuneration or other compensation shall be given for providing an invocation.
9. The invocations shall be positive, uplifting, and respectful of all Pueblo County Elected Officials, employees, residents and meeting attendees.
10. An invocation must not be used to proselytize or advance any one faith or belief or to disparage other people, organizations, faiths or beliefs.
11. An invocation must not be used to threaten condemnation or preach for conversion to any group of people.
12. The prayer leader should not request attendees of the meeting to take or abstain from any action such as standing, bowing heads, repeating prayer, etc.
13. The prayer leader must not address any particular item on the BOCC's agenda.
14. A prayer leader who violates this policy shall be subject to disqualification from offering future invocations.