

April 26, 2021

Dear Mayor Davey and Village of Key Biscayne councilmembers,

We at the Society of Professional Journalists Florida Pro Chapter are writing in support of recent calls for public access at Village Council meetings.



SPJ Florida stands with the First Amendment Foundation in its call for adherence to the Sunshine Law and the need for transparency at meetings of elected officials.

We were disappointed to learn that the council prevented Tony Winton, editor-in-chief of the Key Biscayne Independent, from attending an in-person meeting of the Village Council on April 6.

Our organization believes that a free press is essential to Democracy and the participation of citizens who deserve – and demand – a government body that operates in the sunshine.

Anything less, including hybrid meetings with closed doors, is a disservice to the very people who elected you, Mayor Davey and councilmembers Moss, Lauredo, London, McCormick, Caplan, and Segurola.

Even more concerning is the news that councilmembers scheduled another “hybrid” meeting for April 27, even after the First Amendment Foundation informed councilmembers that closed-door meetings are a violation of Florida’s Sunshine Law and the U.S. Constitution.

We urge you to respect the rights of Key Biscayne residents and reporters.

We also respect the need for precautions during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Opening the chambers to public participation does not exclude the council from instituting safety measures, including mask requirements and temperature checks.

Sincerely,

**Emily Bloch**

President, SPJ Florida Pro Chapter

**The Society of Professional Journalists Florida Pro Chapter Board**

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