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Disney Outmaneuvers DeSantis in Clash Over Theme Park District.

Walt Disney Co. pushed through changes limiting the powers of the municipal authority that governs its Florida theme parks ahead of a controversial takeover by representatives of Governor Ron DeSantis.

The changes were quietly approved last month by the outgoing board of the Reedy Creek Improvement District, the entity that provides fire protection, electricity and other services in the resort area. The last-minute changes restrict the powers of the new board members for decades, including their ability to review theme-park expansions and billboard advertising.

While the maneuver is a victory for the world's largest theme-park operator, it extends the clash between Disney and Republicans in the state, who have threatened to sue to reverse the changes.

"Disney has once again overplayed their hand in Florida," Bridget Ziegler, one of the new board members, posted on Twitter, accusing Disney of arrogance. "We won't stand for this and we won't back down."

The company defended the move, saying in a statement: "All agreements signed between Disney and the district were appropriate, and were discussed and approved in open, noticed public forums in compliance with Florida's government in the Sunshine law."

The Orlando Sentinel first reported the new agreement, citing lawyers for the municipal entity, which has been renamed the Central Florida Tourism Oversight District.

The "declaration of restrictive covenants," passed by the old board, is valid in perpetuity or, if that's considered unlawful, until "21 years after the death of the last survivor of the descendants of King Charles III, King of England."

It's the latest twist in the fight between DeSantis and the corporation that kicked off when Disney criticized a law he signed limiting elementary school teachings about gender identity. Disney had controlled the Reedy Creek district since its founding almost 60 years ago.

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By Felipe Marques

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