

## CITY OF CHENEY

### GENERAL GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES DIRECTIVE

SUBJECT: Social Media Policy

P&P# E-9

OFFICE OF ORIGIN: Mayor/City Clerk/IT

EFFECTIVE DATE: August 11, 2010

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#### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines and define individual and departmental responsibilities for the use of social media. Social media includes, but is not limited to, social networking sites such as MySpace, Facebook and LinkedIn, micro-blogging tools such as Twitter, and audio-visual sites such as YouTube.

#### **PROCEDURES**

- A. Prior to creating a social media site, departments should consider the need and value of a department or program dedicated site versus relying on the City website to disperse department or program information. Since social media sites lose the interest of their audiences when not updated regularly, department staff should calculate the time and effort it will take to maintain a site so that visitors continue to find value over time. As a rule of thumb, social media sites should be updated at least once per week.
- B. Department Heads must obtain approval from the City Administrator and IT Director prior to creating a social media account.
- C. Department Heads must approve the creation of social media accounts within their departments and appoint specific staff members to maintain the sites. Department Heads are responsible for ensuring their staff follows the procedures set forth in this social media policy and monitoring the sites for appropriate use by their employees.
- D. All approved uses of social media must be reported to the City's IT Director. The IT Director will maintain a list of all City social media sites that are operating, including login information and password. The IT Director must be informed if the department intends to stop operating their social media site.
- E. Department staff is responsible for monitoring comments, removing any prohibited content, and saving content as required by the Public Records Act (RCW 42.56).

#### **INFORMATION POSTED TO SOCIAL MEDIA SITES**

##### City Posted Information

- A. The most appropriate uses of City social media sites are: 1) time-sensitive and emergency information and 2) as a communications/marketing tool which increases the City's ability to broadcast its messages to the widest possible audience.
- B. Wherever possible, content posted to City social media sites will also be available on the City's main website.

- C. Social media sites should contain links directing users back to the City's website for in-depth information, forms, documents, or online services necessary to conduct business with the City of Cheney.
- D. Information posted on social media sites must be copied from the site, pasted into a Word document and saved in a searchable electronic folder as often as possible, but not less than once per work day.
- E. Social media sites shall clearly indicate that any articles and any other content posted or submitted for posting are subject to public disclosure.
- F. Councilmembers, Commissioners, appointed volunteers (i.e. Planning Commission, Historic Preservation Commission, Park Board), and other officials should not comment or otherwise communicate on the City's social media sites. Participating in online discussions may constitute a meeting under the Open Public Meetings Act (RCW 42.30).
- G. Information posted on social media sites must be related to official City business.
- H. Employees are expressly forbidden to misuse any social media access privileges in any way that may include, but is not limited to:
  - Using social media accounts for unlawful activities, including violations of copyright law, or for activities that are malicious or have the effect of harassing other users.
  - Violating the acceptable use policies of any network to which they connect to the account.
  - Misrepresenting the city's programs or policies in their communications.

#### Information Posted by Outside Individuals

- A. For all City social media sites that allow posts, those sites are limited public forums, moderated by City staff to ensure content posted by outsiders is appropriate.
  1. Posted content (including comments, photos and links) must be related to the topic posted by the City to be considered appropriate.
  2. Inappropriate and prohibited content is subject to immediate removal from the site. This includes content that:
    - Is not topically related to the particular article being commented upon.
    - Promotes or advertises commercial services, entities or products.
    - Supports or opposes political candidates or ballot propositions.
    - Is obscene
    - Discusses or encourages illegal activity
    - Promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation.
    - Provides information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems.
    - Violates a legal ownership.
- B. Inappropriate content must be removed immediately and retained as required under the Public Records Act.

## RETENTION OF POSTED INFORMATION

- A. Information posted to the City's social media sites is subject to the Public Records Act (RCW 42.56) and records retention requirements (RCW 40.14) set by state law. Records retention schedules can be found at <http://www.sos.wa.gov/archives/RecordsRetentionSchedules.aspx>.
- B. Department staff is responsible for ensuring retention of the original source content in organized, searchable electronic folders. Original content posted by the City on social media sites must be saved in a Word document or appropriate media file. The records should be retained in such a manner that entire folders can be deleted after reaching the minimum retention period as set by state law. Destruction must be appropriately logged and submitted to the City Clerk.
- C. All comments posted by outside users on City social media sites, including those that are inappropriate and removed by staff, must be retained. Staff must copy these posts, including the City information to which they are responding if applicable, into a Word document to be retained as set forth in this policy. In addition, when staff removes inappropriate content they need to include their name and the date and time the content was removed.