

City of Mukilteo, Washington
RESOLUTION NO. 2014-21

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
MUKILTEO, WASHINGTON, ESTABLISHING A SOCIAL MEDIA
POLICY FOR THE CITY OF MUKILTEO.**

WHEREAS, state law, city ordinances and policies direct the City of Mukilteo to openly and transparently communicate with residents about City operations; and

WHEREAS, the City of Mukilteo utilizes new electronic tools to communicate with residents and visitors about City operations; and

WHEREAS, emerging technologies bring with them new challenges for record-keeping, free speech, transparency, and communications; now, therefore,

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MUKILTEO, WASHINGTON, HEREBY RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Purpose.

This resolution establishes a policy for the use of social media in support of City operations. It also provides guidelines for conduct by City employees who use social media to engage with residents and visitors on behalf of the City. This policy is not intended to address employee's personal use of social media sites; which is governed by the City's existing personnel and technology use policies. This policy applies to all users of City communications and computing resources, including regular employees, temporary employees, elected officials, volunteers, contractors, and all others who use these resources on the City's behalf.

Section 2. Use of Social Media Platforms.

1. Social media platforms can provide important tools to help the City disseminate time-sensitive information in a quick and efficient manner, including emergency situations. These platforms are also effective tools for communicating with residents, supporting City activities, and promoting our community.
2. Social media platforms must comply with applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies. This includes adherence to established laws and policies regarding copyright, public records, freedom of speech, privacy laws, and security and conduct policies established by the City. If a social media platform cannot comply with applicable laws and regulations, the City will not use or authorize use of the platform.

3. The official City website will remain the primary and predominant online presence for the City of Mukilteo. Social media platforms can augment this presence as a means of communicating information in various formats to diverse audiences. This policy is intended to apply to interactive features of the City website as well as external social media platforms.
4. Social media platforms are not a mechanism for conducting official city business, other than to informally communicate with the public. This includes conducting meetings, making policy decisions, official public noticing, and discussing items of legal or fiscal significance that have not previously been released to the public.
5. The Mayor will designate a Social Media Coordinator to coordinate the activities of City departments and to oversee the City's social media program generally.
6. All social media accounts or profiles created in the name of the City, City Departments, or City Boards and Commissions must be approved by the Social Media Coordinator.
7. All social media accounts or profiles should include a link to the City's social media policy, and the Social Media Coordinator will develop standard language that provides information about copyrights, privacy protections, public records, and comments.
8. Use of social media platforms when administering City accounts is permitted during regular work hours and using City equipment.
9. Employees representing the City via social media platforms must conduct themselves as representatives of the City.
10. Participation in online discussions by City councilmembers or members of City boards and commissions could constitute a meeting under the Open Public Meetings Act. In order to avoid a violation of state law, councilmembers and members of City board and commissions may not participate in discussions on the City's social media sites.
11. The City's Information Technology staff, in conjunction with the Social Media Coordinator, will maintain a list of active social media sites, logins and passwords, and will provide support, monitor usage, and report inappropriate use of technology.
12. All City employees will be given a copy of the Social Media Policy for review and all employees responsible for administering a City account will regularly review the Social Media Policy to ensure compliance.

Section 3. Public Records Compliance.

1. All social media sites are subject to state law regarding the creation, storage and disposition of public records. The Social Media Coordinator will work with the City Clerk to ensure that City accounts are appropriately archived and data preserved in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.
2. All City accounts must clearly state that content is subject to public disclosure.
3. In general, City staff should not create original content via social media platforms. Wherever possible, information posted on City social media sites should be first provided on the City's official website or in another readily available format, such as a public notice or press release.

Section 4. Content Guidelines.

1. In order to protect privacy and security of employees, residents and visitors, no employees should disseminate sensitive, personally-identifiable information, such as Social Security Numbers, personal phone numbers or email addresses, or home address, about themselves or others via City accounts.
 - a. In order to protect public safety in cases, including but limited to, sex offender notification or wanted individuals, City accounts may be used at the discretion of the Police Chief, Emergency Manager or designee to alert the public to individuals who endanger public safety in accordance with the provisions of RCW 4.24.550.
2. No City account may be used to post content involving or related to:
 - a. Items that are involved in litigation or that could be involved in future litigation;
 - b. Defamatory, libelous, combative, offensive, disparaging, demeaning or threatening materials related to any person, entity, organization or group;
 - c. Personal, private, sensitive or confidential information of any kind.
3. City accounts should not be used to support private interests, and city staff and contractors will exercise care and judgment when posting links or content related to private organizations or businesses.
 - a. Posts or links involving private organizations or businesses may highlight businesses or organizations that sponsor City events and activities or otherwise support the City's economic development, tourism promotion, or community support activities.
 - b. City accounts should avoid actions that suggest an endorsement of specific businesses through "like", "follow", or similar connections.
 - c. Staff and contractors should not use City accounts to promote businesses in which they have an ownership interest.

- d. Nothing in this section prevents City support or connections with other public agencies, non-profit or charity organizations, or the news media.
4. City staff or contractors must immediately report inappropriate content to the Social Media Coordinator. Any posts by City accounts that violate this policy will be hidden or removed. Any content removed from City social media sites based on this policy must be recorded by the City, along with the time, date, identity of the author when available, and the name of the staff member who removed the content.
5. Content provided on City communications should avoid the use of abbreviations, jargon, acronyms or slang. Although social media sites are often more casual than other communication tools, they still represent the City and should maintain a professional image.
6. For consistency and ease of use, social media sites will use consistent names and images whenever possible. The Social Media Coordinator will develop name and image guidelines for use by all City accounts.
7. A social media platform, like any communication resource, must be updated regularly to ensure the information provided is current, accurate, and useful. If a City account is no longer updated on a regular basis, the Social Media Coordinator may discontinue its use and close the account, while ensuring that all records are preserved in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.
8. In order to ensure equal access to all residents and visitors, sites requiring membership or subscription to view content should be avoided. All City accounts and pages should be set to allow the public to view content on an equal and open basis.
9. Comments and other interactive features must be disabled, unless specifically permitted by the Social Media Coordinator.
10. If comments or other interactive features cannot be disabled, or are authorized by the Social Media Coordinator, the following guidelines must be followed:
 - a. Social Media sites are limited public forums, moderated by City staff to ensure content posted by outside users is appropriate. The City reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this social media policy or any applicable law.
 - b. Comments from children under the age of 13 may not be posted in order to comply with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act. By posting on a City social media site, users acknowledge that they are at least 13 years old. Those 12 years old and younger may contact the City via email instead. Comments by children under 13 will be considered inappropriate content and will be subject to being hidden or removed as provided below.
 - c. The Social Media Coordinator will create a content disclaimer, which reserves the right to remove inappropriate comments, including those that have obscene language or sexual content, threaten or defame any person or

organization, violate the legal ownership interest of another party, support or oppose political candidates or ballot propositions, promote illegal activity, promote commercial services or products or are not topically related to the particular posting, or that promote, foster, or perpetuate discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, age, gender or gender expression, sexual orientation, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, military service, or physical or mental disability.

- d. Comments which are critical of the City or its policies, which do not violate the content disclaimer, are free speech and should not be hidden or removed.
- e. City staff or contractors must immediately report inappropriate content to the Social Media Coordinator, who may direct that comments prohibited by these guidelines be hidden or removed.
- f. Any content removed from City social media sites based on this policy must be recorded by the City, along with the time, date, identity of the author when available, and the name of the staff member who removed the content.
- g. Removed content may be subject to public disclosure and will be preserved in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

RESOLVED and approved this 1st day of December, 2014.

APPROVED:



MAYOR, JENNIFER GREGERSON

ATTEST/AUTHENTICATED:



CITY CLERK, CHRISTINA J. BOUGHMAN

FILED WITH CITY CLERK: 12-01-14
PASSED BY CITY COUNCIL: 12-01-14
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