SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY
Adopted: October 2019
Amended: May 2014

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I. PURPOSE & SCOPE

Social media offers evolving opportunities to integrate technology and social interaction to communicate with city residents, businesses and visitors. The City of Shakopee recognizes the value of social media to enhance public outreach, communicate essential information, interact with the community and promote city services, programs and events.

The City of Shakopee wishes to represent itself, its services and its facilities appropriately and consistently. This policy provides guidelines on how to use social media to create a consistent social media presence that matches the organization's overall communication strategies, protects the organization's brand reputation and encourages City Council members, employees and appointed boards and commissions members to responsibly share the city's message.

This policy also covers the private use of the city's social media accounts by all city representatives, including its employees and agents, council members, appointed board or commissioner members and all public safety volunteers to the extent it affects the city.

Questions regarding the scope of this policy should be directed to the Communications Coordinator.

A. Definitions

Social media includes a variety of ways for creating and fostering online social communities while networking and communicating over the Internet. This policy applies, but is not limited to, the following social media sites used by the City of Shakopee:

Facebook
Twitter
YouTube
LinkedIn
Instagram
Nextdoor
Blogs

The city does not maintain personal accounts of elected and appointed officials or employees. The city has the right to eliminate its official social media accounts at any time without notice.

B. Use of Social Media as a Communications Strategy

The City of Shakopee uses social media to achieve the organization's communications goals and objectives. Social media use generally falls into four main categories:

To share essential, need-to-know information with the community
To promote city services, programs and events
To interact and engage with residents, businesses and visitors
To relate public safety messages

II. GENERAL PROCEDURES

A. Responsibility

The Communications Division oversees the city's social media accounts and has administrative rights to all City of Shakopee social media accounts. The Communications Coordinator has access to all city-sponsored social media sites, including rights to edit a site, remove content, add/remove authorized staff or change password and login information.

B. Branding

All City of Shakopee social media accounts must focus on city-related business and adhere to the tone and persona of the City of Shakopee brand. Accounts and their content should be organized in a manner that avoids ambiguities and/or conflicting

information across the city's various communication mediums. Content posted to City of Shakopee social media sites should regularly 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 Shakopee.

Social media websites are to be consistently branded to communicate a clear association with the city. The City of Shakopee name, logo and links to the city website shall be included on all city social media accounts whenever possible. In addition, accounts should include the department logo, city department information (address, phone number and hours of operation) and any other aesthetic "look and feel" elements defined by the Communications Division now or in the future. The site should also prominently post or link to the city's comment policy (Section IV).

C. Creating a Social Media Account

Departments wishing to establish a social media account must first discuss their request with the Communications Division to ensure consistency within the city's communications strategy. Once created, each department is responsible for the content and upkeep of the account. Staff may not create a new or significantly alter an existing social media account without approval of the department head and the Communications Division.

D. Authorized Users

Only authorized employees may post as official representatives of the city on the city's social media accounts. Employees representing the City of Shakopee via the organization's official social media outlets must abide by the terms of this policy and conduct themselves in accordance with the city's personnel and information technology policies. Failure to do so will be subject to discipline as outlined in the city's Personnel Handbook.

City of Shakopee social media accounts shall not be used by any employee, elected official or appointed board or commission member to express personal views or promote personal agendas.

All authorized users must go through social media training before being granted access to the city's social media accounts. Social media accounts are considered a city asset and logins must be securely administered. Passwords to city social media accounts must be reviewed and changed at least one a year.

E. Interacting on Social Media

The value of social media is its ability for individuals and organizations to network and interact. The city's social media accounts may "like" and follow government entities, nonprofit and nonpartisan organizations related to city functions and local media. City accounts may like, share, retweet or comment on social media posts and comments that correspond with the city's social media goals and/or promote the overall community. City social media accounts should not endorse private business or commercial interests. However, the city may use social media to promote the mission of the city, which could include information about new businesses, economic development or private investment approved or in the process of approval by the City Council.

1. Responding to Comments
   Staff responsible for department-specific social media sites must monitor the site regularly and respond to comments and messages in a timely manner (within 24 hours during the work week). Staff are encouraged to use good judgement when determining whether to respond to a comment. Staff should politely correct inaccuracies and provide evidence to support information (e.g., the city website) but should avoid debating on social media. For in-depth or personal matters, you may also ask a person to contact you offline.

2. Removing Comments
   Comments violating the city's comment policy shall be removed promptly. When a person's comment is removed, the city will post a reason for removing the post (i.e. "A comment to this post was removed because it contained an obscenity. This is a violation of the city's social media comment policy (link to policy)"). Removed comments should be archived for our records using a citywide tracking form.

3. Correcting Mistakes
   If an employee makes a factual mistake on a city social media site, the employee should correct it as soon as possible. Corrections should be upfront and timely. If modifying an earlier post, make it clear that the post has been corrected.

F. Public Records and Data Practices

City of Shakopee social media sites are subject to State of Minnesota public records laws. Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to city business, including a subscriber lists and comments, is public record.

Minnesota state law and relevant City of Shakopee records retention schedules apply to social media formats and social media content as reflected in the city's record retention policy. In most cases, content on the city's social media sites, including comments, is expected to be transitory, incidental or non-vital in nature and therefore shall be

retained "until read." However, any content posted that does constitute the official record will be retained according to the City of Shakopee records retention schedule.

III. PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The City of Shakopee respects the free speech rights of all its City Council members; employees; and boards, committee and commission members. However, when using personal social media accounts, they are expected and required to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the city's policies and standards of conduct.

City Council members; employees; and appointed board, committee and commission members shall not:

- Use personal social media accounts to speak on behalf of the city or represent themselves as a spokesperson for the City Council; a city board, committee or commission; city administration; or other city department without prior authorization from the Communications Division and city administrator.
- Include a city brand, logo, trademark or other city identifier on personal social media accounts, e.g., profile photo or avatar.
- Connect city email accounts to personal social media accounts or tie social media account names to the city.
- Post non-public, sensitive or confidential information, such as information related to coworkers, personnel data, medical information and claims or lawsuits against the city. This includes photos or videos that may have been taken due to employee or elected/appointed official's unique access as part of one's duties.

In addition, City Council members; employees; and boards, committee and commission members are strongly encouraged to consider the impact of social media statements prior to posting. They should keep these best practices and guidelines in mind when using a personal social media account:

- Posts that express favoritism and/or bias against any individual or group of individuals reflect poorly on the city and its residents.
- Consider whether liking, sharing, retweeting or commenting on social media posts could be perceived as an endorsement of or about the city, its employees, constituents, other public officials, supplies, vendors or contractors.
- When posting on social media, ask yourself if you or your department would be embarrassed to see the comment appear in the news. If so, don't post it.

G. Employees

The line between personal/professional and public/private can be easily blurred on social media. While city employees have the right to speak publicly as a private citizen on matters

of public concern, they are reminded to use good judgment when using personal social media accounts to comment or post about a city-related issue, policy, etc.

H. Elected and Appointed Officials

- To protect against a Minnesota Data Practices Act violation, social media should not be used as a mechanism for conducting official city business other than to informally communicate with the public.
- It is important to be mindful of the risks of electronic communication in relation to the Minnesota Data Practices Act and the Open Meeting Law. Two-way communication between elected officials or between members of city boards, committees and commissions should be strictly avoided. Adding to a post or comment could inadvertently result in a quorum. If this occurs, the online conversations should immediately cease, with no further posts by the officials. The conversation must not be deleted, and the city administrator should be notified.
- To help prevent errors, liability issues and the posting of inaccurate information, officials are strongly encouraged to speak with the appropriate staff person or department to ensure accurate information, as well as to link to official city communications and documents, rather than summarizing them from memory.
- Officials are asked to correct errors or mistakes in a posting or comment as soon as possible.
- Official city social media sites shall not be used for campaigning purposes. Comments or links to any content that endorses or opposes political candidates or ballot propositions, including links to an elected official's campaign site, shall not be posted on an official city social media site.
- Officials are encouraged to post the following disclaimer on their personal social media accounts: The opinions and views expressed by this account do not represent those of the City of Shakopee.

IV. COMMENT & DISCLAIMER POLICY

The City of Shakopee welcomes participation and comments from the public on its social media sites. Those who make comments shall exchange opinions and ideas in a climate of mutual respect. The City of Shakopee will not edit any posted comments. However, we have the right, at our sole discretion, to delete comments, posts, photos and videos if they:

1. Contain obscenities
2. Include offensive, threatening or harassing language; are personal attacks; or demean specific individuals or groups of people based on ethnicity, race, gender, religion, age, disability or sexual orientation.

3. Contain or link to obscene or sexual content.
4. Are commercial promotions, solicit commerce or qualify as spam.
5. Are potentially libelous.
6. Conduct or encourage illegal activity.
7. Compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems.
8. Contain private or personal information published without consent and/or violate a legal ownership interest of any other party.

The city has the right to reproduce any pictures or videos posted on its social media account, as well as quote any comments or suggestions left by users.

Terms & Conditions
By posting on the city's social media sites, users agree to abide by the city's comment and disclaimer policy. The city also has the right to remove a comment from users who are not using their legal name or otherwise appropriately identifying themselves.

Disclaimer
The views, postings, positions or opinions expressed on this site do not necessarily reflect those of the City of Shakopee.

Advertising
The City of Shakopee does not endorse any product, service, company or organization advertising on its social media pages. The ads that appear on social media pages are sold, posted and maintained by those social media companies.

Privacy Policy
Please note, the City of Shakopee does not share information gathered through its social media sites with third parties for promotional purposes. However, any information you provide to the city is subject to the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act. This law classifies certain information as available to the public on request.

This comment and disclaimer policy shall be displayed prominently or linked to on every City of Shakopee social media site.