



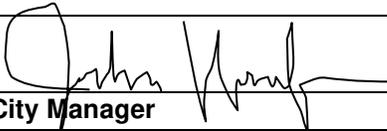
# Agenda Item Summary

Meeting of: April 5, 2021

**Agenda Item Title: Social Media Policy**

**Submitted by:** John P. Hanifan

**Approved for submittal:**

  
City Manager

**Explanation of Agenda Item:** City Council discussed the need to update the City of Chelsea's Social Media Policy at the Annual Visioning Session in February, 2021.

The attached policy is submitted for Council review, discussion and approval.

**Fiscal or Resource Considerations:**

**Does this agenda item require the expenditure of funds?** YES X NO

**If YES, are funds budgeted?** YES X NO

**Are staff or other resources required?** X YES NO

**City Manager Comments:** This item was presented at the Visioning Session (2/10/2021). The transcript of that portion of the Visioning Session is attached. I recommend Council adopt the attached Social Media Policy

**City Manager Recommended Form of Motion:** Motion to adopt the attached Social Media Policy (*with modifications, if any*)

**Names and addresses of those to be notified:**

**Attachments:**

Updated Social Media Policy

A portion of the Transcript from February 10, 2021 Visioning Session

**All Agenda Item Summaries and any attachments are due in the City Clerk's Office by 4:00 p.m. on the Wednesday prior to the City Council meeting. If the Wednesday prior to the City Council meeting is a holiday, then the submission deadline is 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday.**

## SOCIAL MEDIA

The City recognizes that many of its employees, elected officials, appointed officials and board members use social media for personal communication and enjoyment. In general, the City views social media positively and respects the right of employees, elected officials, appointed officials and board members to use social media as a medium of self-expression. An employee's, elected official (s) appointed official(s) and board member (s) online activities, however, can reflect negatively on the City or have negative consequences for the City, especially if you choose to identify yourself as a City employee, elected official, appointed official or board member or to discuss matters related to the City. This policy is designed to protect the City's interests, while allowing its employees, elected and appointed officials and board members to engage in the use of social media as freely as possible.

Social media includes social networking sites (such as Facebook); video and photo-sharing websites (such as YouTube and Instagram); micro-blogging sites (such as Twitter); blogs, including corporate blogs, personal blogs, or blogs hosted by traditional media publications; forums and discussion boards; online encyclopedias (such as Wikipedia); and any other website that allows individuals to publish their own content or comment on content posted by others.

Some employees, as part of their job duties and responsibilities with the City, will be authorized to create social media content on behalf of the City. These employees will receive written authorization describing the content they are entitled to create and any restrictions or policies that apply to their individual circumstances.

Employees, elected and appointed officials and board members who use social media for personal use are reminded that they are personally responsible for the content of any social media they create. If you use social media, you must comply with the following:

### A. GENERAL STANDARDS

1. Make it clear that the views you express are yours only and that they do not necessarily reflect the views of the City. You should neither claim nor imply you are speaking on the City's behalf. If you identify yourself as a City employee, representative, elected or appointed official or board member, refer to the work done by City government, or provide a link to the City's website, you are required to include the following disclaimer in a reasonably prominent place: "The views expressed on this post are mine and do not necessarily reflect the views of the City of Chelsea"
2. Do not disclose any confidential or proprietary information of the City or concerning residents of the City. Do not use any City logo in any social media posting.
3. Your social media postings should not violate any other applicable policy of the City, including those set forth in the Employee Handbook. You may not harass, defame, demean, or threaten any other person or entity.
4. Assume your social media posting is accessible to the general public. You must be respectful to the City, its employees, constituents, partners and affiliates, and others. Do not let your personal perspectives, opinions, or postings cause damage to the City and/or its interests.

5. If a member of the news media or blogger contacts you about a social media posting that concerns the City, refer that person to the Mayor or City Manager.

#### B. LIMITATIONS

1. No sexual, violent, racial, ethnically derogatory material, comments, pictures, artwork, video or other reference may be posted along with any City of Chelsea approved reference.
2. Employees, Elected and appointed officials and board members shall not post any material on the internet that brings discredit to or may adversely affect the efficiency or integrity of the City of Chelsea.
3. Employees, Elected and appointed officials and board members should consider the possible adverse consequences of internet postings, such as future employment, cross-examination in criminal cases, and public as well as private embarrassment.
4. Employees, Elected and appointed officials and board members are reminded to exercise good judgment and demonstrate personal accountability when choosing to participate on social-networking sites.
5. Sites deemed inappropriate, whether an employment association or not, bringing discredit to the City, or to a City employee, elected or appointed official or board member or promoting misconduct, whether on or off duty, may be investigated through a criminal or administrative investigation.

#### C. FAILURE TO COMPLY

1. Failure of any employee, elected or appointed official to comply with the policy or violation of the policy is subject to discipline or censure, up to an including termination of employment or removal from elected or appointed office.

Transcript from Council Visioning Session  
Social Media Policy Discussion  
February 10, 2021

Mr. Hanifan:

Sure. Thank you members of Council, Mayor Johnson. And, Mr. Feeney, just let the record show, he just now joined us. So whenever we have the slides, whenever you see letters or bullet points underneath that the major topics, those are things that have either been added by staff or are edited by Council as important points in preparation of the agenda, it's not the exhaustive list of what we can discuss in any one topic. So I wanted to wait until we actually got to a slide to point it out. So one of the first things under Council rules is we talked about this before is **the social media policy** improvement. And bear with me, I'm going to attempt to change slides here. You should see a social media policy now, is that what we're seeing now? Everyone's done?

Mayor Johnson:

Yes.

Mr. Hanifan:

Okay. So this is an amended February 10th that really almost the entire first page was the existing social media policy that we had. As you can imagine, there's as many different and various social media policies across, all different kinds of organizations or local governments just like Chelsea that have social media policies. Really I guess the additional sections that have been added as is letter B limitations, items one through five. And so this is the first draft on the policy, I expect that there'll be discussion and we can certainly answer any questions anyone might have about this first pass. I don't view this as a final product and certainly are amenable to suggestions to make it better. So this is really just the first draft of the policy.

Mayor Johnson:

All right. Thank you, Mr. Hanifan. And we'll certainly have and, again, this is not something that we're voting on, or there are no motions tonight, it's more of an introduction of topics and setting priorities for the future. Does Council have any comments at this time? Ms. Albertson.

Albertson:

So would this be the time when we might offer suggestions or text changes or anything like that is now? Or are we going to wait till it comes before Council for voting?

Mayor Johnson:

Sure. You could certainly we could do it now or later. I think if there are general topic areas that need further, you would like add it or discussed, if it's more micro matters, might save maybe the micro ones, but certainly can add your suggestions at this time. Okay.

Albertson:

So it is in fact micro and I will say in my comment.

Mayor Johnson:

Okay. Ms. Kwas, I noticed that your hand was also up.

Transcript from Council Visioning Session

Social Media Policy Discussion

February 10, 2021

Kwas:

Thank you, Madam Mayor, I also had more of a micro adjustment that I will say. Thank you.

Mayor Johnson:

All right. Thank you. My one suggestion on this is just to more clearly call out violation is subject to discipline or censure. All right. Any other comments from Council at this time? All right. Then we'll move on to item number B, which is the open meetings act training.

Mr. Hanifan:

Thank you, Mayor Johnson, members of Council.