



Social Media Policy
S-088-21

Effective Date:
September 23, 2021

Part 1 Purpose

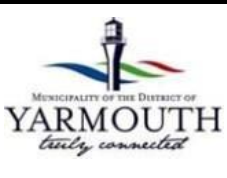
- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to elected officials regarding the personal use of social media sites where they are clearly identified as being a councillor of, or connected to the Municipality.

Part 2 Definitions

- 2.1 **“Co-participants”** means the owners of personal accounts and/or the originators of social media content.
- 2.2 **“FOIPOP”** means the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.
- 2.3 **“MODY”** means the Municipality of the District of Yarmouth.
- 2.4 **“Municipality”** means the Municipality of the District of Yarmouth.
- 2.5 **“Personal Account”** means an account set up by an individual, in their name, which is separate from a MODY account.
- 2.6 **“Social Media”** means the various online, accessible communication channels or technologies that enable individuals to join and/or participate in online communities for the purpose of publicly sharing information, ideas, messages, pictures, etc. These channels can include Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn, as well as blogs, mobile applications, websites, photo boards, discussion boards, or any other online location where commentary is publicly shared.

Part 3 Procedures

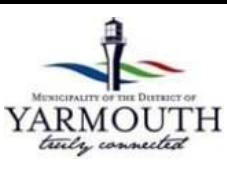
- 3.1 Social Media sites are public, regardless of individual privacy settings. As such, any postings (content, statements, pictures or comments, etc.) by an elected official has the potential to negatively impact the Municipality, its reputation, workplace, other councillors, employees, partners/vendors or its customers/clients.
- 3.2 Council will approach online communication by using sound judgment and common sense, using the Code of Conduct for elected officials as a guide. As social media is a far-reaching communication tool that comes with both risks and rewards, the personal social media accounts of Warden and Councillors must be considerate of the following:
 - 3.2.1 Conduct and represent themselves professionally;



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- 3.2.2 Posts, pictures, comments or any content involving the following will not be tolerated:
 - 3.2.2.1 Proprietary and confidential municipal information, including internal information and activities, confidential information of municipal employees, businesses partners, customers or clients;
 - 3.2.2.2 Inappropriate content, including harassing, bullying, intimidating and discriminatory content or sexual innuendos regarding employees, volunteers, Council members or other elected officials, customers/ clients, corresponding organizations or vendors;
 - 3.2.2.3 Defamatory, derogatory or disparaging statements regarding the Municipality, its employees, volunteers, Council members or other elected officials, customers/clients, corresponding, organizations, or vendors.
- 3.2.3 Posts on social media are subject to MODY's Violence in the Workplace policy.
- 3.2.4 No Council member shall purport to speak or post on behalf of the Municipality.
- 3.2.5 Posts by Councillors must be accurate and not misleading, and they must not reveal confidential information.
- 3.2.6 Re-posting something written by someone else should be done with caution, with the following procedures in mind:
 - 3.2.6.1 no material that negatively reflects on the Municipality shall be reposted;
 - 3.2.6.2 nothing relating to an open procedural file shall be re-posted;
 - 3.2.6.3 nothing that could open the Municipality to legal or civic action shall be re-posted;
 - 3.2.6.4 Councillors must ensure they have the proper permission from the original author to repost;



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- 3.2.6.5 if re-posting an item, Councillors shall clearly state the material, letter, response, etc. has been authored by someone else.
- 3.2.7 The Councillor's biography within the social media account should clearly state that the views expressed are those of the individual Councillor and may not represent the views of the Council as a whole.
- 3.2.8 Do not use the Municipality's logo on a personal account or personal website.
- 3.2.9 Do not post information discussed in closed session and do not post anything that would not otherwise be presented in a public forum.
- 3.2.10 Do not discuss situations involving named, pictured or otherwise identifiable individuals without their permission.
- 3.2.11 Do not use the copyrights, trademarks, publicity rights, or other rights of others without the necessary permissions of the rights holder(s).
- 3.2.12 Anyone receiving threats, abuse or harassment through their use of social media should report it to the Police.
- 3.2.13 Once an individual is no longer a Councillor, any social media accounts identifying them as a Councillor of, or connected to, the Municipality shall be disabled or amended.

Part 4 Recommended Practice

- 4.1 In the case of Facebook, in order to keep a Councillor's personal life and role as a Councillor separate, Councillors should create an additional Facebook page which members of the public can 'like' rather than using their personal profiles.
- 4.2 When asked a question about municipal operations (snow removal, etc.) Council may not have the answer. Therefore rather than duplicating the service provided by staff, elected officials should acknowledge the question and refer people to the Municipality's official customer service channels on Facebook or by phone or email.
- 4.3 Resist the urge to post everything. Emails from staff or citizens are written for a specific audience for a specific purpose. Councillors could be doing their readers

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a disservice by sharing information without context. Therefore cutting and pasting emails is not permitted.

- 4.4 Social media participants expect timely responses to requests and expect co-participants to monitor social media sites/pages frequently and regularly. Monitoring and responding in a timely way is crucial for Councillors that participate in social media.
- 4.5 Once information is published online, it becomes part of a permanent record. Council should provide a link to an online space where their thought or message can be expressed completely and accurately if it, along with its context, cannot fit within a character-restricted space (such as Twitter).
- 4.6 Social media posts by Councillors are subject to the FOIPOP Act.

Part 5 Failure to Follow Policy

Council members who fail to follow this this policy may be subject to corrective action by Council in accordance with Code of Conduct for elected officials.

Chief Administrative Officer's Annotation for Official Policy Book	
Date of Notice to Council members of Intent to Consider (7 days Min)	September 13, 2021
Date of Passage of current Policy	September 23, 2021
I certify that this Social Media Policy S-088-21 was adopted by Council as indicated above.	
	
_____	September 29, 2021
Chief Administrative Officer	Date



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Date last reviewed by Council:
Date last amended:

Amendment Log

Date	Amendment Description