

SOCIAL MEDIA USE POLICY

Approved VB 9/14/2020

PURPOSE

To address the fast-changing landscape of the Internet and the way citizens communicate and obtain information online, Village of Belgium Departments/Divisions may consider using social media technologies. As more citizens in our community make the shift towards, or include the use of, social media technologies to receive and share information and communicate their opinions, it is imperative for the Village to incorporate social media technologies into the existing communication infrastructure. Where appropriate, the use of social media technologies in work-related activities, events, and announcements is encouraged to enhance customer service, increase citizen involvement, and to further the goals of the organization.

The F&P Committee has an overriding and legitimate interest and expectation in deciding what is “spoken” on behalf of the Village on social media sites. It is the policy of the Village that a standard for interaction with social media tools and their associated technology is hereby established.

BENEFITS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

- Provides a low-cost resource for communicating the Village’s various messages and promoting Village services, programs, and initiatives
- Allows for real-time interaction with the public, thus, enabling the Village to better serve the public’s needs
- Creates an additional opportunity for the public to be informed and engaged in the Village’s affairs
- Increases efficiency as it pertains to the sharing of information, news, and events
- Provides a support device to internal departments and divisions for promoting events, partnerships, and other Village-driven initiatives and opportunities
- Serves as an additional advertising tool for increasing traffic on the Village’s official website

GUIDELINES

1. All Village of Belgium social media site proposals and uses are subject to prior review and approval by the F&P Committee
2. Village social media sites are an extension of the Village’s communication infrastructure.
3. The Village’s official website (www.village.belgium.wi.us) will remain the Village’s primary and predominant Internet presence.
 - a. The best and most appropriate uses of social media tools fall generally into two categories:
 - i. As channels for disseminating time-sensitive information as quickly as possible (e.g. emergency information, cancellations/closures)
 - ii. As marketing/promotional channels that increase the Village’s ability to broadcast its messages to the widest possible audience (e.g. recreation program information, etc.)
 - b. Whenever reasonable, content posted to a Village social media site should also be available on the Village’s official website.
 - c. Whenever reasonable, content posted to a Village social media site should contain links directing users back to the Village’s official website for in-depth information, forms, documents, and online services necessary to conduct business with the Village.

- d. Information shared on the Village website and social media sites from outside organizations shall be limited to the following:
 - i. Links to Non-Profit Groups located within Ozaukee County or the Cedar Grove Belgium School District may be posted on the “Community Links” page of the Village Website.
 - ii. Community Events sponsored by local government or non-profit organizations within Ozaukee County that are open to the public.
 - iii. Events held by members of the Belgium Area Chamber of Commerce that are open to the public.
4. All full-time Village employees have authorization to maintain approved social media accounts. Social media accounts will be maintained by Authorized Users, who must complete and have on file a Social Media Use Policy Authorized User Agreement Form.
5. Authorized Users are responsible for the content and upkeep of assigned Department/Division social media sites.
6. All Village social media sites and the conduct of Authorized Users shall comply with all appropriate Village policies and standards.
7. Village social media sites are subject to State of Wisconsin and Village of Belgium public records laws. Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to Village business, including a list of subscribers and posted communication, is a public record. Content related to Village business shall be maintained in an accessible format so that it can be readily produced in response to a public records request.
8. Wisconsin State law and relevant Village records retention schedules apply to social media formats and their content.
9. Social media sites shall clearly indicate that any content posted or submitted for posting are subject to public disclosure.
10. The F&P Committee reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this Social Media Use policy, the Terms of Use Agreement, and/or any applicable law found not to be in accord with Village purposes and policies, or for any other reason.
11. Any exceptions to the policy are subject to the prior review and approval of the F&P Committee.

RESPONSIBILITIES

F&P COMMITTEE

- Reviews proposals for new social media accounts and grants formal approval.
- Provides counsel to Departments/Divisions as to the appropriate use of the social media tools and guidance as to the types of information that may be posted.
- Monitors content on Department/Division social media accounts to ensure adherence to the guidelines in this policy. Inappropriate use may result in the removal of the content and/or Department/Division page or account from the social media sites.

VILLAGE CLERK or DEPUTY CLERK

- Maintains file of credentials for social media accounts.
- Manages public record requests for information found on Village social media sites, unless credentials were not submitted by respective Department/Division Director, in which case that Department/Division Director will be responsible for managing public record requests for information found on the social media site.

VILLAGE ATTORNEY

- Reviews and approves any changes or additions to the Terms of Use Agreement, as requested.
- Renders opinions on matters regarding disclaimers, terms of use, and privacy concerns as they arise.
- Provides opinions on matters of public records, in accordance with any applicable federal, state, and local laws.

DEPARTMENTS/DIVISIONS

ESTABLISHING A SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT

1. Contact the F&P Committee to discuss objectives and desired outcomes for utilizing social media technologies and to help determine the site's effectiveness in reaching the Department's/Division's communication objectives.
2. Obtain prior formal approval from the F&P Committee to proceed with any proposed social media account.
3. The Department/Division Director shall specify all initial Authorized Users for the project prior to establishing any social media account.
4. Obtain a completed and signed *Authorized User Agreement Form* for each employee responsible for managing social media accounts and return signed agreement(s) to the Village Clerk's office.
5. Establish the social media account using a Village e-mail address and provide the account user name and password to the Village Clerk's office, including all subsequent modifications to credentials.

OPERATING AND MAINTAINING A SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT

1. Include an introductory statement that clearly specifies the work-related purpose and topical scope of the social media site. The Village's website link should accompany the purpose statement.
2. When reasonable, social media accounts should link back to the Village website for the purpose of downloading any forms, documents, and other information.
3. Conspicuously post the approved Terms of Use Agreement.
4. Enable features for public comments, if such capability exists, and comply with and enforce the posted Terms of Use Agreement.
5. When possible, hide and do NOT delete content that violates the Terms of Use Agreement.
6. Maintain compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws related to public records requests and records retention.
7. Authorized Users shall monitor their sites at least once each work day and update content (e.g. post, tweet, etc.) once each week.
8. When practical, questions and comments received from citizens on social media should be responded to within 48 hours to better serve the public and encourage conversation on social media.
9. When social media account credentials are unknown by the Village Clerk's office, Department/Division account holders will be responsible for managing public records requests for information found on social media sites.

TERMS OF USE AGREEMENT

It shall be the policy of the Village that the following agreement must be conspicuously posted on each social media site established and maintained by the Village, if such capability exists. The agreement will also be posted on the Village's website (www.village.belgium.wi.us) for easy access.

SOCIAL MEDIA TERMS OF USE AGREEMENT

While this is an open forum, please keep your comments clean and appropriate. Inappropriate comments are subject to deletion by the administrator of this account. If you do not comply with the terms of use outlined below, your message will be removed. If you post inappropriate content a second time, your profile may be blocked from posting any more information to the site.

This forum is not monitored at all times. DO NOT use this forum to report emergency situations or time-sensitive issues.

Please remember the following rules when posting:

1. All content is subject to public records law.
2. Content should be related to the subject matter of the social media site where it is posted.
3. ***If your post violates any of the below rules, it will be deleted:***
 - Content is graphic, obscene, or explicit.
 - Content that is abusive, threatening, hateful, or intended to defame anyone or any organization.
 - Content that suggests or encourages illegal activity.
 - Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, lawful source of income, or arrest/conviction record.
 - Content posted by persons whose profile picture or avatar, username, or email address contains any of the aforementioned prohibited conduct.
 - Solicitations or advertisements, including but not limited to, promotion or endorsement of any private financial, commercial, or non-government agency.
 - Content attempting to defame or defraud any person or private financial, commercial, or governmental agency.
 - Content that compromises the safety or security of the public or public systems.
4. You participate at your own risk and take personal responsibility for your comments, your username, and all information provided.
5. The appearance of external links on this site does not constitute official endorsement by or on behalf of the Village.
6. Any public records requests for information found on Village of Belgium social media sites shall be directed to the Village Clerks' office.
7. For more information, please contact Village Hall at 262-285-7931.

DEFINITIONS

Social Media – forms of electronic communication (as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (such as videos). This policy covers all social media tools, both current and future.

Social Networking – is the practice of expanding one's business and/or social contacts by making connections using a range of social media tools including blogs, video, images, tagging, lists of friends, forums, and messaging that use the Internet to promote such connections through Web-based groups established for that purpose.

Social Media Account – any registration, login credential, tool, forum, website, or network that is created or maintained by a Department and/or Division for the purpose of establishing or perpetuating a social media presence.

Authorized User – any employee, and all persons acting on their behalf, who has been authorized by their Department/Division Director and registered with and approved by the F&P Committee to establish, create, edit, or maintain any social media account and the posts it may contain in the transaction of official business of the Village.

Post – any e-mail, message, picture, graphic, image, advertisement, notification, feed, stream, transmission, broadcast, podcast, video, instant message, text message, blog, microblog, status update, wall post, comment, and any and all other forms, means, or attempts at collaboration or communication that is uploaded, posted to, or otherwise displayed on or transmitted by, any social media account or network.

External Entity – any person or party not employed by, or an authorized representative of, the Village.

External Information – any social media post by any external entity, and the information or substance it contains.