
	CASCADE CHARTER TOWNSHIP, MICHIGAN			
	POLICIES AND PROCEDURES		# OF PAGES: <u>4</u>	POLICY #: <u>Admin 2016-02</u>
	SUBJECT: Social Media Usage		APPROVED BY:  TOWNSHIP MANAGER, BENJAMIN SWAYZE	
	DEPARTMENT: Administrative	SUPERCEDES: None	DATE OF ISSUE: May 25, 2016	DATE OF EFFECT: Immediate

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the utilization of social media platforms by Township staff and officials to communicate with the public.

II. POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of Cascade Township that we will utilize social media platforms to enhance communication, collaboration and information exchange with the public in support of the goals and objectives of the Township. The policies and procedures contained within are to establish guidelines to promote the effective, efficient and orderly use of social media platforms to promote accurate and reliable communication with the public.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Establishment of Township Social Media Sites – The Township’s official website (www.cascadetwp.com) shall remain the Township’s primary means of communication. Whenever possible, postings to social media platforms should link to information readily available on the Township website.

1. The establishment of Township social media sites is subject to the approval of the Township Manager. The Township manager will be granted administrative access rights to all Township social media pages.
2. Administrative access to Township social media accounts will be limited to the Township Manager, Department Head and/or his designee.
3. Township social media sites shall clearly state that such sites are maintained by the Township and shall contain a link to the Township social media usage policy.
4. Township social media sites shall be managed consistent with the Open Meetings Act. Elected officials and administrative staff shall not deliberate Township matters through commenting or blogging on Township social media sites.
5. Township social media sites will comply with usage rules and regulations required by the site provider, including privacy policies.
6. All Township social media sites shall adhere to all applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies.

7. Township social media sites are subject to the Freedom of Information Act. Any content maintained on a Township social media site that is related to Township business, including a list of subscribers, posted communication, and communication submitted for posting may be considered a public record and subject to public disclosure
8. The Township Manager reserves the right to terminate any Township social media site at any time without notice.

B. Approved Social Media Platforms – The following social media platforms may be utilized by the Township:

1. **Facebook**
2. **Twitter**
3. **Instagram**
4. **LinkedIn**

The use of other social media platforms must be approved by the Township Manager.

C. Content Guidelines – The goal of the Township’s social media sites is to serve as an online information source focused on Township issues, projects, news and events and is not intended as a public forum. Whenever possible, social media will link to information readily available on the Township official website (www.cascadetwp.com).

1. The content of Township social media site shall pertain to Township related or sponsored/supported news, issues, programs, meetings, services and events. Content can include, but is not limited to information, photographs, videos and hyperlinks.
2. The Township shall have full permission or rights to any content posted by the Township, including photographs and videos.
3. Postings shall only contain information that is freely available to the public and not be confidential as defined by any City policy or state or federal law.
4. Postings may NOT contain any personal information, except for the names of employees whose job duties include being available for contact by the public.
5. Any employee authorized to post items on any of the Township social media sites shall review, be familiar with, and comply with the social media site’s use policies terms and conditions.
6. Any employee authorized to post items on any of the Township’s social media sites shall not express his or her own personal views or concerns through such postings. All postings on any Township media site shall reflect only official goals, objectives, policies and views of the Township.

7. Township social media sites may contain content including, but not limited to, advertisements and hyperlinks over which the Township has no control. The Township does not endorse any content placed on Township social media sites by the site's owners, vendors or partners.
8. The Township reserves the right to implement or remove any functionality of its social media site. This includes, but is not limited to, information, articles, pictures, videos, comments or any other form of communication that is posted on a Township social media site.

D. Commenting Guidelines – The spirit of social media is a dialog with two-way communication, which allows for members of the public to comment on information posted to Township social media sites. As such, all comments will be monitored by Township staff. The Township reserves the right to delete and/or censor all comments with content that:

1. Contains a personal attack, insult, racial slur or any other derogatory term
2. Defames a person or organization
3. Is off-topic and unrelated to the original post
4. Uses foul language or is sexually explicit, including “masked” profanity
5. Promotes hate or discrimination of any kind
6. Is blatant spam, including advertising commercial services or products
7. Encourages illegal activity or violates any local, state or federal law
8. Contains private or personal information
9. Endorses political candidates or a particular stance on an active ballot measure or specific legislation
10. Is reported as abuse
11. Contains random or unintelligible text
12. Compromises the safety or security of the public or public systems
13. Violates the legal ownership interest of any other party
14. Contains images, videos or links to sites that do not conform to these guidelines
15. Contains viruses or computer code
16. Violates any aspect of this policy

These guidelines shall be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink on all Township social media sites.

Repeated violations of the commenting guidelines shall be cause for the author to be permanently blocked from the Township social media sites.

E. Administration/Monitoring Guidelines – A successful social media site requires frequent attention. Each social media site requires a main administrator who is responsible for monitoring the site on a daily basis and sustaining the page long-

term. The department will also designate a back-up administrator in the primary administrator's absence.

1. Social media sites should be refreshed with a new post at least once per day, with the minimum being once per week. Public engagement should be used as a gauge for the timing and frequency of posts.
2. Employees representing the Township on social media sites shall conduct themselves at all times as a professional representative of the Township in accordance with all Township policies. Social media posts should be made utilizing proper grammar and avoid utilizing jargon and abbreviations. While social media can be less formal than other means of communication, posts to social media should still represent the Township in a positive manner.
3. The social media site administrator is responsible for making sure the content is not stale and that questions from site visitors are answered in a timely manner. Supplying a response to a resident or public inquiry within two business days is required, while within 24/hour is preferable when possible.
4. An application should not be used unless it serves a business purpose, adds to the social media site user experience and comes from a trusted public source. An application may be removed at any time if there is significant reason to think it is causing a security breach or spreading viruses.

IV. REGULATION

A. Enforcement of Policy

1. The Township Manager shall be responsible for the oversight of the provisions contained within this policy.
2. The Township Manager or his/her designee shall be responsible for the implementation of the provisions contained within this policy

B. Adoption/Amendment of Policy

The Township Board of Trustees shall be responsible for the adoption and amendment of this policy upon the recommendation of the Infrastructure Committee.