

ORDINANCE NO. 15-20

AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING AND APPROVING A SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

WHEREAS, based upon the recommendation of the City Services Director and the Ordinance Committee, Council for the City of Uhrichsville wishes to develop a new social media policy.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MEMBERS OF COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF UHRICHSVILLE AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. THAT THE ATTACHED EXHIBIT "A" SHALL SERVE AS THE SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY OF THE CITY OF UHRICHSVILLE.

SECTION 2. THAT THIS ORDINANCE SHALL GO INTO FORCE AT THE EARLIEST TIME PERMITTED BY LAW.

FIRST READING: 6/11/20

SECOND READING: 6/25/20

THIRD READING: 7/9/20

PASSED: 7/9/20

Robert Cothran
President of Council

[Signature]
Mayor

Certified by:
Inish Addison
Clerk

Attested to:
[Signature]
Law Director

Exhibit "A"

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY **CITY OF UHRICHSVILLE, OHIO**

General Purpose:

Uhrichsville is implementing this social media policy ("Policy") to provide procedures for maintaining City sponsored social media accounts. The City recognizes that social media accounts, when properly used, can be an excellent way to communicate with residential and business citizens. The City of Uhrichsville will appoint employees and, at times, a third-party entity to maintain City social media accounts. All employees and contracted third-party entities are expected to adhere to this Policy.

Definitions:

Social media is any form of online publication or presence that allows employees and/or citizens to engage in multi-directional conversations in or around the content on an internet-based application. Examples of social media include Facebook, You Tube, Twitter, Pinterest, LinkedIn, and various blogs.

Policy:

To ensure that all employees providing media services are responsible, productive network users who are protecting the City's public image, the following procedures have been established.

This Policy provides for the City's social media uses:

The City may use social media for the purpose of facilitating communications with the community. In addition, social media allows the City to:

- a) Help achieve strategic goals.
- b) Monitor and respond to hot topics and emerging issues quickly.
- c) Proactively share stories to address current issues and projects.
- d) Expand communication tools with a vast distribution system for content, while broadening and engaging new audiences.
- e) Open up government to encourage citizen participation, strengthen democracy, and support a civic culture.
- f) Increase transparency of government.

Comments:

For purposes of this Policy, "comments" include information, statements, articles, pictures, videos, or any other form of communicative content posted on a social media site. During the use of, or when establishing a City presence on social media, the following procedures should be followed:

- a) All official City presence on social media are considered an extension of the City's information networks and are governed by these policies.
- b) The City will have a general account. Other divisions or departments may establish separate accounts with the approval of the City Service Director.

- c) Certain staff members, as appointed by the City Service Director will serve as “points of contact” for the accounts and will retain the authority to monitor content on each of the social media sites to ensure adherence to this Policy for appropriate use, message and branding consistent with the mission and values of the City. A list of the points of contact will be maintained by the office of the City Service Director.
- d) To maintain consistency, the points of contact will be the only staff members that can post to City social media accounts. Points of contact should be knowledgeable and able to answer questions about content that may be posted.
- e) Wherever possible, links to more information should direct users back to the City’s official website for more information, forms, documents, or online services necessary to conduct business with the City.
- f) Employees representing the City via social media must conduct themselves at all times as representatives of the City. Employees who fail to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner shall be subject to the City’s disciplinary procedures.
- g) In their roles as points of contact, employees are connecting and responding to the inquirer in an official capacity and the City’s social media connection is not to be used for personal gain or use. All of the City’s posts on a City social media site shall be in the name of the “City/Department” and not a particular individual.
- h) Employees should remember that even though social media contact information from third parties may constitute a public record, using such information for personal gain shall be considered a violation of this policy and of the employee’s responsibility to act or respond in a professional manner. Employees who fail to comply with these rules and standards are subject to disciplinary action.

City social media accounts, including a list of subscribers and posted communication, will be managed consistent with Ohio’s Public Records Act. Content related to City business shall be maintained in an accessible format and so that I can be readily produced in response to a request. Such accounts shall clearly indicate that any articles, comments, and any other content posted or submitted for posting are subject to public disclosure. Deleted comments or postings or pages shall be retained pursuant to the City’s retention schedule.

The social media accounts will be managed consistent with Ohio’s Sunshine Laws. Members of the City Council, and any other public body of the City, should not respond to any published messages, or use the account to respond to, blog or otherwise discuss, deliberate or express opinions in any manner that violates the Sunshine Laws.

Employees are not permitted to publish any content or postings that involve or are related to the following:

- a) Harassing statements.
- b) Anything which a person of reasonable sensitivities may find to be offensive.
- c) Matters in litigation or otherwise in dispute, or that could be in the future.
- d) Non-public information of any kind.
- e) References to illegal or banned substances and narcotics unless for public educational purposes.

- f) Pornographic, sexually-oriented, otherwise offensive, or illegal materials.
- g) Defamatory, libelous, offensive, or demeaning material.
- h) Solicitation of business.
- i) Comments supporting/opposing political campaigns. (Comments supporting a City levy or other ballot issues may be posed with City's approval.)
- j) Information that might compromise the safety or security of public buildings or activities.
- k) Disparaging/threatening comments about or related to anyone.
- l) Personal, sensitive, or confidential information of any kind.

Public comment for social media accounts:

The City's social media accounts may permit public posting of comments upon the express consent of the City Service Director.

Social media accounts that are maintained by the City that have been approved for public comment shall display a link to the public comment policy as follows:

Thank you visiting the City of Uhrichsville <insert name of social media website>. The purpose of this website is to share photos, video, and information of public interest in the City with residents, businesses, and visitors. It is not the intent to create a public forum.

Please note if you post a comment, the City reserves the right to delete submissions that contain vulgar language, personal attacks of any kind, or comments that are offensive to a person with reasonable sensitivity or target or disparage age, race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sexual preference, handicapped or disabled, genetic information, or status as a veteran or disabled veteran of the U.S. armed forces. The City reserves the right to delete comments that:

- i. Are spam or include links to other sites;
- ii. Are clearly off topic;
- iii. Advocate illegal activity;
- iv. Are pornographic, sexually-oriented, otherwise or illegal;
- v. Promote or oppose particular services, products, political organizations or candidates; or
- vi. May infringe on copyrights or trademarks.

Please note that the comments expressed on this site, other than those posted by the City of Uhrichsville, do not reflect the opinions or position of the City of Uhrichsville or its officers and employees.

Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to City business, including a list of subscribers, posted communication, and communication submitted for posting, may be a public record subject to public disclosure.

Comments posted are subject to the rules and regulations of the social media provider.

Contact Us:

If you have any questions or concerns about the City of Uhrichsville social media policy, to report incorrect information, or if you are seeking to obtain permissions that fall outside of the guidelines above, please contact the City Service Director.