

Village of Johnson – Social Media Policy

Purpose

This Policy governs the publication of and commentary on the Village of Johnson social media sites by authorized representatives. For purposes of the policy, social media means any facility for online publication and commentary including, without limitation, Blogs, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Front Porch Forum, Village website(s), or other future social media platforms that the Village may utilize. This policy is in addition to and compliments any existing or future policies regarding the use of technology, computers, email and the internet. The Village has an overriding interest and expectation in deciding what is published on behalf of the Village through social media and in establishing guidelines for the use of Village social media by Village officials, employees, and the general public.

Title and Authority

This policy shall be known as the Village of Johnson Social Media Policy.

The Village Board of Trustees (Board) reserves the right to amend any of the provisions of this Social Media Policy for any reason and at any time, with or without notice.

This Social Media Policy will be administered by the Village Trustee Board or its authorized representative.

Account Management

The establishment and use of Village social media sites on behalf of the Village is subject to approval by the Board, or its authorized representative. The Board, or its authorized representative, will review all requests to officially contribute to Village social media sites and has the sole authority to authorize their use and establish and/or terminate Village social media accounts. Those designated and authorized to create and/or utilize Village social media do so with the understanding that they are representing the Village and must conduct themselves at all times as representatives of the Village.

The Board or its authorized representative will also be responsible for maintaining a list of all social networking application domain names in use and the names of all Village administrators of these accounts.

Content Management

The Board, or its authorized representative, shall designate a Village Social Networking Moderator to monitor, manage, and oversee all content on each social media site to ensure adherence to this policy, including appropriate use, messaging, and branding that is consistent with the interests, goals, and objectives of the Village.

The Village Social Networking Moderator retains the sole authority to remove information from the Village social media outlets.

The Village does not guarantee the authenticity, accuracy, appropriateness, or security of posted hyperlinks or websites or content linked thereto.

All Village social media site shall clearly indicate that they are maintained by the Village and shall prominently display necessary Village contact information. All Village social media sites shall include the prominent placement of the Village logo along with the following notification:

This is the official (insert social media site) page for the Village of Johnson. The purpose of this page is to provide general public information only. If you are looking for more information about the Village of Johnson or require a response from the Village, please visit www.townofjohnson.com or call (802) 635-2611.

Comments

Users and visitors to Village social media sites shall be notified that the intended purpose of the site is to serve as a mechanism for the authorized Village officials to share information with members of the public, not to engage in a back and forth discussion.

A comment posted by a member of the public on any Village social media site is the opinion of the commentator or poster only, and publication of a comment does not imply endorsement of, or agreement by, the Village, nor do such comments necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of the Village. Comments by authorized Village officials shall be allowed on Village social media sites only when consistent with the provisions of this policy.

Comments containing any of the following inappropriate forms of content shall not be permitted on any type of Village social media site and are subject to editing, removal or restriction, in whole or in part, by the Village Social Networking Moderator:

- *Comments not topically related to the particular social medium thread or topic or article being commented upon;*
- *Comments in support of or opposition to political campaigns or ballot measures of any kind;*
- *Profane, obscene, or sexual language or content or links to such language or content;*
- *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, or sexual orientation;*
- *Solicitations of commerce, including but not limited to advertising of any business or product for sale;*
- *Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;*
- *Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;*
- *Defamatory or personal attacks;*

- *Threats to any person or organization;*
- *Conduct that violates any federal, state, or local law; or*
- *Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.*

If comments are related to the topic at hand, then the content must be allowed to remain, regardless of whether it is favorable or unfavorable to the Village. The Village reserves the right to deny any individual who violates the Village social media policy access to posting to Village social media sites, at any time and without prior notice. The Village reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this social media policy or any applicable law. These conduct guidelines governing comment on Village social media sites shall be displayed on all Village Social Media Page(s) or made available by hyperlink from the Village's official website.

Public Records Law – Compliance

Village social media sites and their related social media content are subject to Vermont's Access to Public Records Law. Information that is produced or acquired in the course of Village business, including comments posted to Village social media sites, may be a public record – thus, there should be no expectation of privacy in regards to the information posted on these social media outlets.

The Village's social media sites shall clearly indicate that any articles and any other content or comments posted or submitted for posting in whatever format are subject to public disclosure. Content related to Village business shall be maintained in an accessible format so that it can be produced in response to a public records request. Users shall be notified that public disclosure requests must be directed to the proper custodian of public records. The name, title, and contact information for the proper custodian of public records shall be posted on each town social media site.

Public Records Law – Retention

Relevant Village records retention schedules apply to content on the Village social media sites. Content posted or submitted for posting shall be retained pursuant to Vermont's Public Records Law in its standard format and in accordance with applicable disposition orders and retention schedules as established by the Vermont State Archivist.

Open Meeting Law

Vermont's Open Meeting Law defines a public meeting as a gathering of a quorum of the members of a public body for the purpose of discussing the business of the public body or for the purpose of taking action. All meetings of a public body are to be open to the public at all times unless otherwise exempted. Members (elected or appointed) of any Village public body should refrain from using Village social media sites to discuss the business of the public body or taking action by the public body in violation of Vermont's Open Meeting Law. Furthermore,

members of public bodies should refrain from commenting on or responding to inquiries related to quasi-judicial matters within the subject matter jurisdiction of their respective public bodies.

Information posted by the Village on its social media sites will supplement and not replace required notices and standard methods of providing warnings, postings, and notifications required to be made with regard to public meetings and hearings under Vermont law.

Legal

All comments posted to any Village social media site are bound by that site's applicable statement of rights and responsibilities. The Village reserves the right to report any violation of that site's statement of rights and responsibilities to the site provider with the intent of the provider taking appropriate and reasonable responsive action.

ADOPTED this 12 day of June, 2017.

SIGNATURES of Village of Johnson; Village Board of Trustees:








