



CITY OF HALF MOON BAY

Administrative Policy

Subject: City of Half Moon Bay Social Media Policy

POLICY:

1. Purpose

This Social Media Policy (“Policy”) establishes guidelines for the establishment and use by the City of Half Moon Bay (“City”) social media sites as a means of conveying information to members of the public.

The intended purpose of City social media sites is to disseminate information from the City about the City’s mission, meetings, activities, and current issues to members of the public.

The City has an overriding interest and expectation in protecting the integrity of the information posted on its social media sites and the content that is attributed to the City and its officials.

2. Definitions

“Social media sites” means content created by individuals, using accessible, expandable, and upgradable publishing technologies, through and on the internet. Examples of social media include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Nextdoor, Instagram, Blogs, RSS, YouTube, LinkedIn, Delicious, and Flickr.

“City social media sites” means social media sites which the City establishes and maintains, and over which it has control over all postings, except for advertisements or hyperlinks by the social media site’s owners, vendors, or partners. City social media sites shall supplement, and not replace, the City’s required notices and standard methods of communication.

“Posts” or “postings” means information, articles, pictures, videos or any other form of communication posted on a City social media site.

3. General Policy

3.1. The City’s official website at www.hmbcity.com (or any domain owned by the City) will remain the City’s primary means of internet communication.

3.2. The establishment of City social media sites is subject to approval by the Communications Director or their designee. Upon approval, City social media sites shall bear the name and/or official logo of the City.

3.3. Content on City social media sites will be the exclusive responsibility of the City's Communications Department.

3.4. City social media sites shall clearly state that such sites are maintained by the City and that the sites comply with the City's Social Media Policy.

3.5. City social media sites shall link back to the City's official website for forms, documents, online services and other information necessary to conduct business with the City whenever possible.

3.6. The City's Communications Department shall monitor content on City social media sites to ensure adherence to both the City's Social Media Policy and the interest and goals of the City.

3.7. City social media sites shall be managed consistent with the Brown Act. Members of the City Council, Commissions and/or Boards shall not respond to, "like", "share", retweet or otherwise participate in any published postings, or use the site or any form of electronic communication to respond to, blog or engage in serial meetings, or otherwise discuss, deliberate, or express opinions on any issue within the subject matter jurisdiction of the body.

3.8. The City reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this Policy or any applicable law. Any content removed based on these guidelines must be retained by City for a reasonable period of time, including the time, date, and identity of the poster, when available.

3.9. The City reserves the right to terminate any City social media site at any time without notice.

3.10. City social media sites shall comply with usage rules and regulations required by the site provider, including privacy policies.

3.11. The City's Social Media Policy shall be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink.

3.12. All City social media sites shall adhere to applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies.

3.13. City social media sites are subject to the California Public Records Act. Any content maintained on a City social media site that is related to City business, including a list of subscribers, posted communication, and communication submitted for posting, may be considered a public record and subject to public disclosure.

3.14. Employees representing the City on City social media sites shall always conduct themselves as a professional representative of the City and in accordance with all City policies.

3.15. All City social media sites shall utilize authorized City contact information for account set-up, monitoring and access. The use of personal email accounts or phone numbers by any City employee is not allowed for the purpose of setting-up, monitoring, or accessing a City social media site.

3.16. City social media sites may contain content, including but not limited to, advertisements or hyperlinks over which the City has no control. The City does not endorse any hyperlink or advertisement placed on City social media sites by the social media site's owners, vendors, or partners.

3.17. The City reserves the right to change, modify, or amend all or part of this policy at any time.

3.18. The City reserves the right to deny access to City social media sites for any individual who violates the City's Social Media Policy, at any time, without prior notice.

4. Content Guidelines

4.1. Social media content will support the City's mission and reflects its key messages. It will aid in reaching a broad set of customers and stakeholders to engage them in City issues and activities. Content may include:

- News and updates on City activities, projects, programs, and events
- News and updates on relevant national, state, regional, and local issues
- Announcements of City Council, Planning Commission, and
- Strategic Planning Committee meetings and available documents
- Invitations to attend public meetings
- Announcements of community events
- Publication of newsletters, reports, and other written material
- Urgent or emergency updates
- Press Releases
- Relevant information from partner agencies or stakeholders

4.2. Content posted to the City's social media sites must contain hyperlinks directing users back to the City's official website for in-depth information, forms, documents or online services necessary to conduct business with the City of Half Moon Bay, whenever possible.

4.3. The City shall have full permission or rights to any content posted by the City, including photographs and videos.

4.4. Any employee authorized to post items on any of the City's social media sites shall review, be familiar with, and comply with the social media site's use policies and terms and conditions.

4.5. Any employee authorized to post items on any of the City's social media sites shall not express his or her own personal views or concerns through such postings. Instead, postings on any of the City's social media sites by an authorized City employee shall only reflect the views of the City.

4.6. Postings must contain information that is freely available to the public and not be confidential as defined by any City policy or state or federal law.

4.7. Postings may NOT contain any personal information, except for the names of employees whose job duties include being available for contact by the public.

4.8. Postings to City social media sites shall NOT contain any of the following:

- Comments that are not topically related to the particular posting being commented upon;
- Comments in support of, or opposition to, political campaigns, candidates or ballot measures;
- Profane language or content;
- Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, or status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation, as well as any other category protected by federal, state, or local laws;
- Sexual content or links to sexual content;
- Solicitations of commerce;
- Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
- Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems; or
- Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.
- Comments that contain spam or include links to other sites, to include; malicious software or sites; pornographic, provocative or sexually explicit content or material.
- Comments that are off topic.
- Comments that advocate illegal activity.
- Comments that promote or endorse particular services, products, political organizations, campaigns, candidates, or ballot measures.
- Comments that infringe on intellectual property.
- Comments that contain personally identifiable, confidential or private information. This refers to information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, either alone or when combined with other personal or identifying information that is linked or linkable to a specific individual. To protect your privacy, please do not share personal information.

4.9. These guidelines shall be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink on all City social media sites. Any content removed based on these guidelines must be retained, including the time, date and identity of the poster, when available.

4.10. Comments on topics or issues not within the jurisdictional purview of the City, or in violation of this policy, may be removed.

4.11. The City reserves the right to implement or remove any functionality of its social media sites, when deemed appropriate by the Communications Director or his/her designee. This includes, but is not limited to, information, articles, pictures, videos or any other form of communication that is posted on a City social media site.

4.12. Except as expressly provided in this Policy, accessing any social media site shall comply with all applicable City policies pertaining to communications and the use of the internet by employees, including email content.

4.13. All content on City social media sites is subject to oversight by the City's Communications Department.

Adopted by the City Council on July 16, 2019.