

Title: Social Media

Policy No: 1036

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Purpose: This policy provides guidelines to for Councillor and Employee use of their personal social media accounts, in a manner that is not harmful to the reputation of Greenview.

1. DEFINITIONS

- 1.1. **Greenview** means the Municipal District of Greenview No. 16.
- 1.2. **Social Media** means any facility for online publication and commentary, including without limitation blogs, wikis, and social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram.
- 1.3. **Post** means a posting includes any written comment, content or image, including but not limited to photographs, video, clip art, scanned images, documents and emoticons.
- 1.4. **SOLE** means a State of Local Emergency.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

- 2.1. Greenview supports the use of social media to further the strategic direction and goals of the organization. Social media provides additional tools and channels that can complement traditional communications and marketing methods and mediums. The purpose of using social media sites is to present matters of public interest.
- 2.2. The public has the right to access and reference the Greenview's social media sites in the same way as traditional communications methods.
- 2.3. Greenview shall treat public engagement on social media sites in the same manner as they would traditional engagement.
- 2.4. Greenview reserves the right to delete or moderate content posted to their social media sites.
- 2.5. To ensure public accessibility and the protection of all citizens, Greenview reserves the right to remove comments, posts, or content that contains any of the following:
 - A. Confidential or personal information;
 - B. Discriminatory or hateful language;
 - C. Attacks on any person, whether an employee, member of Council, or the public;
 - D. Profanity or abusive language;
 - E. Encouragement or demonstration of illegal behaviour;
 - F. Explicit language or links to explicit content;
 - G. Spam;

- H. Unsolicited commercial advertising that may attempt to sell, promote, or advertise products or services;
 - I. A post that could compromise the well-being, safety, or security of the public, employees, Councillors, or anyone else;
 - J. A post that may compromise the security of public systems, equipment, buildings, or other property;
 - K. Violation of any municipal, provincial, or federal laws or bylaws; or
 - L. Promotion of individual religions, political parties, or candidates in any election.
- 2.6. Posts made by citizens or third-party contributors do not necessarily reflect or represent the views or opinions of Greenview or its employees. Greenview does not necessarily endorse public comments or postings.
 - 2.7. Engagement on Greenview-owned social media channels are typically considered transitory records and will not be archived, stored, or kept by Greenview. However, by engaging with and using Greenview social media channels, users acknowledge and consent that their engagement (comments, posts, messages, etc.) may become part of the public record and could potentially be used in Greenview official documentation. Greenview reserves the right to decide what posts, comments, or messages may be saved in official documentation.
 - 2.8. Greenview is not responsible for any harm, damages, or losses suffered as a result of using third party social media sites. Participants do so at their own risk and accept that they have no right of action against the Greenview in relation to the use of social media.
 - 2.9. Greenview is not responsible for any harm, damages, or losses suffered as a result of using third-party social media sites. Participants do so at their own risk and accept that they have no right of action against the Greenview in relation to the use of social media.
 - 2.10. In their capacity as private citizens, Greenview employees and Council Members have the same rights of free speech as other citizens, however, Greenview expects that they will not represent Greenview on their own social media platforms or comment on Greenview programs or operations. Councillors and employees must ensure that their use of social media does not negatively affect the reputation of Greenview.

3. COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 Council members are bound by the Council Code of Conduct Bylaw, FOIPP, The Municipal Government Act, and any other legislation as it relates to copyright, privacy, and the disclosure of information.
- 3.2 Council Members who use social media platforms to create an official Councillor profile must ensure that their use of social media does not put Greenview's security, reputation or information at risk.
- 3.3 Council Members should not use their official "@mdgreenview.ab.ca" email address to create social media accounts.
- 3.4 Council Members shall be held personally responsible for the content that they publish on their own political social media platforms and shall not hold Greenview responsible or liable for any content placed on their own platforms.
- 3.5 Council Members may be involved in political debate on their political social media platforms. All actions on Council Members' political social media platforms shall be conducted with respect and in accordance with the Council Code of Conduct Bylaw. Bullying, hatred, bigotry, disrespect, harassment and otherwise bringing Council, Greenview, or Greenview Administration into dispute are all prohibited and subject to disciplinary action as determined by Council in accordance with the Council Code of Conduct Bylaw.

- 3.6 Council Members must not act, claim to act, or give the impression that they are acting as a representative of Council as a whole on their political social media platforms. Council Members using social media must make clear that their actions and opinions on social media are their own.
- 3.7 Council members may not represent themselves as anything other than their official title and capacity on their political social media platforms.
- 3.8 Council members may not publish or report on meeting discussions held in closed session or other confidential matters on social media, regardless of the profile being public or private.
- 3.9 Council members may not use the official Greenview logo on their social media platforms.
- 3.10 Any Council Member's social media platform shall not be promoted by Greenview official social media platforms. Greenview does reserve the right to like or share content that is posted to the Council members social media platforms if the post is deemed to be of informational value to the community as a whole.
- 3.11 Once an elected official's term comes to an end, or they resign from the position, they must delete or rename their political social media platforms to reflect that they are no longer a sitting Member of Council.
- 3.12 Council acknowledges that it is Administration's role to release information on Greenview news, announcements, projects, events, and other relevant items, and shall not circumvent the that duty unless specifically given authorization to do so by a resolution of Council.
 - 3.12.1 Councillors should endeavor to refrain from releasing information on their own social media accounts (Whether private or public pages) prior to Administration releasing the information to the public.
- 3.13 Council Members recognize that any direction of content, administration, creation of posts, and general usage of Greenview social media platforms must come from Council as a whole.
 - 3.13.1 Individual Councillors may make recommendations for content to administration, but the content of Greenview social media is managed by administration in accordance with the relevant policies and bylaws, and as directed by Council as a whole and is subject to the schedules of content managed by the Communications Department.

4. EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 Employees must ensure that confidential matters are not disclosed on their private social media accounts. Employees are bound by all federal and provincial legislation, and all Greenview bylaws, policies and procedures, and must not disclose Greenview information or content that they are not specifically authorized to disclose.
- 4.2 Acting as a private citizen, Greenview employees must use a private email address and make every reasonable effort to make it clear that their contribution to social media platforms is as a private individual, and not as a representative of Greenview.
- 4.3 The only role of Greenview Administration and social media platforms during a municipal election period is to promote the election itself, and will not be used to further the campaigns of current or prospective Members of Council.
 - 4.3.1 No sharing of any content for prospective Members of Council shall occur on any official Greenview social media platform.
 - 4.3.2 To safeguard a fair and equitable election period, effective January 1 of an election year, all links, likes, follows and any sharing of content with a current Reeve or Councillor shall be stopped on all official Greenview social media platforms until the Organizational Meeting for the newly elected Council.
 - 4.3.3 Greenview reserves the right to delete any comments or links posted to its pages or social media posts from any persons seeking election in order to maintain neutrality during the election and to avoid the perception of any endorsement of any candidate by Greenview.

- 4.3.4 The only exception to the above is in the event of a State of Local Emergency (SOLE) or community crisis that requires public acknowledgement from a current Member of Council. What constitutes a community emergency shall be determined by the Reeve, CAO and/or Director of Emergency Management.
- 4.4 Any provision of this policy may be superseded at any time by the Director of Emergency Management during activations of the Emergency Operations Centre and surrounding an activation of a SOLE.