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**POLICY:** Social Media Policy

**SECTION:** ADMINISTRATION **POLICY #:** ADM-017

**PREPARED BY:** Jennifer Larson **PAGE:** 1 of 3  
Interim Chief Administrative Officer

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Adopted by Council March 13, 2017

**SUPERSEDES:** N/A

**AUTHORIZED:**   
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Interim Chief Administrative Officer

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**PURPOSE:**

The District of Stewart's Social Media Policy establishes and outlines the principles of use for the District's Communications Coordinator when engaging and posting on the District's social media accounts. Additionally, this policy creates the operational procedures for assigning the Communications Coordinator responsibilities to Staff.

**POLICY:**

The District uses online social media accounts and the website to communicate District initiatives, goals and objectives with the community and various stakeholder groups.

The goals of the District's social media accounts are to inform the community of District happenings and events and provide additional platforms for direct engagement. The District's social media accounts are not intended to be used for political forums or information outside the District's intent.

**PRIMARY GOALS:**

- Increase awareness of municipal services and events such as public notices, upcoming Capital Projects, and District sponsored events;
- Circulate time-sensitive information quickly;
- Provide additional means to gather community comments and perceptions regarding the District and its initiatives;

- Develop trust and opportunities to build stronger relationships with community members;
- Correct misinformation, remedy mistakes, or alter services;
- Utilize social media as an additional way to collaborate with the public and other municipalities on mutually beneficial programs and initiatives.

**SCOPE:**

- This policy applies to social media use for official and authorized District purposes;
- This policy shall apply to all District employees and others who have been authorized by the District's Chief Administrative Officer to provide information to the Communications Coordinator regarding District business for posting.
- Social media profiles and websites representing the Mayor and Members of the District Council are exempt from this policy, as are sites representing individuals and Committees of Council that do not fall under District employee mandates or this policy;
- Social media profiles and websites representing Members of Council will not act as official information media platforms on behalf of the District of Stewart. Any information to be communicated to the District's followers via social media will be provided by the District's Communications Coordinator.
- District Council acknowledges that it is not their role to report directly on District related business and will use their social media profiles and websites as a secondary information source once matters have been officially released by the District. Council will use the designated sharing tools on the various social media platforms based on this direction. Council will include an "in my opinion" disclaimer either within the banner of their individual social media site(s) or separately when making follow up posts to the District's social media postings and when creating original posts pertaining to District related business.

**RESPONSIBILITY:**

The Communications Coordinator role shall be assigned to Staff by the CAO as deemed appropriate.

The posting of content and engagement on behalf of the District will be the responsibility of the District's Communications Coordinator. All other employees must have permission by the Communications Coordinator prior to posting.

The District will authorize specific individuals to utilize social media in an official capacity to ensure that, as with all communications activities, communications through social media channels are accurate, consistent and professional.

When representing the District on social media, employees are expected to communicate in a respectful and professional manner and in accordance with all District policies. Employees are not permitted to discuss personal or confidential information on social media sites, whether through public posts or private messages. Non-compliance by District employees may result in discipline.

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF APPROPRIATE USE**

The District's social media followers and engagers must abide by the following principles of appropriate use or may be subject to removal. The District of Stewart reserves the right to remove posted online content, comments or links which contain any of the following from the District's social networking sites:

- Comments not relevant to the particular posting by the District's Communications Coordinator;
- Slanderous or derogatory remarks, obscenities, profane language or sexual content;
- Content that endorses, promotes, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, colour, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation;
- Promotion of commercial services or products other than sponsors, affiliations, or business partnerships;
- Promotion of political candidates;
- Promotion of illegal activity;
- Spam or irrelevant external links;
- Information that may compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;
- Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.

### **RECORDS:**

All District of Stewart social networking sites shall adhere to applicable Provincial, Federal and local laws, regulation and policies including all information Technology and Records Management policies and other applicable District of Stewart policies.

The Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy Act applies to social media content and therefore content must be able to be managed, stored and retrieved to comply with the act.