

City of Mount Airy Social Media Policy

The City of Mount Airy recognizes that social media tools allow dialogue between the City and the public in a typically free, timely and accessible format. The various platforms of social media carry with them the risk of being a format for inappropriate comments or activity. To guide the City's use of these tools, the following social media policy has been implemented.

Purpose:

1. To address the constantly changing landscape of the Internet and how residents communicate and obtain information online and through new and developing technologies. The City of Mount Airy recognizes that social media presents both new possibilities as well as challenges. The City embraces this challenge and believes that the use of social media can help broaden its audience and further the mission of its departments.
2. Establish administrative operational guidelines on the posting of information on social media sites.
3. Set guidelines for employees who utilize social media to exercise discretion and best judgment when posting information on city sites, as well as being mindful of blurring their personal and professional lives with private use of social media.

Employee Guidelines:

1. The best, most appropriate City of Mount Airy uses of social media tools fall generally into three categories:
 - a. As channels for disseminating time-sensitive information as quickly as possible (ex.: emergency information, meeting notices, public hearings, etc.)
 - b. As marketing/promotional channels which increase the City's ability to broadcast its messages to the widest possible audience
 - c. As a means to communicate and receive feedback from city residents and businesses
2. Wherever possible, content posted to City of Mount Airy social media sites should contain links directing users back to the City's official web sites for in-depth information, forms, documents or online services.
3. City of Mount Airy social media sites are subject to North Carolina's public record laws. On a monthly basis the PIO will copy all postings and comments from any social media site(s) for retention per the approved municipal records retention schedule. In addition, any comments deemed inappropriate will be copied for retention prior to being deleted from the site.
4. Employees are allowed to have personal social network sites. However, these sites must remain personal in nature and be used to share personal opinions or non-work related information, and should be mindful that they represent the City of Mount Airy even in their time off of work. Reports of inappropriate use of social media will be investigated and possible disciplinary action may be taken. Employees should never use

their government e-mail account or work contact information in conjunction with personal social networking sites.

5. Upon adoption, a copy of this policy will be distributed to all current city employees and subsequent new hires, and made a part of the city's employee personnel policies and administrative policies.

User Guidelines:

1. The purpose of this site is to present matters of public interest to City of Mount Airy residents, businesses, visitors and other interested parties.
2. All use of social networking and media by the City should be consistent with applicable state, federal, and local laws, regulations, and policies including all information technology security policies.
3. Once posted, the City reserves the right to delete submissions that contain vulgar language, personal attacks of any kind, or offensive comments that target or disparage any group of people because of some shared characteristic. Any comments viewed as threatening, libelous or harassing are prohibited and subject to deletion. Further, the City also reserves the right to delete comments that contain the following:
 - a. Spam, advertising or links to other sites
 - b. Content that is clearly off topic and/or disruptive
 - c. The promotion of illegal activity
 - d. Promotions for any particular services, products or political organizations
 - e. Copyrighted or trademarked material
 - f. Personal identifying information such as home addresses, phone numbers or personal e-mail addresses
4. All comments posted on City-managed social media sites are open for public disclosure and may be retained on file per North Carolina public records laws.
5. Postings on social media sites do not serve as formal requests for service. Any citizen needing a response from the City should call or visit the appropriate department. However, attempts should be made to respond as best as possible to postings that may be construed as requests to address certain issues and follow-up on the validity of a critical post or suggestion of improvement. Users that are city residents or businesses will be given priority on follow-ups.
6. Please note that the comments expressed on this site do not reflect the opinions and position of the City of Mount Airy or its officers and employees. To report a violation, please e-mail to facebookadmins@mountairy.org.
7. Determinations as to whether submissions are in compliance with these guidelines or are to be deleted from City site(s) shall be in the sole discretion of City staff.
8. Guidelines listed above should be posted to the city's general website and/or each social media website.

APPROVED JANUARY 20, 2011

Barbara A. Jones, City Manager