

**CITY OF GOLD BAR, WASHINGTON
RESOLUTION NO. 22-05**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF GOLD BAR, WASHINGTON CREATING A SOCIAL MEDIA
POLICY**

WHEREAS, social media is pervasive throughout current society; and

WHEREAS, residents of the City of Gold Bar look to social media for information before considering the City's website; and

WHEREAS, using social media can result in misinformation and/or delays in receiving information found on the City's website; and

WHEREAS, the City has determined that creating a Facebook page may allow residents to more quickly access information; and

WHEREAS, clear policies on how social media is utilized are required;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the governing body of the City of Gold Bar that the following social media policy shall be implemented.

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| Section I | Social Media Policy |
| Section II | Severability |
| Section III | Effective Date |

Section I. Social Media Policy

A. Purpose

The City's website is the preferred, and most accurate, method, for information about the City. It should be considered the primary source and any social media platform the secondary source of information.

Social media, defined here as the use of third party hosted online technologies that facilitate social interaction, may provide alternative ways for the City of Gold Bar to share basic information and emergency notifications for those residents and followers who may not otherwise utilize the City's website.

The goal of the City's social media platform is to serve as an online information source and is not intended as a public forum.

This policy is designed to inform employees and the public, and to ensure transparency and consistency when incorporating social media into the City of Gold Bar communications and outreach efforts.

B. Applicability

This policy is applicable to employees and elected officials of the City of Gold Bar.

The policy relating specifically to elected officials is defined in Section G.

C. Procedures

1. The Office Manager shall be responsible for creating, updating, and maintaining any social media platform in conjunction with the City's website.
2. The Office Manager shall be responsible for ensuring that social media content is retained under the Public Records Act, as outlined in Section F.

3. No other City employee shall make any change to the City's social media platform unless directed to do so by the Office Manager and/or the Mayor.

4. The Mayor, Office Manager, and/or the City's Information Technology contractor shall manage the social media platform for documenting authorized users, account logins, and passwords.

5. The social media platform must include a visible and easily identifiable legal disclaimer that the City is not responsible for corrupted links, malicious software, computer viruses, or malware.

6. The City's social platform shall not endorse any commercial enterprise, candidate for election, ballot title, or any outside organization or cause without the prior approval of the Mayor and City Council.

7. The Office Manager or designee shall verify that written material, visual images, graphics, and other content posted to the social media platform is not copyrighted or otherwise protected from authorized use. Appropriate releases from content owners should be obtained before using such protected material on the official social media platform.

8. There shall be a clear and easily identifiable statement on the social media platform that states all content is a public record and may be subject to public disclosure under the Washington Public Records Act (RCW 42.56).

D. Types of Information Posted on Social Media

1. The primary use of City social media is for time-sensitive and emergency information.

2. A secondary use of City social media may be to broadcast any messages to the widest possible audience.

3. The Office Manager and/or Mayor must maintain accurate City information by regularly reviewing and updating information as necessary and appropriate.

4. A link to the City's website must be included on any social media platform utilized by the City, directing users back to the City website for official, in-depth information on posted content.

E. Commenting on Social Media Platforms

If possible, the City prefers to not allow any comments on social media platforms.

In the event comments must be allowed, such comments posted to the city's social media page will be monitored. The City reserves the right to remove inappropriate comments including those that contain obscene language or sexual content, threaten, or defame any person or organization, violate the legal ownership interest of another party, support or oppose political candidates or causes, promotes illegal activity, promote commercial services or products, or are not related to the particular topic.

The City of Gold Bar reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed to be in violation of its Social Media Policy or any applicable law.

Content removed from social media sites based on a violation of this policy will be recorded by the City, including time, date, identity of the author (if available), the name of the staff member who removed the comments or contents, and the reason for removing the comments or content.

Removed content may be subject to public disclosure and will be maintained by the City's social media archiving platform.

F. Retention of Posted Information

1. Information posted on the City's social media platform is subject to the Public Records Act and

associated retention schedules.

2. In order to ensure appropriate retention of public records, content posted by the City should not be original source content (content that has not been created anywhere else or only exists on the social media platform), but rather a secondary copy of information that is posted either on the City's website or contained in an electronic record or hard copy.

a. If original content must be posted on a social media platform, that information shall be copied from the site and retained in a manner that makes it readily searchable and available for staff and/or any public records requests.

3. All social media content with public records value must be maintained for the minimum required retention period in an easily accessible format that preserves the integrity of the original record to the extent possible. The Office Manager should refer to the most recent versions of the Washington State approved Records Retention Schedules for applicable records retention requirements. Various methods may be employed to retain public records created on social media sites. Options include:

- a. Archiving Software/Service: the City may use software or service designed to capture content from social media sites for retention and retrieval;
- b. E-mail: updates, comments and account change notifications may be sent to a City email account created for this purpose and retained as described in this section;
- c. Website Capture: web capture tools may be used to capture snapshots of City's social media sites in their native format, such as the Washington State Digital Archives website capturing program; or
- d. PDF Format: staff may convert social media pages to PDF format, and the PDF files saved for retention purposes. This option retains the content and formatting (look and feel) of the original web page.

G. Elected Officials

Participation in online discussions by elected or appointed officials may constitute a meeting under the Open Public Meetings Act. Councilmembers, other officials, and appointed volunteers (members of commissions, and/or ad hoc appointed citizen advisory committees) should, in general, not comment or otherwise communicate on the City's Social Media site(s).

1. The use of individual social media platforms by elected officials for the City is discouraged. The City recognizes, however, that elected officials may wish to create a social media presence for the intent of campaigning or communicating with the general public.
2. There shall be a clear, and easily identifiable notification on the elected official's social media platform declaring the site is unofficial and not endorsed by the City.
3. There shall be a clear and easily identifiable legal disclaimer on the elected official's platform stating that the City is not liable for any content or action by the elected official in connection with the social media platform.
4. There shall be a clear and easily identifiable disclaimer stating that any content posted by the elected official or commenter is not endorsed by the City and that the City may not be held legally liable for any such content.
5. There shall be a clear and easily identifiable disclaimer stating that the elected official, as creator and owner of any social media platform created independently from the City shall be solely responsible for public records, retention of said records, and associated public records requests.
6. Elected officials will not post or release proprietary, confidential, or sensitive information on social media sites in a manner that violates applicable state law, including, without limitation, Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 42.23.070-Prohibited Acts.
7. Elected officials that create and operate a social media platform shall comply with the Open Public Meetings Act and Appearance of Fairness Doctrine and shall not allow comments or interactions that constitute a quorum.

8. The City shall not be responsible for legal fees or representation for any social media platform created by an elected official independently of the official City social media platform.

H. Inappropriate Use

Inappropriate use of social media in violation of this policy can be grounds for corrective action, including disciplinary action up to, and including, termination of employment.

Section II, Severability

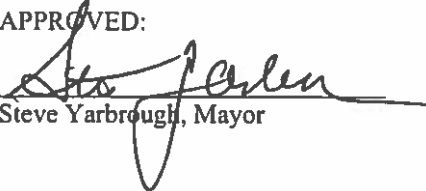
This resolution is severable and if any portion of it shall be declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining portion shall remain valid and enforceable.

Section III, Effective Date

This Resolution shall take effect from, and after, its passage and approval, as provided by law.

Resolved this 3rd day of May, 2022.

APPROVED:


Steve Yarbrough, Mayor

ATTEST/AUTHENTICATED:


Lisa Stowe, Clerk/Treasurer