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**VILLAGE OF SUGAR GROVE  
BOARD REPORT**

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**TO:** VILLAGE PRESIDENT & BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
**FROM:** SCOTT KOEPPPEL, VILLAGE ADMINSTRATOR  
**SUBJECT:** EXTERNAL USERS SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY  
**AGENDA:** JUNE 18, 2024 REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
**DATE:** JUNE 11, 2024

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**ISSUE**

Should the Board of Trustees approve an update to the Social Media Policy for External Users?

**DISCUSSION**

From time-to-time staff reviews existing policies and makes recommendations to the Village Board. Social media is one of the best ways to reach members of the community. Facebook and other social media platforms encourage discussion and involvement from different users. A policy allows staff to encourage civic engagement on social media platforms within the Village's limited public forum.

**COST**

Legal costs to review the policy.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Village Board discuss the proposed changes to the External Users Social Media Policy.

# Village of Sugar Grove External Users Social Media Policy

## **Statement of Purpose**

The Village of Sugar Grove recognizes that social media services, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, have become increasingly common forms of communication among residents, media outlets, government agencies, businesses, and others. Using this technology, the Village has additional avenues by which to share news releases, inform the public about initiatives, and highlight events and positive media coverage. Additionally, social media provides the ability to share other information that supports the goals and mission of the Village.

However, the Village also has an overriding interest and expectation in determining what is “spoken” on behalf of the Village on its official Village social media pages. To that end, the Village has established an “External Users Social Media Policy,” the purpose of which is to establish policies and regulations relative to the Village’s establishment and use of various social media sites as a means of conveying information from the Village and/or about the Village to residents and other interested members of the general public.

For purposes of this policy, the term “social media” shall be understood to be content created by individuals, using accessible, expandable, and upgradable publishing technologies, through and on the Internet. Examples of current social media tools include but are not limited to Facebook, Instagram, web blogs, YouTube, Twitter, Four Square, and Flickr. For the purpose of this policy, the term “comments” includes information, articles, pictures, videos or any other form of communicative content posted on a Village social media site.

## **Guidelines and Expectations**

“Social media account” shall mean any of the Village of Sugar Grove’s accounts or online services that allow for interaction with Village residents and other stakeholders on social media sites, including, but not limited to, Twitter, Facebook, Nextdoor and Instagram.

### **A. Limited Public Forum**

The Village’s social media accounts are limited public forums. As such, the Village reserves the right to restrict or remove any content thereon that is determined to be in violation of the Policy herein established, the policies of any particular site used by the Village, or any applicable law. The Village does not make its social media accounts available for general public discourse, but rather reserves and limits the topics that may be discussed on the social media accounts.

### **B. Comment Policy~~Content Restrictions~~**

As a public entity, the Village must comply with certain standards to serve all of its constituents in a civil and unbiased manner. Members of the community are welcome to comment and share feedback on the Village of Sugar Grove’s social media account(s), ~~however;~~ however, comments containing any of the following are considered inappropriate content and will not be permitted to be posted on Village social media sites and are subject to removal and/or restriction:

1. Profane, obscene, violent, sexual, or pornographic content, links, and/or language.
2. Comments that promote, foster, or perpetuate discrimination on the basis of creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation.
- ~~2. Content that promotes discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, religion, gender, etc.~~
3. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party, including copyright or trade secrets (information regarding the development of systems, processes, products, and technology), internal reports, policies, procedures, and confidential communications.
- ~~3. Content that violates a legal ownership interest, such as a copyright or trademark.~~
4. Comments containing vulgar, offensive, profane, or physically threatening language, personal attacks, or unsupported accusations to any person or organization.
- ~~4. Threats to any person or organization.~~
5. Conduct that violates any cyber-crime or other in violation of any federal, state, or local law or the encouragement of illegal activity.
- ~~5-6. Content promoting the use of illegal or banned substances and narcotics.~~
- ~~6-7. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems~~
- ~~7-8. Promotion of any business, product, services, or activities unrelated to government business.~~
9. Solicitations of commercial sales or commercial links. ~~S~~  
~~spam or links to other sites.~~
10. Spamming or repetitive content, such as posting the same content more than two times in the same location.
11. Any tags related to the Village of Sugar Grove page will be deleted.
12. Comments unrelated to the particular Village post purportedly being commented upon.
13. Photographs or videos unrelated to the particular post being commented upon.
14. Comments from children under 13 (to comply with the Children's Online Privacy Protection ACT) - by posting on the Village's social media sites, users acknowledge that they are at least 13 years old.
15. Comments that contain external links unless posted by the Village.
16. Comments in support or opposition to political campaigns, ballot measures, or referendums

17. Private information as defined by State or Federal statute, regulations or written Village policies adopted in conformance with the law.

~~8-18.~~ Personal information of any person, such as social security numbers, driver's license numbers, bank accounts, addresses, or telephone numbers.

### **C. Content Removal**

Content that is deemed not suitable for posting by the administrators of the Village's social media accounts based on the criteria defined above, shall be retained by staff pursuant to the records retention schedule in the form of a screen capture along with a description of the reason the specific content was rejected. The comment will then be removed, as technology allows, from the Village's social media account(s).

### **D. Notice**

Users and visitors to the Village's social media accounts shall be notified that the intended purpose of the account is to serve as a mechanism for communication of Village news, services, and events and that it is a limited public forum. By posting or commenting, users agree to the terms of use outlined in this policy, which will be posted to the Village's website and linked to, as technology allows, from each of the Village's social media ~~account~~accounts.

### **E. Time of Use**

The Village of Sugar Grove's social media accounts are not monitored 24/7, and as such, posts and responses should not be immediately expected.

### **F. Emergency Notice**

As the Village's social media accounts are not monitored 24/7, users are advised NOT to use the Village's social media accounts to report a crime or emergency situation. Crime reports and requests for police assistance must be made by dialing 9-1-1.

*This policy will be reviewed and updated as necessary. Last updated ~~May-21XXX~~, 2024.*