



## Social Media Policy

### Purpose:

This policy governs the publication of social media commentary on social media venues by employees, Mayor and Council of the Town of Vauxhall

### Definitions:

**Employees:** includes permanent, part-time, temporary, casual, contract, and any others who are employed by the Town of Vauxhall.

**Personal Social Media:** refers to the private accounts belonging to Employees and Council

**Public Media Sites:** refers to all other Social Media Pages including, but not limited to, chat groups, business pages, members of Council pages, and other public figure pages.

**Town Social Media:** refers to the Social Media pages run by the Town of Vauxhall

### Policy Statement:

Social Media is a strategic component of the Town of Vauxhall that promotes professional communication practices with residents.

### Roles and Responsibilities

Corporate Communications - Administrative

- a. Building a positive image for the Town of Vauxhall;
- b. Gaining citizen insights to monitor public opinion about the Town of Vauxhall and its services;
- c. Networking with professionals to maintain business contacts or maintaining contacts with members of professional organizations;
- d. Create content, monitor accounts, and respond to questions and comments from residents and stakeholders;
- e. Council shall acknowledge that it is Administration's role to release information on Town news, announcements, projects, events, and other relevant items;

- f. Mayor and Council shall have no individual authority to direct the content, administration, creation, or usage of any Town of Vauxhall social media profiles except for those directions that are outlined in the bylaws, plans, policies or procedures;
- g. Will not create contact to promote external organizations, external content may be shared by the Town Social Media accounts at the direction of the CAO or designate assigned by the CAO;
- h. Address controversial and sensitive online content that could compromise the well-being, safety or security of the public, employees and members of Council;
- i. Will not engage in hostile back and forth dialogue with anyone via Social Media;
- j. The Town of Vauxhall reserves the right to remove all content posted to their social media sites that contain the following:
  - 1. Confidential or personal information
  - 2. Discriminatory, profanity or abusive language
  - 3. Attacks on any person, whether an employee, member of Council, or the public
  - 4. Encouragement or demonstration of illegal behavior
  - 5. Anything to do with explicit content
  - 6. Anything that compromises the security of public or private property
  - 7. Violation of any municipal, provincial or federal law or bylaws
  - 8. Promotion of individual religions, political parties, or candidates in any election
  - 9. Spam
- k. Any comments that jeopardize the safety of members of Council or Employees shall be reported to members of Council and the appropriate authorities;
- l. The Town of Vauxhall is not responsible for any harm, damages, or losses suffered as a result of using third party social medial sites. Participants do is at their own risk and accept that they have no right of action against Town of Vauxhall in relation to the use of social media;
- m. The Town of Vauxhall shall make every effort to respond to engagement on its social media sites. However the Town may request that discussions be relocated to more traditional forms of engagement (phone, email etc.) in order to protect privacy or provide accurate information;

#### Employees

In their capacity as private citizens, Town employees, have the same rights of free speech as other citizens, however the Town of Vauxhall expects that they will not represent the Town of Vauxhall on their own personal social media sites or comment about the Town's operations.

- a. Must be conscious of what they post on Personal, Public and Town Social Media and not share anything that could influence public opinion or on Council or Administrative decisions;

- b. Must be aware that common disclaimers such as "retweets don't imply endorsement" or "all views are my own" do not absolve the responsibility of the Employee to adhere to this policy;
- c. Must be aware that inappropriate content, such as threatening, offensive or harassing language, posed by Employees on Personal, Public or Town Social Media accounts will be brought to the attention of the CAO and the appropriate course of action will be determined;
- d. Acting as a private citizen, a Town employee must use a private email address and make every reasonable effort to make it clear that their contribution to social media sites is as a private individual, and not as a representative of the Town;
- e. Employees are bound by the official Oath of Confidentiality, the Employee Handbook and the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Employees must not disclose any Town information or content that they are not specifically authorized to disclose;

#### Council

- a. Council members who use social media platforms to create official Councillor or Mayoral profiles must ensure that their use of social media does not put the Town's security, reputation, or information at risk;
- b. Council members must not use their Town email address to create personal social media accounts;
- c. 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;
- d. Council may provide ideas for content (such as pictures of official duties, event attendance, pictures) to Administration to post;
- e. Any Council member's political social media platform shall not be promoted by the Town of Vauxhalls official social media platform. The Town does reserve the right to like or share content that is posted to official Council social media accounts if the post is deemed to be of informational value to the community as a whole;
- f. Once an elected official's term comes to an end or resigns from their position, they must delete their political social media platform;
- g. The Mayor and Councillors are bound by the official Oath of Confidentiality, Code of Conduct Bylaw the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the Municipal Government Act and must not disclose any information or content that they are not authorized to disclose;

Administration shall establish procedures for this policy and shall be responsible to ensure the spirit and intent of the policy is adhered to.