



RESOLUTION 17-417

**A RESOLUTION REPEALING RESOLUTION 10-332 AND
ADOPTING A REVISED WEBSITE, BLOGGING AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

The La Center City Council adopts the following findings:

WHEREAS, on June 23, 2010, the City Council adopted Resolution 10-332 Adopting a Website, Blogging and Social Media Policy to establish a comprehensive set of general guidelines and a policy governing the City’s website, blogging sites, and social media in general; and

WHEREAS, these policies are intended to apply to all city employees and appointed/elected officials; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to revise and update the policy governing the City’s website, blogging sites, and social media in general; and

WHEREAS, the policy contained in the revised Website, Blogging and Social Media Policy attached to this resolution as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by this reference, is what the City deems as appropriate and consistent with the public purpose for its website, blogging sites, and general social media; and

WHEREAS, the City Council considered the attached Website, Blogging and Social Media Policy at its regular meeting on March 22, 2017, at which time it accepted public testimony and comment on the proposal.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the La Center City Council that Resolution No. 10-332 is repealed, and the revised Website, Blogging and Social Media Policy attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by this reference, is adopted as the City’s Website, Blogging, and Social Media Policy and shall be applicable to all employees, volunteers, appointed and elected City officials.

APPROVED and **ADOPTED** and effective this 22nd day of March 2017, by a majority of the La Center City Council.

AYES: 4
NAYS: 0
ABSTAIN: 0
ABSENT: 1



Greg Thornton, Mayor

ATTEST:



Suzanne Levis, Finance Director/Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Daniel Kearns, City Attorney

The City of La Center

Website, Blogging and Social Media Policy

Introduction

City of La Center ("City") maintains a municipal internet website and may create or employ in the future one or more web logs (commonly referred to as "blog" sites), or social media sites such as Facebook, /or Twitter accounts by which City officials and City organizations will disseminate information and articles related to municipal operations, organization and governance of the City. Additionally, the City may from time to time post city information on local internet-based media such as NextDoor. All of these internet-based outlets will be used to to disseminate information about the City, its policies, programs and operations and to facilitate further discussion of those matters related to the City's governance by providing members of the public the opportunity to submit comments regarding the articles.

The official City of La Center website will remain the City's primary source of internet communications and information. All of the City's internet-based outlets, including its social media sites, however, are limited public forums for the governmental purposes stated in this policy document.

This document outlines the practices and procedures on social networking and social media usage for the City of La Center and defines individual and departmental responsibilities for the use of the City's social media tools. The City encourages the proper use of social media to further the goals of the City and its departments, where appropriate.

Policy

1. Authorized Users

- 1.1. Comments and articles submitted to a City of La Center blog or social media site shall be moderated by the City's authorized Blog Moderator, who has been trained for and assigned this function by the City of La Center.
- 1.2. All articles, information, comments and postings to the City's official social media sites shall be reviewed and approved by the City's Blog Moderator before posting.

1.3. The content of the City's social media sites shall be owned by and the sole responsibility of the City of La Center and shall be moderated by the City's Blog Moderator.

2. Establishing a Social Media Account

2.1. Social media sites used by the City must, if applicable to that particular platform, be designated as a government page.

2.2. Social media sites used by the City must be named as "City of La Center, WA" and use the City's official logo as its profile picture.

2.3. City social media sites will be open to the public and not require membership; however, public comment and participation in the City's social media sites will be screened by the City's Blog Moderator before posting to verify that they comply with the requirements of this policy and are consistent with the governmental topic or theme of the particular social media site.

3. Acceptable Use

3.1. Personal Use

City employees may have personal social media sites; however, no personal social media site may be or show any affiliation with the City but shall remain personal in nature. City employees shall not use professional email accounts or passwords in connection with their personal social media sites or social networking. Adherence to these principles guarantees a distinction between personal views and those of the City.

Any comments made from a personal account by City staff, elected officials, volunteers or residents do not necessarily reflect or represent the opinions or policy positions of the City of La Center.

3.2. Elected Official Use

City Councilmembers and appointed members of City Commissions should not comment on or otherwise communicate on the City social media sites. Doing so may constitute an improper meeting under the Open Public Meetings Act.

3.3. Professional Use

All official City communication that occurs over social media sites shall remain professional in nature, tone and language and should be conducted in accordance with City guidelines,

practices, and policies. Social media is a communication channel for distributing information to the public. It is used in addition to existing communication channels such as City newsletters, website, press releases, official documents, etc.

3.3.1. Use of social media is optional and not required. The most appropriate uses of City social media sites are: (1) for time-sensitive and emergency information; (2) as a communication tool for citizen engagement, promotions and marketing; and (3) as a tool to direct citizens and site users to the City's official website.

3.3.2. Employees shall not use the City's social media sites for political purposes, to conduct private commercial transactions, or to engage in private business activities.

4. Postings to City Social Media Sites

4.1. Information must be presented in accordance with professional guidelines including use of good grammar, spelling, brevity, clarity, and accuracy. Information must be easily understandable and avoid unnecessary jargon, obscure terminology, or acronyms.

4.2. All laws governing copyright and fair use or fair dealing of copyrighted material owned by others, including the City's own copyrights and brands shall be followed on social media sites.

4.3. Posts should reflect information that is already available on the City's website. Whenever possible, content or messages posted on the social media site should include a link directing users back to the City's website.

4.4. To make electronic and information technology accessible to people with disabilities, posts that include photos and/or videos should include text describing the photo or video.

4.5. The City reserves the right to restrict or remove from its blogs or social media sites any content that is deemed in violation of this policy or any applicable law.

4.6. The website, blog sites and all official city social media sites shall clearly indicate that any articles and any other content posted or submitted for posting are subject to public disclosure.

4.7. All official City blog sites and social media sites shall include a notification on the home page that public disclosure requests must be directed to the City's Public Records Officer.

4.8. The linked content of embedded hyperlinks within any City of La Center blog articles, social media sites or comments thereto shall be evaluated by the City's Blog Moderator prior to posting. Any posted hyperlinks shall be accompanied by a disclaimer stating that the City of La Center does not guarantee the authenticity, accuracy, appropriateness or security of the link, web site or content linked thereto.

5. Content of Postings

5.1. City employees and/or elected officials shall not publish or post any of the following on any City of La Center social media site:

- 5.1.1. Confidential information;
- 5.1.2. Content that violates Copyright protections or laws;
- 5.1.3. Profanity, racist, sexist, or derogatory content or comments;
- 5.1.4. Comments on any partisan candidate or ballot measure election;
- 5.1.5. Commercial endorsements or SPAM

5.2. Inappropriate and prohibited content subject to immediate removal from the site includes content that:

- 5.2.1. Violates any requirement or prohibition of this Policy;
- 5.2.2. Violates the social media tool's terms of use;
- 5.2.3. Is not topically related to the particular content posted or being commented upon;
- 5.2.4. Promotes or advertises commercial services, entities or products;
- 5.2.5. Supports or opposes political candidates or ballot propositions;
- 5.2.6. Is obscene, profane or vulgar;
- 5.2.7. Discusses, encourages or constitutes unlawful activity;
- 5.2.8. Promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, socioeconomic status, national origin, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation;
- 5.2.9. Provides information that compromises the safety or security of the public or public systems, or includes threatening, harassing, or personal attacks against any individual or entity; and/or
- 5.2.10. Violates any recognized legal right or ownership.

6. Public Records Act Compliance

6.1. All content or comments posted to any City social media site is a "public record" created and is subject to state and local public records laws and applicable retention requirements.

6.2. To ensure compliance with applicable retention requirements, most content posted by City personnel on City social media sites should not be original source content (content that has not been created anywhere else and only exists on the social media site), but rather a secondary copy of information that is posted on the City website or contained in an electronic copy or a hard copy. If original content is posted on a social media site that information shall be retained

in accordance with the City's records retention policies and other applicable laws, for at least the minimum retention period listed for those records beginning the date of posting. Copies of records the City already retains elsewhere will be considered secondary copies and shall be retained accordingly.

- 6.3. Subscriber information and comments to City social media sites, including those that are prohibited and have been removed, will generally be retained as required by applicable public record laws and retention requirements.
- 6.4. When prohibited content is removed, the record must include the original content and the date and time the content was removed.
- 6.5. The City may use the services of a third-party archiving service to capture social media records.

7. City Website

The City of La Center does not provide general Web site hosting for the public, but does allow other governments and non-profit organizations that work with the City to put their information on the City's server or link to the City's website. This is a simple way to be a good neighbor and to assist non-profit organizations in the community. These outside groups are responsible for their own content but must follow the City's guidelines. Any group seeking to post content or a link on the City's website shall contact the City's Finance Director for prior review and approval.

7.1. The City's Website may provide links to websites for:

- a. Governmental and educational institutions.
- b. Non-profit or public service organizations with some relationship to the City (including but not limited to: organizations contracting with the City, organizations sponsoring City activities or programs, and organizations participating in City activities or programs).
- c. Generally recognized community service organizations.
- d. Organizations providing information about art, cultural, and sporting activities in the City.
- e. Organizations providing information about employment opportunities in the City's area.
- f. Organizations providing information about tourist attractions in the City's area.

7.2. The City's Website will not provide links to websites for:

- g. Candidates for elective offices.
- h. Organizations or individuals advocating a position on a political or partisan issue.
- i. Corporate or other for-profit organizations unless they fit any of the criteria stated above.

Individual or personal home pages or non-city social media sites.

8. External Policy

Policy must be made available on social media sites (hyperlink to policy on City website sufficient).

8.1. Disclaimer

The City operates and maintains its social media sites as a public service to provide information about City programs, services, projects, issues, events and activities. The City assumes no liability for any inaccuracies these social media sites may contain and does not guarantee that the social media sites will be uninterrupted, permanent, or error-free. Any individual accessing, browsing and using a City of La Center social media sites accepts without limitation or qualification, the City's Website, blogging and social media policy stated herein. The City maintains the right to modify this Policy without notice. Continued use of any City social media sites following the posting of any modification signifies acceptance of such modification.

8.2. Moderation of Third Party Content and Comments

For all City social media sites that allow user-generated content (non city-published content), those sites are limited public forums, moderated by City of La Center designated Blog Moderator to ensure content posted by outside users is appropriate. A Comment Policy Notice shall be displayed or linked to on all social media sites that allow user-generated material to be posted, indicating the site is moderated and inappropriate content will be removed.

The City reserves the right to restrict or remove from its blogs or social media sites any content that is deemed in violation of this Policy.

The City social media sites and all content published are subject to monitoring. User-generated posts will be rejected or removed at the sole discretion of the City when the content:

- Violates any requirement or prohibition of this Policy
- Violates the social media tool's terms of use;
- Is not related to the particular content being commented upon;
- Promotes or advertises commercial services, entities, or products;
- Supports or opposes political candidates or ballot propositions;
- Is obscene, profane or vulgar and/or includes or provides links to sexual content;
- Discusses, encourages or constitutes illegal activity;

- Promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, socioeconomic status, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation;
- Provides information that compromises the safety or security of the public or public systems, or includes threatening, harassing, or personal attacks against any individual or entity; and/or
- Content that violates any legal right or ownership.

The City reserves the right to hide or remove any content with or without notice to the author.

The City also reserves the right to ban or block any user that repeatedly (more than once) violates the guidelines listed above. Any content removed based on these guidelines must be retained for a maximum of three years (the statute of limitations under 42 USC 1983 for violation of First Amendment rights), including the time, date and identity of the poster when available.

8.3. Property of the City of La Center

All information content and images, including the City logo/seal generated by the City and provided on any City social media site are property of the City, proprietary in nature and are protected by applicable trademarks and copyright laws. The City's logo shall not be used by any non-city entity or person without express written permission.

Definitions

For the purpose of this City of La Center Website, Blogging and Social Media Policy, the definitions shall apply:

- **Blog:** (an abridgment of the term web log) is a City of La Center website with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video.
- **City of La Center blog author:** An authorized City of La Center official that creates and is responsible for posted blog articles (see blog article below).
- **Blog article:** An original posting of content to a City of La Center blog site by a City of La Center blog author.
- **Blog commenter:** A City of La Center official or member of the public who submits a comment for posting in response to the content of a particular City of La Center blog article.
- **Blog comment:** A response to a City of La Center blog article submitted by a blog commenter.

- **Blog Moderator:** The authorized City of La Center official who reviews, authorizes and allows content submitted by City of La Center blog authors and public commenters to be posted to a City of La Center blog site.
- **Public records officer:** The authorized City of La Center official who monitors the City's compliance with the Washington Public Records Act and all related requirements and retention schedules, maintains indexes if any of public records, receives, reviews and responds to public record requests.
- **Social media site:** Facebook, My-space, Twitter and similar social media sites that the City may from time to time establish or maintain.