

Town of Mundare

Policy: Social Media Policy

No. 12-06

Date adopted/revised: March 3, 2015

Resolution: #15/51

Subject: Social Media Policy

Statement:

To provide rules and guidelines for staff in respect to various Social Media forums on behalf of the Town of Mundare.

Policy Statement:

The Town of Mundare strives to enhance communication and wants to build stronger community relationships through the use of Social Media. Social Media platforms hold a purpose of promotion and information sharing in order to further the Town's best interests.

1. This policy governs the publication of and commentary on Social Media by employees of the Town of Mundare. For the purposes of this policy, Social Media means any facility for online publication and commentary, including without limitation blogs, social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Flickr and YouTube. This policy is in addition to and complements any existing or future policies regarding the use of technology, computers, e-mail and the Internet.
2. Publication and commentary on Social Media carry similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary. All uses of Social Media must follow the same ethical standards that Town of Mundare employees must otherwise follow.
3. The Town of Mundare will designate an approved officer for posting to social channels. This officer will
 - follow Town of Mundare Social Media guidelines and protocols;
 - post the Town's Social Media Policy Statement (Appendix A) on the web site; and
 - approve all content and request-for-posts.

Social Media Policy **Guidelines and Protocols**

Guidelines:

1. The purpose of Social Media is to share information including but not limited to Town news, upcoming events, emergencies, job openings and general Town operations.
2. Information must be offered in a professional, accurate and timely manner.
3. Any unauthenticated communication will be removed immediately.
4. No Town website or Social Media forum shall be created or managed through an employee's personal profile.
5. The Town does not commit to responding to every communication received through Social Media.
6. The Town reserves the right to make editorial decisions regarding postings or forums.
7. Social media accounts shall be monitored regularly, with best efforts made to do so once a day.

Protocols:

Think before you post — Be courteous and respectful of those using the space and post positive, educational messages that add value, ensuring the audience is taken into consideration before every post is made.

Legal considerations — Comments, posts and links (peruse and validate all links before posting) will not contain defamatory, obscene or illegal material. Comments must abide by Canadian law such as libel, slander copyright and FOIPP and copyright.

Be transparent and authentic — Be open and honest at all times. Content will ensure that the Town of Mundare is represented in its best light.

Maintain confidentiality and protect identity — Do not share personal documents or information such as home telephone numbers (unless deemed appropriate for event registration, etc.), address or other personal information. Do not post confidential information and develop content so as to ensure the safety of the town, its employees and citizens.

Negative posts and individuals— Delete all spam, advertising or content that is inaccurate, misleading, threatening, defamatory or otherwise objectionable. Moderate content carefully to remove posts that contain inappropriate language and tone, and carefully monitor individuals who post only negative comments and attack others with profane, vulgar and hateful commentary. Acknowledge and deal with negative comments deemed legitimate in a timely manner, through both direct contact with the individual as well as posted on the social media channel it was posted on.

Accuracy — Strive to post accurate, fact-based content. In the event that an error has been made, correct it in a public and timely manner. Re-read posts to ensure spelling and grammar is correct and is in alignment with Town communications policies.

Style Guide adherence — Spelling and grammar are important, but different applications may call for different approaches, naming conventions and tone (Twitter as an example).

Channel Guidelines:

Facebook

- Prepare to moderate user generated content: Mundare’s Facebook page represents the Town online, and the Town should appropriately choose content shared and uploaded on its Facebook page in order to avoid any public relation problems. Inappropriate comments are, unfortunately, common, and the Town will be clear what types of comments will be deleted. But it must be carefully monitored.
- Most updates should be accompanied by a picture. Ensure the picture has received approval from the parties in it.
- Make sure the pictures are of high quality and are appropriate.
- Limit use of hashtags on Facebook.
- Post a maximum of three times daily, ideally twice, once in the morning and once in the afternoon/evening. One post a day must be related to the current relevant event.
- Keep content simple: the more concise and clear, the more interactive the content is, the more likely users will ‘like’ the Town and begin to follow our information regularly.
- Share relevant content from other groups/organizations/municipalities as appropriate.
- Keep in mind that the Town of Mundare’s current audience on Facebook is typically adults but youth could also follow this page so ensure content is appropriate for all audiences.
- Regularly find other groups/organizations/municipalities to “Like” on Facebook.
- Regularly thank Facebook friends for following us on Facebook. This can be done in batches but each individual should be thanked for their support.
- Engage groups by ‘Liking” or commenting on different groups’ content weekly.
- Look for the opportunity to follow additional organizations.
- In the event of a local emergency, think before posting and follow the municipality’s emergency communications protocol.

Twitter

- Post several times a day at minimum. Make sure your tweets follow the relevant campaign.
- Tweet in the first person if possible: Twitter provides a more personal communication experience, so capitalize on that.
- Tweets should be in complete language (e.g. R, U, 2 substitutions are not acceptable). The ‘&’ sign is acceptable to use as AND.
- Be sure to retweet things that you think followers would appreciate but be sure to filter to make sure it is appropriate and relevant.
- Hoot Suite** should be used to set up tweets for evenings, weekends and for regular campaign/event notices.
- Regularly find time to search for new groups/organizations/municipalities to follow.

- Thank new followers regularly, often with a personal tweet but this can also be done in batches. If you suspect a follower is just spam, you don't have to thank them.
- In the event of local emergency, think before posting and follow the municipality's emergency communications protocol.

****Hoot Suite (Social Media Management System)**

- Posting to Hoot Suite can be used to manage regular campaign and event posts and to post to Twitter on weekends, evenings.
- In the event of an organizational or local emergency, suspend Hoot Suite scheduling activities at once. Scheduled tweets can look insensitive or harm organizational reputation if deemed as not appropriate to the current activities of Twitter. In the event of natural disaster (i.e., 2013 Southern Alberta flood), use Twitter to notify followers of safety but limit usage to important and topical tweets only.