

**RESOLUTION NO. 2010-016**

**A RESOLUTION AMENDING THE PERSONNEL POLICY  
ADDING SECTION 21.12, SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Cottage Grove, County of Washington, State of Minnesota, to amend the personnel policy, adding Section 21.12 as follows:

**SECTION 21.12. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

21.12.1. Policy

The City of Cottage Grove will determine, at its discretion, how its web-based social media and online community presence will be designed, implemented and managed as part of its overall communications and information technology strategies and functions. City government social media and other web-based resources may be modified or removed by the City at any time and without notice, as necessary to maintain the integrity of both communications and information technology functions.

21.12.2 Purpose

It is the intent of the City of Cottage Grove to represent itself appropriately, consistently and positively on the internet. Collaborative technologies are fundamentally changing how information is provided, received and how the City can engage its citizens. To aid in meeting the goals of the City, the purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for creating and maintaining a social media and online community presence which is in accord with policies and directives established by City management. It also provides guidelines and standards for individual employees regarding the use of social media for communication with citizens, colleagues and the world at large.

21.12.3. Scope

This policy applies to any existing or proposed social media web sites and online community accounts created by City employees during the course and scope of their employment, and includes all sites and accounts described in Section 21 Electronic Media Usage Policy. This policy does not govern personal use of social media web sites during work hours. Section 21.4 Personal Use Limitations in the City's Personnel Policy governs personal use of social media.

21.12.4. Definitions

**“City Social Media”** – Those social media web sites established for the benefit of the City of Cottage Grove with authority granted as outlined in this policy. Includes all employee social media accounts established at the request of or with the approval of City management. City Social Media does not include employee's personal social media accounts.

**“Social Media Web Sites”** – Focus on creating and fostering online social communities for a specific purpose and connect users from varying locations and interest areas.

**“Social Networking”** – Offer a way for registered users to communicate with each other on the internet, usually offering many ways to connect to other registered users. These websites fall under four categories:

- Conversation – blogs, message boards, twitter
- Social Networking – Facebook, Myspace, LinkedIn
- Content Sharing – YouTube, Flickr, Digg, Delicious
- Collaboration – Wikipedia, Micropublishing

These web sites can offer many different ways for users to interface such as instant messaging, blogging and commenting, microblogging, status updates, online forums, web site link sharing, video conferencing, sharing photos, videos, etc.

**“Microblogging (Twitter)”** – This is a form of blogging that allows registered users to post short updates (140 characters or less) about themselves and their activities.

#### 21.12.5. General Standards

The City of Cottage Grove social media web sites and online community accounts and their associated content should focus on significant City interest areas and be organized in a manner that avoids duplication, ambiguities and/or conflicting information.

1) Currently the City is maintaining 4 web sites and 4 distinct, authorized social media web sites:

#### City Web Sites

City of Cottage Grove web site [www.cottage-grove.org](http://www.cottage-grove.org)

City of Cottage Grove Economic Development web site [www.growthpartnerscg.com](http://www.growthpartnerscg.com)

City of Cottage Grove River Oaks Golf Course web site [www.riveroaksmunigolf.com](http://www.riveroaksmunigolf.com)

City of Cottage Grove River Oaks Golf Course wedding site [www.riveroaksweddings.com](http://www.riveroaksweddings.com)

#### City Social Media Web Sites

City of Cottage Grove Facebook site- <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Cottage-Grove-MN/City-of-Cottage-Grove-MN/136890553483?v=wall&viewas=0>

City of Cottage Grove Public Safety Facebook site - <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Cottage-Grove-MN/Cottage-Grove-Minnesota-Police-Department/147704903882>

City of Cottage Grove River Oaks Facebook site -<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Cottage-Grove-MN/River-Oaks-Golf-Course/47983194682?ref=s>

City of Cottage Grove Parks and Recreation Facebook site -  
[http://www.facebook.com/posted.php?id=136890553483&share\\_id=180440327611&comments=1#s180440327611](http://www.facebook.com/posted.php?id=136890553483&share_id=180440327611&comments=1#s180440327611)

#### 21.12.6. Social Media Web Site Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the Department Director to ensure all City policies are followed when employees are establishing a City of Cottage Grove social media site or interacting with social media sites in the course of the employee's scheduled work.

- 1) All postings to City of Cottage Grove social media sites may be subjected to review by the MIS Coordinator, Community Services Coordinator and/or the City Administrator and may be deleted without notice.
- 2) Additional or significantly amended Social Media Web sites, intended to be established for the benefit of the City of Cottage Grove via individual employees or departments, must be approved by the Community Services Coordinator and/or the City Administrator. The employee is responsible for providing documentation on the benefits of using social media networks for their specific job functions as justification for approval of the additional or significantly amended social media sites. It is the responsibility of the employee's supervisor to review work impacts to assure that using social media does not negatively affect the employee's day-to-day job performance.
- 3) Administration of all social media web sites and online community accounts must comply with applicable laws, regulations and policies as well as proper business etiquette.
- 4) City social media accounts accessed and utilized during the course and scope of an employee's performance of his/her job duties may not be used for private or personal purposes or for the purpose of expressing private or personal views on personal, political or policy issues or to express personal views or concerns pertaining to City employment relations matters.
- 5) As set forth in other City policies, City employees are blocked from accessing social media sites and other online communities such as Craigslist on their City of Cottage Grove computers, except where an employee administers a site or under other circumstances where the employee has been granted permission by their Department Director, the Community Services Coordinator or City Administrator and has obtained access from the MIS Coordinator.
- 6) City of Cottage Grove social media and online community web site accounts are considered a City asset and logins to these accounts must be securely administered in accordance with City computer security policies. The MIS Coordinator must be an Admin on all City web site accounts. **The City reserves the right to shut down any of its social media sites or accounts for any reason without notice.**
- 7) A social media web site and online community accounts shall not be used by the City or any City employee or representative to disclose sensitive and/or confidential information without the prior written approval of the City Administrator.

8) All social media web sites and online community accounts created and utilized during the course and scope of an employee's performance of his/her job duties will be identified as belonging to the City of Cottage Grove, including the City logo, as well as a link to the City's official web site.

9) Inclusion of the following disclaimer, as approved by the City Administrator, is required on all social media sites.

**“The City of Cottage Grove’s use of external social media web sites is provided as a public service. The City of Cottage Grove disclaims liability for ads, videos, promoted content or comments accessible from any external web site. The responsibility for external content or comments rests with the organizations or individuals providing them. Any inclusion of external content or comments does not imply endorsement by the City of Cottage Grove. The City reserves the right to delete any postings that are obscene, vulgar, threatening, contain profanities or show the City or its residents in a negative manner.”**

#### 21.12.7. Social Media Guidelines

1) Adhere to your area of business expertise and provide information on your current activities and those of your industry.

2) Post meaningful, respectful comments that promote collaboration and sharing. Do not spam, inflame or make comments that are offensive.

- Posting may include:
  - a. City events
  - b. City partner events (i.e. Strawberry Fest, Crime Board Breakfast, Holiday Train, etc.)
  - c. Not-for-profit fundraisers held in the City (hockey breakfast, etc)
- Posting not allowed:
  - a. Sales at retail stores
  - b. Garage sales, etc, for individual profit
  - c. Events hosted entirely or primarily for a private gain
  - d. Political Commentary

3) Always think before posting; if it causes you to pause or question if it is appropriate, it most likely should not be posted.

4) Respect proprietary information, content and confidentiality. Give credit to appropriate persons when required or appropriate.

5) Reply to comments in a timely manner, when a response is appropriate. Understand that quality communication is important, so engage appropriately.

6) Be transparent as to who you are and who you represent. Be clear about your role for the City of Cottage Grove so as to indentify your vested interest in the information you share.

- 7) Be aware that just by identifying yourself as a City of Cottage Grove employee you are creating perceptions about yourself and about the City. Be sure all content associated with you is consistent with your work and the City's professional standards.
- 8) Know and follow the City's rules for conduct, Internet Policy and the Social Media Policy.
- 9) Be aware that some information is confidential and/or sensitive until deemed available for public release. Employees are expected to maintain this confidentiality.
- 10) Add value and excitement to the online community. Your statements and posts should provide the community with information to improve their knowledge, skills, solve problems, or to understand City government and community activities better.
- 11) Social media is a conversation, so talk to the community as you would a real person in a professional situation. Be a leader while communicating and do not create incendiary statements to inflame others. Be careful and considerate of other points of view.

- Posting guidelines:
  - a. No more than 1 or 2 posts per day on the site
  - b. Please keep sites updated
  - c. Posts should include a colorful picture or link if possible to another site to promote interest
  - d. Post events close to the event, or people will forget it. At the very least, post a reminder close to the event.
- Guidelines for responses to posts:
  - a. The City will delete any responses containing profanity, vulgarity, or which are demeaning or inflammatory to other people
  - b. Document deleted posts (save thread to a file), along with specific reason for deleting
- Use Facebook as a photo repository for City events – gives fans a reason to join and something to look at.

#### 21.12.8. Violations of the Policy

- 1) Violations of this Policy shall be reported to the Department Director, the Community Services Coordinator and or the City Administrator. Employees violating this policy may be disciplined in accordance with the provisions of the City of Cottage Grove's Personnel Policy or employee's labor contract.

#### 21.12.9. Exceptions/Changes

- 1) This policy replaces all previous policies covering the same or similar topics except as provided for in Cottage Grove's Personnel Policy. Exceptions to this policy may be granted only by the City Administrator. This policy may be reviewed and changed at any time.

Adopted this 3rd day of February, 2010.

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Myron Bailey, Mayor

Attest:

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Caron M. Stransky, City Clerk