

Town of Berwick

Town Guidelines for the Use of Social Media

PURPOSE

To address the fast-changing landscape of the Internet and the way the general public communicates and obtains information online, the Town of Berwick departments may consider using social media tools to reach a broader audience. The Town encourages the use of social media to further the goals of the Town and the missions of its departments, where appropriate. The Town has an overriding interest and expectation in deciding what is “spoken” on behalf of the Town on social media sites. This policy establishes guidelines for the Town’s use of social media.

POLICY

1. The Town’s website (*www.berwickmaine.org*) will remain the Town’s primary and predominant Internet presence.
 - (a) The best, most appropriate Town uses of social media tools fall generally into two categories:
 - (i) As channels for disseminating time-sensitive information as quickly as possible (for example, emergency information).
 - (ii) As marketing/promotional channels that increase the Town’s ability to broadcast its messages to the widest possible audience.
 - (b) The use of RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feeds shall be the preferred method for dissemination of public information by the Town.
 - (c) Wherever possible, content posted to Town social media accounts will also be available on the Town’s main website.
 - (d) Wherever possible, content posted to Town social media accounts should contain links directing users back to the Town’s official website for in-depth information, forms, documents or online services necessary to conduct business with the Town.

2. No Town employee, elected official, appointed official, contractor, department, board or committee may establish any social media identity, account, profile, page, or site (collectively, “social media account(s)”) in the name of or on behalf of the Town or any Town department unless the Town Manager or his designee, and the Department Head, as appropriate, have approved the account. This requirement applies regardless of whether the account is established, accessed, or used by means of Town information systems or by means of the employee’s or others’ information systems, and regardless of whether the account is established, accessed, or used from Town or non-Town premises.

3. Following approval under Section 2 above, Department Heads will be responsible for the content and upkeep of any social media accounts their department may create.

4. All Town social media accounts shall comply with all appropriate Town policies and standards, including, but not limited to, the Town’s Personnel Policy

5. Town social media accounts are subject to Maine’s public records disclosure law, the Freedom of Access Act (“Right-to-Know” law). Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to Town business is a public record. The department maintaining the account is responsible for responding completely and accurately to any public records request for public records on social media, with assistance, if necessary, from the Town’s Public Access Officer.

Content related to Town business shall be maintained in an accessible format and so that it can be produced in response to a request. Wherever possible, such accounts shall clearly indicate that any articles and any other content posted or submitted for posting are subject to public disclosure. Users shall be notified that public disclosure requests must be directed to the relevant Department Head.

6. Maine law and relevant record retention schedules apply to social media formats and social media content. The department maintaining an account shall preserve records required to be maintained pursuant to a relevant records retention schedule for the required retention period on a Town server in a format that preserves the integrity of the original record and is easily accessible.

7. Users and visitors to social media accounts shall be notified that the intended purpose of the account is to serve as a mechanism for communication between Town employees and members of the public relating to the transaction of Town business. Town social media account articles and comments containing any of the following forms of content shall not be allowed:

- (a) Comments not topically related to the particular social medium article being commented upon;
- (b) Profane language or content;
- (c) Content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, national origin, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation or any other status protected by law;
- (d) Sexual content or links to sexual content;
- (e) Solicitations of commerce;
- (f) Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
- (g) Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems; or
- (h) Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.

These guidelines must be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink. Any content removed based on these guidelines must be retained, including the time, date and identity of the poster when available.

8. Administration of Town social media accounts.

- (a) The Town Manager will maintain a list of social media tools that are approved for use by Town departments and staff.
- (b) The Town Manager will maintain a list of all Town social media accounts. Department Heads must submit to the Manager a list of all social media accounts maintained by the department, including the following information:
 - (1) the name, hosting site and Internet address and date of inception for the account, and a statement of the purpose and scope of the department's use of the account
 - (2) all user names, passwords, and other log-in credentials for the account
 - (3) all authorized social media users for the department that have access to and/or responsibility for the account
 - (4) the administrative contacts and contact information for the account.

The Department Head must promptly notify the Manager of any changes in any of the foregoing, and of any new department social media accounts or pages and any termination of accounts or pages.

- (c) Department Heads shall ensure that all department-approved social media accounts and social media content are periodically reviewed for compliance with this policy.

Department Heads are responsible for all social media content created, received, transmitted, stored, deleted, destroyed, and/or printed in the name of or on behalf of the Town or the department.

- (d) The Town must be able to immediately edit or remove content from social media accounts.
- (e) The Town Manager, Human Resources Director and Department Heads may monitor content on each of the social media accounts to ensure adherence to this Social Media Policy for appropriate use, message and branding consistent with the goals the Town.
- (f) Violation of these standards may result in the removal of pages from social media outlets. The Manager retains the authority to remove information.

9. The Town reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this Social Media Policy or any applicable law.

10. The Town will approach the use of social media tools as consistently as possible, enterprise-wide.

11. All new social media tools proposed for Town use will be approved by the Town Manager and the appropriate Department Head.

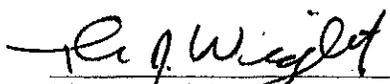
I have read and understand the above "Town of Berwick Town Guidelines for the Use of Social Media":

Signature _____

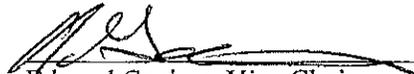
Printed Name _____

Date _____

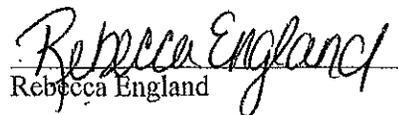
The Town of Berwick Guidelines to the Use of Social Media is adopted this 1st day of November, 2016
by the Board of Selectmen.



Thomas Wright, Chairman

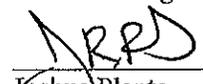


Edward Ganiere, Vice Chair



Rebecca England

Mark Pendergast



Joshua Plante

Board of Selectman, Town of Berwick, Maine