



TOWN OF WAREHAM BOARD OF SELECTMEN

No. 2013-06

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Purpose and Applicability

The way in which people can communicate continues to evolve due to the rise of internet based communication tools. The Town of Wareham (The Selectmen of the Town of Wareham) recognizes the many new opportunities for communication created by these tools to communicate official information to the public, and wishes to encourage the responsible use of official Town of Wareham social media channels of communication. Use of these tools creates new responsibilities for Town employees, boards and commissions. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to clarify the boundaries between appropriate and inappropriate use of official Town of Wareham sponsored social media. Nothing in this policy is intended to restrict an individual's right to discuss, as a private citizen, matters of public concern on non-official social media sites, nor to restrict his right to engage in concerted activity with co-workers.

This Social Media Policy describes guidelines and requirements for Wareham employees and agents when using Town of Wareham official social media as defined below.

Definitions

Social Media is:

- Any Town of Wareham related Domain website
- Social networking websites (e.g. Myspace, Facebook, Twitter, Gather.com, Yahoo! Groups, LinkedIn)
- Multimedia sharing websites (e.g. Flickr, YouTube, Vimeo, Picassa)
- Blogs (e.g. Blogger, WordPress, Moveable Type, TypePad.)
- Wikis (e.g. Wikipedia, PBwiki, Wikispaces)
- Forums and discussion boards (e.g. Google Groups, Yahoo! Groups)
- Personally managed websites, blogs etc.
- O-line polls and surveys (e.g. Doodle, Survey Monkey)
- Any other internet accessible site on which an individual user can post text, media etc.

Policy Guidance

1. Before making any posting on any site, official or unofficial, that identifies you as an employee or agent of the Town of Wareham, or that refers to the Town or any of its entities, consider whether you risk damaging the Town's reputation, legal obligations, contract negotiations or personnel issue, or that of any of its entities. Please be aware that the Conflict of Interest Laws place limitations on your use of official information that confers unwarranted advantages upon you, your immediate family, or those who might benefit from "inside" information. Accordingly, your social media must not disclose any information that is confidential or proprietary, the subject of any active litigation, labor negotiations, or personnel issues.
2. If you post, you must do so in a way that is not defamatory. Defamatory statements that you make are your own responsibility, and the Town of Wareham will not defend you from the consequences of your personal actions.

Official Use of Social Media

1. Representation of the Town of Wareham or any of its employees, agents or affiliates may only be initiated or authorized by the director of information technology, the Town Administrator, or their designees.
2. You may not misrepresent any site as a Town of Wareham official social media site. Use of name and Town Seal, are prohibited unless approved by the Town Administrator or his designee. Misuse of the Town Seal is a criminal act punishable pursuant to G.L. c. 268, s. 35. Any use where an employee or agent of the Town speaks representing the Town must be approved through the official chain of command, with prior permission granted.

Sanctions

Failure to comply with this policy may lead to violations of law and disciplinary action where appropriate.

This policy shall take effect immediately.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Adopted: October 15, 2013

Peter W. Teitelbaum, Chairman

Alan H. Slavin, Clerk

Stephen M. Holmes

Patrick G. Tropeano

Judith Whiteside