Common Council Social Media Policy – Phase 1

Official Alder Social Media Pages

Phase 1 Policy Overview

On July 16, 2019, the Common Council adopted a resolution creating the President's Work Group to Review Council Communication Tools & Processes.

The "Common Council Social Media Policy – Phase 1" is a product of this Work Group that will allow for limited social media usage by alders on City-managed social media accounts. It provides a Phase 1 protocol for a trial of alder usage of Facebook and Twitter using city-owned accounts.

Phase 1 Policy Overview (Index)

- Definition of social media for the purpose of this Phase 1 Policy
- Social media options allowed in Phase 1 (Facebook & Twitter)
- What is an "Official City Account"
- Eligibility
- Phase 1 POLICIES (Alder's Facebook pages and Twitter Accounts)
  - Page/Account Design
  - Naming conventions
  - Mandatory Content
  - Operations of Page
    - Commenting, Blocking, Private messages (PM) and Direct messages (DM), etc.)

- No Use of City Resources
- No Campaign, Promotions, Solicitations and Donations
- Open meetings
- Public records

- Alders' Facebook and Twitter Use – Phase 1 GUIDELINES
  - Maintain clear lines between your personal, official alder, and campaign social media
  - Commenting
  - Promoting or sharing a post, event or other content from a nonprofit organization.
  - Private messaging (PM) and Direct messaging (DM):

Social media platform options in Phase 1

- During Phase 1, only **Facebook** and **Twitter** can be used by alders, at their option.
- This official City Facebook page and/or Twitter account can be used **solely** for **"official council business"** of that alder.
- The account is set up directly by City staff, with the account ownership / contact person being a City employee.
- The password for the page/account is managed by City staff and is capable of being **transferred** to future elected officials in the same aldermanic district.
- No other City-supported social media accounts will be allowed.

Facebook and Phase 1 Eligibility

- Facebook: Facebook is a social media network that connects people through an online platform. By sharing content like text status posts, images, videos, and external links like blog posts, Facebook users can contribute ideas and join conversations with other people who share the same or different interests.

- Phase 1 specifies Alder Facebook "pages": Facebook Pages allow you to reach and engage the people you care about: your community, voters and supporters.

- Facebook Pages have the ability to advertise and have access to **Page insights (metrics)**. (Meta-The Basics How-to-Guides)

Twitter & Phase 1 Eligibility

- Twitter: A social networking site launched in 2006, is undoubtedly one of the most popular social media platforms available today, with 100 million daily active users and 500 million tweets sent daily.

- Phase 1 specifies Alder Twitter "accounts", where the user only has an account. Both Common Council and Alder would have access to account.

What is an "Official City Account"

- FB and Twitter **can only be set up directly by City staff**, with the account ownership / contact person being a City employee.

- The password for the account is managed by City staff.

- The page or account is **capable of being transferred** to future elected officials in the same aldermanic district by a City employee, OR renamed for a newly-elected official in the same district.

- The name of the page/account follows an official naming convention established by the City.

- The public-facing portion of the alder's social media page directs visitors to their official City of Madison email address, City website, etc.

- Setting up a social media account requires agreement with legal terms and conditions of the social media platform.

- Examples of what is **NOT** an Official City account: any social media account/page/presence created by the alder on their own, not created through the City of Madison, and not managed by City staff using the steps above. Alders' personal accounts and pages must be kept separate.

Phase 1 POLICIES (Alder's Facebook Pages and Twitter Accounts)

- Page/Account Design
- Naming conventions
- Mandatory Content
- Operations of Page
  - Commenting, Blocking, Private messages (PM) and Direct messages (DM), etc.)
- No Misuse of City Resources
- No Campaign, Promotions, Solicitations and Donations
- Open meetings
- Public records

Phase 1 GUIDELINES (Alders' Facebook and Twitter Use)

- Maintain clear lines between your personal, official alder, and campaign social media

- Commenting

- Promoting or sharing a post, event or other content from a nonprofit organization.

- Private messaging (PM) and Direct messaging (DM)

How can Social Media be Used for Gov't

- Social media can be used by local governments for things like recruiting government workers and volunteers, promoting events, and directly corresponding with citizens about important local issues.

- Elected officials can also take advantage of the communicative nature of the platform to build relationships with community members.

- Social media build awareness around initiatives, and is an essential tool in crisis communications.

Examples of Official Council Business

- City events or alder organized district events or meetings such as a neighborhood meeting related to a development proposal or a city project.
- Leaf and yard waste pick up, snow removal, road closures
- Grant Announcements
- Position Appointments
- Upcoming Common Council meetings & Public Hearings
- Promotion of in-person/virtual information meetings (e.g. Property tax assessments)
- Notices
- Ground breaking on approved developments

Examples of Facebook/Twitter Content

80% of posts inform, educate, or entertain

- Neighborhood Fun! (E.g. Children drawing pictures for residents)
- Non-partisan content focusing on the importance of local elections
- Exciting business developments in your district, renderings of approved projects
- Interactive polls on issues
- Interactive maps
- Infographics & dashboards
- Interesting statistics/demographics; e.g.: "How many constituents are in each district?"
- History quizzes
- Images and qualities of each districts (parks, lakes, etc).

20% of post promote Common Council brand

- District Videos
- Repost messages and blog posts from Alders
- Agenda items gaining interest
- Alder Spotlights, "Did you know?" "Life of an alder/what they do?" e.g. on average, an Alder…,
- NRT Initiatives
- Community Development resources

Facebook Content Examples for Alder/CC Use

Things to consider

- Sample pilot with a few current Alders leading up to April elections.
- After what period of time should a report of the pilot social media account usage be prepared for CCEC by Council Staff with the assistance of IT and the City Attorney's Office? (Communication Tools & Processes)
- Social media training may need to be implemented among Alders participating in pilot.
- Do we develop standards and policies to promote the usage of translation services, and other accommodations for residents with LEP and VI, for all social media communications?
- Consultation with the City Attorney Administrative Procedure when employing social media so as to appropriately address public records and open meetings considerations.