



Media Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines, protocols, and procedures to ensure that the City's communication with the public is efficient, effective, consistent, timely, and transparent. In addition, this policy addresses the responsibilities of individual employees and city officials with regard to media use. Lastly, this policy outlines terms of use and comment policy in order to help facilitate and enhance the transfer of information to the public through the City's Social Media.

Communication Objectives

1. Ensure the City is visible and responsive to the citizens it serves.
2. Inform citizens about the City's policies, programs, services, projects, and initiatives through communication that is effective, timely, accurate, and consistent.
3. Inform stakeholders when establishing or developing priorities, policies, programs, and services where reasonable and practical.
4. Engage in a proactive communications program that uses a variety of platforms to accommodate diverse needs existing in our community.

Ownership

All website and social media systems and resources owned or controlled by the City and all messages, text, graphics, images, and electronic files and other information transmitted by, received through or stored in these systems and resources are the property of the City.

Platforms

1. City of Bel Aire Website – Our City's website is a platform for residents to get information as well as make payment for City services.
 - A. The Communications department is responsible for maintaining the City website.
 - B. The Communications department will work with department heads and the City Manager to determine what information will be posted to the City's website.
 - C. Access to edit department pages can be granted by getting approval from the Communications Director.
 - D. Linking to an outside news source as a way to promote City of Bel Aire-related information is prohibited unless specifically approved by the City Manager. An example of a possible exception would be in the case of a co-sponsored event.
2. Cable Channel – Cable Channel 7 is a public service and information resource for Bel Aire citizens provided through Cox Communications. The Communications department is responsible for scheduling appropriate programming following FCC guidelines. As of 2022 Council meetings will no longer be rebroadcast on the cable channel as requirements for airing meetings are cost prohibitive.

3. Social Media – The City of Bel Aire has an interest in informing and engaging its audience using traditional as well as new media. Social media has become one of the main channels of communication for many and is an excellent communication tool for the City. By leveraging social media as a primary communication tool, we are engaging our customers in a timely cost-effective way and supporting City goals. Sharing our original content personalizes our messages and demonstrates our “social persona.” In social media, there are appropriate occasions for both original and shared content.
 - A. City meetings are open to the public at the designated meeting location, however when practical the City will make reasonable effort to rebroadcast recorded meetings on social media platforms.
 - B. All social media accounts that represent the City will be approved by the City Manager. If specific departments are interested in creating a social media presence, they will need to first get approval from the City Manager and then contact the Communications department.
 - C. The Communications department will set up the accounts and be named the administrator or will obtain all usernames and passwords to these accounts.
 - D. The City of Bel Aire reserves the right to temporarily or permanently suspend access to any page or social media platform at any time.
 - E. **Community Standards**
 - i. Communication on City media platforms must be made with respect and courtesy to others.
 - ii. Any comment posted by a member of the public on an official City Social Media Page or Department Social Media Page is the opinion of the commentator only, and its publication on such Page shall not imply endorsement of or agreement by the City.
 - iii. All Social Media established by the City, including the City’s Social Media Page and those Pages utilized by individual City departments, are for informing the public and not intended to create a public forum. As such, each Page shall have, in a place visible to the public or accessible by link, a notice that comments containing any of the following forms of content are prohibited and will be removed:
 1. Comments not related to the topic of discussion;
 2. Profane, obscene, uncivil, harassing, or inappropriate language or content;
 3. Sexual content;
 4. Solicitations of commerce;
 5. Promotion or encouragement of illegal activity;
 6. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public, public systems, the City, its employees, or public officials;
 7. Promotes political candidates, issues or viewpoints except as provided by City sanctioned debates or forums;

8. Defamatory remarks, personal attacks, or threats against any individual person or group of people.
 9. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any party;
 10. Any content in violation of or inconsistent with federal, state, or local laws and ordinances;
 11. Links to any outside websites that are inconsistent with this policy;
 12. Content that is repetitive or duplicative;
 13. Any content not listed herein but that is otherwise inconsistent with the spirit of civility intended by these Terms of Use & Comment Policy.
- ii. The following notice shall be provided along with the comment policy above:
This City of Bel Aire platform is for providing City the residents and vendors of the City and not intended to create a public forum. The City of Bel Aire reserves the right to remove content that is deemed in violation of this policy, applicable law, or the City's employee handbook. Any participant on a City Social Media Page or Department Social Media Page that repeatedly violates the commenting guidelines as set forth in this policy may be permanently removed from the City's social media page(s). The City of Bel Aire reserves the right to temporarily or permanently suspend access to any Page at any time.

Employee Use

Personal social media accounts established by employees should not be presented as official voices of the City.

Social media guidelines for employees are established in the *Personnel Policy Manual* and should be reviewed and followed by City Staff.

Updates to this Policy

The City of Bel Aire recognizes that these guidelines will continually evolve as new technologies and social networking tools emerge. The City of Bel Aire reserves the right to change the communication policy at any time to reflect the current marketing techniques with relation to changes in technology.

Adopted this _____ day of _____, 2022 by the Bel Aire City Council.

Jim Benage, Mayor