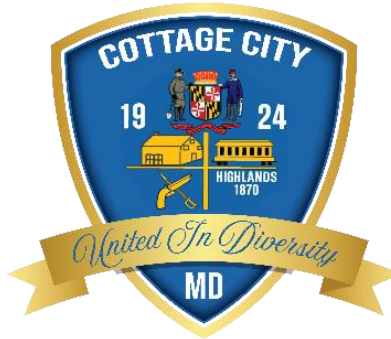




**The Town of Cottage City
3820 40th Avenue,
Cottage City, MD 20722
(301)-779-2161**

Memorandum:

To: Cottage City Commission

From: John Hoatson, Town Manager

Date: September 1, 2026

Subject: IT & Cybersecurity Policy – Commission Guidance

Following the Commission's recess, I would like to keep the issue of the Town's IT and Cybersecurity Policy on the radar and seek direction from the Commission regarding how you would like to proceed.

As you may recall, Advantage Technology, through Mike Nastick & Chis May, provided the Town with a Municipal IT and Cybersecurity Policy & Procedure Template. The template provides a comprehensive framework for addressing municipal cybersecurity, information technology, data protection, and technology use.

The template is organized around the NIST Cybersecurity Framework and Maryland Department of Information Technology guidance. It addresses important areas including account security, multi-factor authentication, ransomware, vendor management, backups, incident response, public records obligations, technology procurement, software and SaaS, and artificial intelligence (AI) use.

The document also includes a dedicated section addressing AI within the broader Technology Procurement, Software, SaaS, and AI Use Policy.

Commission Direction:

The template is intended to serve as a working template, rather than a document that a municipality must adopt in its entirety. Sections can be selected, modified, or removed to reflect Cottage City's existing policies, operational needs, vendors, insurance requirements, Charter and Code provisions, and available resources.

I would therefore like to obtain guidance from the Commission regarding what you would like to see included in a future Town policy or ordinance.

Among the issues for consideration are:

1. Whether the Town should adopt a comprehensive IT and Cybersecurity Policy;
2. Whether the policy should be adopted by ordinance, resolution, or administrative policy;
3. Whether the Commission would prefer a phased approach, beginning with the highest-priority areas such as:
 - Acceptable Technology Use;
 - User Access and Multi-Factor Authentication;
 - Data Security and Handling;
 - Incident and Cybersecurity Reporting;
 - Backup and Recovery Procedures;
 - Vendor and Third-Party Security; and
 - AI Use;
4. Whether the Town should establish specific requirements for employees and elected officials,
5. What level of oversight the Commission would like regarding cybersecurity incidents and technology-related policies; and
6. Whether the Town should incorporate portions of a standalone municipal AI ordinance into the broader IT and cybersecurity policy.

Next Steps:

Following the Commission's discussion, we can provide Advantage Technology with the Commission's preferred scope and request any additional guidance or recommendations.

Once the Commission provides direction, I can work with the Town Attorney to develop the appropriate ordinance, resolution, policy, or combination of documents for consideration.

At this stage, I am primarily seeking Commission guidance on what you would like the Town's IT and cybersecurity framework to accomplish and what provisions you believe should be included.