

City Council Meeting

Agenda Item

Data Sheet

Meeting Date: August 3, 2026

Topic:

First Reading: Consideration of and Action on Ordinance No. 2026-36. An Ordinance of the City of Tomball, Texas, Amending Chapter 2, Administration, Article III, Division 5, Code of Ethics, of the Code of Ordinances by adding a new Section 2-219, Social Media and Online Conduct, and by renumbering existing Sections 2-219, 2-220, and 2-221 as Sections 2-220, 2-221, and 2-222, respectively; providing a repealer clause; providing for severability; making findings of fact; providing for enforcement; providing an effective date; and providing for other related matters.

Background:

Ordinance No. 2026-36 proposes amendments to Chapter 2, Administration, Article III, Division 5 of the City's Code of Ethics to establish clear standards for social media and online conduct by City officials. The ordinance adds a new Section 2-219 and renumbers existing Sections 2-219 through 2-221 without changing their substantive content. As stated in the ordinance, the City recognizes that "the digital presence of the city's officials carries public-trust obligations comparable to conduct in official meetings and proceedings" and seeks to ensure "consistent and accurate communication with the public" while supporting compliance with the Texas Open Meetings Act and Public Information Act. Key provisions include:

- Scope of Application
- Official Representation
- Prohibited Conduct
- Open Meetings Act Guidance
- Public Information & Media
- Constitutional Protections

The new Social Media and Online Conduct section will be enforced through Council's existing Code of Ethics, and does not create criminal penalties for protected speech.

Origination: City Secretary's Office/Olson & Olson

Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval of first reading of Ordinance No. 2026-36.

Party(ies) responsible for placing this item on agenda: Thomas Harris III, City Secretary

FUNDING (IF APPLICABLE)

Are funds specifically designated in the current budget for the full amount required for this purpose?

Yes: _____ No: _____ If yes, specify Account Number: # _____

If no, funds will be transferred from account # _____ To account # _____

Signed

Staff Member

Date _____

Approved by

City Manager

Date _____