



Measure #: 2025-045

## TOWN COUNCIL MEASURE SUBMITTAL

Date: 01/27/2025

Submitted By: Councilor Sobogan

Telephone #: 508-699-0100

### MEASURE DESCRIPTION:

Adoption of Guidelines/Policy for Town Councilor Conduct on Social Media and Community Engagement

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

### PURPOSE AND JUSTIFICATION:

#### Purpose:

To consider adopting a policy to provide clear guidelines for town councilors regarding the use of social media and engagement with the community, ensuring transparency, professionalism, and ethical conduct while protecting the integrity of the council.

#### Background:

In today's digital age, social media serves as a powerful tool for public officials to communicate with the community and address concerns. However, without clear guidelines, the potential for misrepresentation, misinformation, or unintentional violations of ethical standards can arise. Establishing a policy will ensure that councilors can effectively engage with residents while maintaining the trust and confidence of the public.

#### Scope of the Guidelines:

- Clarify the distinction between personal and official communication on social media.
- Define best practices for responding to public concerns on social platforms.

#### Ethical Standards:

- Outline expectations for accuracy and transparency when discussing council business or recapping meetings.
- Prohibit the use of official town symbols (e.g., town seal) or language that implies a councilor is speaking on behalf of the council without authorization.

#### Public Feedback Utilization:

- Encourage councilors to observe community concerns on social media and address recurring themes during council meetings under "Councilor Comments."
- Promote the use of meeting recordings or official minutes to ensure accurate information is accessible to the public.
- Require councilors to conduct all town-related business through designated council email addresses to ensure compliance with public records laws and maintain transparency.

### SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

### ATTACHMENTS:

REFER TO SUB-COMMITTEE: Rules

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### PURPOSE AND JUSTIFICATION CONTINUED:

#### Transparency Measures:

- Discuss sharing meeting recordings or summaries via official town channels, such as North TV, Facebook, or the town website, to provide accurate recaps.

Ensure compliance with Open Meeting Law and public records requirements.

#### Enforcement and Training:

- Consider implementing training for councilors on social media ethics and conduct.
- Establish a process for addressing complaints or violations of the proposed policy.

#### Proposed Next Steps:

- Initiate a formal discussion of the proposed guidelines at the upcoming town council meeting.
- Collect feedback from councilors and the public to refine the policy