

Agenda Item Report



Winnebago County
The Wave of the Future

DATE: October 4, 2022

FROM:

RE: Winnebago County Social Media Policy

General Description:

Social Media is a method that many members of our community use to obtain information. Winnebago County encourages the use of social media outlets to further the goals of the County and the mission of its Departments where appropriate. The Winnebago County Social Media Policy provides standards and guidance to County Departments and personnel regarding the use of social media platforms for county business.

Action Requested:

Motion for the adoption of the Winnebago County Social Media Policy.

Procedural Steps:

Committee of Jurisdiction: INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Meeting date: 10-13-22

Action taken: _____APPROVED_____

Vote: _____4-0_____

County Board

Meeting date: 11-15-22

Background:

Winnebago County has an overriding interest and expectation in deciding what is “announced” or “spoken” on behalf of the County through the use of social media.

Departments throughout Winnebago County have been using social media platforms to communicate with the public for over a decade with no County guidance or oversight. This policy establishes guidelines for the establishment and use of social media by the County for conveying information about the County and its events and activities. This policy also establishes guidance for employees acting in a personal capacity when using social media.

The County’s intent is to create a “government speech forum” or a “limited forum” devoted exclusively to the County’s postings to the public. Nothing in this policy shall be applied to prohibit or infringe upon any communication, speech, or expression that is protected or privileged under law. This includes speech and expression protected under state or federal constitutions as well as labor laws or other applicable laws.

Policy Discussion:

Winnebago County Departments have been utilizing social media for more than a decade without any consistent standards. The goal of this policy is to provide guidance as Winnebago County continues to

utilize social media platforms to communicate and share information with the public. The policy is also intended to keep Winnebago County in compliance with record retention requirements as well as current case law that addresses social media use by Government agencies.

Attachments:

Winnebago County Social Media Policy