



LAFCO - San Luis Obispo - Local Agency Formation Commission
SLO LAFCO - Serving the Area of San Luis Obispo County

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TO: MEMBERS, FORMATION COMMISSION

**FROM: MIKE PRATER, EXECUTIVE OFFICER
IMELDA MARQUEZ, ANALYST**

DATE: OCTOBER 15, 2020

SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF POLICY ON SOCIAL MEDIA USE

Recommendation. It is respectfully recommended that the Commission review the attached policy regarding Social Media. The Commission may 1) Give staff feedback and direct staff to take any appropriate follow up actions or 2) Approve by motion the attached draft policy with or without modifications as specified.

Discussion. The San Luis Obispo Local Agency Formation Commission (SLO LAFCO) principally relies on its website to disseminate information to the public concerning current and pending agency activities. Information displayed through the website is complemented by more traditional forms of outreach. This includes sending e-mails to self-registered groups, making presentations/ attending local agency and community meetings, and publishing announcements or notices in the newspaper.

Attachment

**A: Draft Policy on
Social Media**

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act (CKH) directs LAFCOs to actively engage citizens in considering the current and future needs of local communities. This includes requiring LAFCOs to maintain an internet website to help ensure relevant information is readily available to the public. Staff recommends the enhancement of public engagement through social media use; these tools could be used to reach and expand our current audience. With the recent pandemic, governmental agencies are increasingly relying on social media. Several social medial sites – specifically Facebook and Twitter – are now commonly used to promote government information and services to a continuously increasing audience. Some examples of other LAFCO’s that currently use one or both of the mentioned platforms is Napa, Orange, Santa Clara and Stanislaus Counties. Other more local examples would be SLO Air Pollution Control District, SLO Council of Governments, SLO Integrated Waste Management Authority along with numerous other local government entities.

Staff has designed the draft policy with assistance from Legal Counsel to: (1) establish general goals and direction in the use of social medial sites to enhance communication to the public and (2) authorize protocols with respect to using Social Media.

This policy does not address commissioner use of social media due to the recent passage of Assembly Bill 992, which limits members of legislative bodies from directly responding to social media posts involving public agency business that is made, posted, or shared by another member of the legislative body. Assembly Bill 992 is effective January 1, 2021 until January 1, 2026, unless otherwise renewed by the state legislature.

Attachment A

Draft Policy on Social Media

Administrative Policies

3.6 Policy on Social Media Site Use

1. Purpose

To establish guidelines for the Commission's use of social media sites as a means of conveying information, including information concerning mission, meetings, activities, events, services, and current issues.

2. Definitions

The following words have the meaning as described:

"Social media sites" refers to online platforms used to create accessible, expandable and upgradable publishing technologies through and on the internet.

"Commission" means the San Luis Obispo Local Agency Formation Commission.

"Commission social media sites" means social media sites including the Facebook page and Twitter page that the Commission will use to convey information.

"Posts" or "postings" mean information, articles, pictures, videos or any other form of communication posted on Commission social media sites.

"Comment" or "Comments" mean and include any information, articles, words, pictures, videos or any other form of communicative content posted by others on Commission social media sites.

3. General Guidelines

- a. The Commission's website (<http://www.slolafco.com/>) will continue to serve as the Commission's primary location of electronic information. When possible, Commission social media sites will link to the official Commission website for documents, online services, and other necessary information.
- b. The establishment of a social media site is subject to approval by the Executive Officer, consistent with this policy. Social media site accounts will be created using an official Commission email account and will bear the name and official seal of the Commission as applicable to the social media site. All Commission social media sites will use authorized Commission contact information for account set-up, monitoring, and access. Use of personal email accounts or phone numbers by Commission employees for the purpose of setting-up or administering a Commission social media site is prohibited.

- c. Content posted on City social media sites is subject to oversight by the Executive Officer or his designee(s).
- d. All Commission social media sites must adhere to applicable federal and state laws, and Commission regulations and policies. This includes but not limited to the California Public Records Act, the Ralph M. Brown Act, and laws and policies regarding records retention, conflicts of interest and copyright. Any content maintained on Commission social media sites that is related to Commission business, including a list of subscribers and posted communication may be considered a public record and subject to public disclosure.
- e. Commission social media sites must comply with usage rules and regulations required by the site provider, including privacy policies.
- f. Rules applicable to the use of Commission social media sites, as determined appropriate by the Executive Officer, must be made available to all Commission social media site users on each Commission social media site and on the Commission's website.

4. Content Standards and Guidelines

- a. Any employee authorized by the Executive Officer to post items on Commission social media sites must review, be familiar with, and comply with the social media site's use policies and terms and conditions.
- b. Any employee authorized by the Executive Officer to post items on Commission social media sites must not express his or her own personal views or concerns through such postings. Postings on Commission social media sites by an authorized Commission employee must only present factual information regarding the Commission's policies and programs.
- c. Content posted to Commission social media sites should contain hyperlinks directing users to the Commission's official website for in-depth information, forms, documents or online services whenever possible.
- d. Postings may be made primarily during normal business hours. After-hours or weekend postings may be made when the news or information is relevant to an event or activity occurring, or as otherwise authorized by the Executive Officer.
- e. Postings must not contain information that is confidential as defined by any Commission policy, state law, or federal law.
- f. Postings must not contain any employee's personal information, except for the names of employees whose job duties include being available for contact by the public.

5. Comment Guidelines

- a. Commission social media sites are intended to disseminate information and direct viewers to more in-depth information or resources on the Commission's website. Commission social media sites are not intended to provide a public forum for comments or discussion by the public.
- b. The Commission reserves the right to implement or remove any functionality of Commission social media sites, when directed by the Executive Officer. This includes, but is not limited to, the posting of information, articles, pictures, videos, comments, or any other form of communication in Commission social media sites.
- c. The Commission will continue to encourage members of the public to contact the Commission directly via phone, email or in person with questions or concerns related to Commission business. Commission social media sites will provide the public with instructions on contacting the Commission via phone, email or website.