PERSONNEL AND NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

October 27, 2026 at 6:00 PM

303 Mansion Street Mauston, WI

1. **Call to Order/Roll Call**
2. **Discussion and Action Regarding Minutes**
   - a. October 13, 2026
3. **Discussion and Recommendation Regarding the Communication Specialist Job Description**
   - a. Job Description
4. **Discussion and Recommendation Regarding the Amendment to the City of Mauston Social Media Policy**
   - a. Memo
   - b. Social Media Policy
5. **Discussion and Recommendation Regarding the City of Mauston Social Media and Communications Operating Guidelines**
   - a. Memo
   - b. Social Media and Communications Operating Guidelines
6. **Adjourn**

NOTICE:

It is possible that action will be taken on any of the items on the agenda and that the agenda may be discussed in any order. It is also possible that a quorum of other governmental bodies of the municipality may be in attendance at the above-stated meeting to gather information; no action will be taken by any governmental body at the above-stated meeting other than the governmental body specifically referred to above in this notice.

Also, upon reasonable notice, efforts will be made to accommodate the needs of disabled individuals through appropriate aids and services. For additional information or to request this service, contact City Deputy Clerk Carole Wolff at (608) 747-2706.

Any member of the public wishing to join the meeting telephonically should call City Hall by 4pm the day of the meeting. Staff will be happy to provide instructions on joining the meeting by phone. City Hall main number: 608-847-6676

PERSONNEL AND NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

October 13, 2026 at 6:15 PM

303 Mansion Street Mauston, WI

1. **Call to Order/Roll Call:** The Personnel and Negotiating Committee meeting was called to order on October 13, 2026, at 6:15 p.m. by Chair Leanna Hagen. Present were Jim Allaby, Leanna Hagen, and Kayla Thomas. Also present were Mayor Darryl Teske, City Administrator Daron Haugh, and Deputy Clerk Carole Wolff.
2. **Minutes:** Motion by Allaby, seconded by Thomas, to approve the minutes of September 22, 2026. Motion carried by voice vote.
3. **CPI Lock at 3.3%:** Motion by Hagen, seconded by Thomas, to recommend Council approval of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) Lock at 3.3%. Motion carried by voice vote.
4. **Step Schedule:** Haugh reported that the proposed 2027 step schedule is the same as the schedule used in 2026. Motion by Thomas, seconded by Allaby, to recommend Council approval of the proposed 2027 step schedule. Motion carried by voice vote.
5. **Adjournment:** Motion by Thomas, seconded by Allaby, to adjourn. Motion carried by voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 6:21 p.m.

_____ _____

Chair Date

Job Descriptions*

POSITION TITLE:	Communications Specialist	**Education Levels:**
DEPARTMENT:	Administration / GMTA Support	**Min:** Associate degree
STATUS:	Full-time, FLSA Non-Exempt, Non-represented	**Preferred:** Bachelor's degree
REPORTS TO:	City Administrator	**Ideal Add'l:** Communications, Marketing, GMTA
Personnel Committee Recommendation: _____		**Council Approval:** _____
WORK HOURS & CONDITIONS:		

This position will work a flexible schedule to accommodate City and GMTA meetings, events, tourism activities, social media coverage, community engagement, and other communication-related responsibilities. Hours may include daytime, evening, weekend, and seasonal work depending on event schedules, meeting needs, and assigned projects. Work is performed primarily in a normal office setting, with regular attendance at community events, business visits, meetings, and other off-site activities as assigned.

POSITION SUMMARY:

Perform communications, marketing, scheduling, and administrative support functions for the City of Mauston and Greater Mauston Tourism Association. This position leads implementation of the City's social media communications strategy, coordinating staff participation, content creation, digital publishing, and audience engagement. The Specialist works collaboratively across departments to strengthen public understanding, showcase community stories, and maintain a consistent communications voice while supporting assigned City and GMTA operations.

PRINCIPAL DUTIES:

- Lead implementation, ongoing evaluation, and refinement of the City's adopted social media strategy, in coordination with the City Administrator and participating departments.
    - Coordinate and support the City's network of staff content creators, facilitating collaboration, creative development, and consistent participation across departments.
- Facilitate regular creative planning sessions with participating staff to develop story ideas, coordinate content production, share feedback, and recognize successful contributions.
- Develop, schedule, post, and monitor social media content for the City of Mauston across approved platforms.
    - Guide content development to reflect the City's adopted voice, emphasizing authentic storytelling, staff participation, and video content appropriate to each platform.
- Create clear, consistent, and professional public communications for City programs, services, announcements, events, projects, and community updates.
- Assist with maintaining the City's public communication calendar, including coordination of messaging, posting schedules, public notices, events, and internal deadlines.
- Provide communications, calendar management, meeting support, and event coordination assistance for the Greater Mauston Tourism Association.
- Support GMTA tourism promotion by assisting with visitor-focused messaging, business outreach, event information, promotional content, and community storytelling.
- Coordinate event-related communications before, during, and after City or GMTA events, including public updates, sponsor recognition, volunteer information, photos, and follow-up messaging.
- Assist with maintaining and updating digital communication platforms, including the City website, social media accounts, mobile applications, newsletters, press releases, flyers, graphics, promotional materials, and other public-facing communication tools as assigned.
- Work with City departments, local businesses, community partners, tourism stakeholders, and event organizers
    - To gather relevant information of interest to the community, and share timely updates;
    - In supporting a portfolio of original and aggregated content for the City of Mauston's social accounts.

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Job Descriptions*

- Monitor social media performance, community sentiment, and audience engagement; identify trends and opportunities and recommend adjustments to content strategy based on measurable results and community response.
- Maintain organized communication files, calendars, contact lists, event materials, media assets, sponsorship information, and related records.
- Provide back-up for others within the office as needed, and work with other employees of the City as a team to encourage a unified organization.
- Other duties as assigned by the City Administrator.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Education: Associate degree required; bachelor's degree preferred.
- Experience in communications, marketing, social media management, public relations, event coordination, tourism promotion, administrative support, or a related field preferred.
- Bachelor's degree in communications, Marketing, Public Relations, Business, Tourism, or related field preferred.
- Must possess and maintain a valid Wisconsin driver's license or have reliable transportation to attend meetings, events, and off-site assignments.

SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

- Has the ability to communicate clearly, professionally, and accurately with the public, elected officials, City employees, community partners, businesses, tourism stakeholders, and visitors.
- Maintains a solid understanding of social media platforms, their audience profiles and content approach.
- Ability to coordinate and encourage creative participation among employees with varying levels of interest, experience, and technical ability.
- Ability to evaluate social media performance, adapt to changing platform practices, and apply creativity and sound judgment to public communications.
- Efficiently operate computer hardware and software related to communications, scheduling, social media, website updates, graphic design, document preparation, and administrative functions.
- Maintain confidentiality with sensitive information and exercise discretion when handling internal communications, public inquiries, and organizational matters.
- Exercise good professional judgment, creativity, initiative, and integrity.
- Develop well-written content, proofread materials, manage multiple deadlines, and maintain a consistent tone and message across communication platforms.
- Perform responsible work with independence and discretion, with minimum supervision. Start and complete assigned tasks without supervision, following oral and written instructions.
- This position regularly exposes the employee to stressful situations, including responding to frustrated members of the public, managing competing priorities, and addressing urgent communication needs. The employee must be able to perform effectively under these conditions while maintaining professionalism, objectivity, and respectful interactions.

MANAGEMENT STATEMENT:

These position descriptions have been prepared to assist in defining work hours and conditions, job responsibilities, and skills needed. It is not intended as a complete list of jobs, duties, responsibilities, and/or essential functions. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from this position if the work is similar, related or a logical assignment to the position.

These position descriptions do not constitute an employment agreement between the employer and employee. These descriptions are not intended to limit or modify the right of any supervisor or supervising governmental body to assign, direct and control the work of employees under supervision. The City of Mauston retains and reserves any and all rights

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Job Descriptions*

to change, modify, amend, add or delete, from any section of this document as it deems, in its judgment, to be proper.

By my signature below:

- I acknowledge that I received a copy of this job description.
- Any questions and/or concerns have been addressed with me.

_____	_____	_____
Signature	**Printed Name**	**Date**

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THE CITY OF Mauston

MEMO

To: Mayor Teske – Personnel Committee

From: Daron J Haugh – City Administrator

Subject: Social Media Policy Amendment

Date: 2026-10-27

The attached redline substantially expands the City's social media policy in response to evolving platform practices, public-records and First Amendment obligations, and the creation of the Communications Specialist position. It retains the City Administrator's prior revisions and adds detailed standards for content strategy, community-content curation, copyright and music use, public comments, accessibility, records retention, training, and account oversight.

Key changes in the proposed amendment include:

- Clarifies authorization, inventory, security, records-retention, emergency-use, and oversight requirements for official City accounts.
- Adds a proactive content strategy emphasizing a warm, accessible City voice; people-first and platform-native content; analytics; quarterly performance review; and a content calendar.
- Creates standards for selecting and sharing community content while preserving City editorial control, requiring a public purpose, permission, attribution, documented records, and conflict-of-interest safeguards.
- Adds copyright, music-licensing, account-type, cross-platform reposting, and annual-review requirements.
- Keeps comments disabled by default, permits account-specific authorization, and establishes viewpoint-neutral moderation, documentation, warning, blocking, and appeal procedures when comments are available.
- Updates rules for personal accounts, protected speech, confidentiality, open meetings, political activity, monitoring, discipline, training, and annual policy review.

City of Mauston

Social Media Policy

Council Adopted: October 27, 2026

Council Adopted: June 25, 2024

City of Mauston

Social Media Policy

In order to maintain a professional online presence and to comply with the Wisconsin Public Records Law and the First Amendment, the City of Mauston has adopted the following social media policy. This policy governs the creation, administration, use, security, retention, and oversight of City social media accounts. It may be amended by the City in accordance with applicable law and City procedures.

PURPOSE

The City's social media accounts exist for more than distributing notices. Their purpose is to give the Mauston community a warm, human, and relatable view of its local government: the people who plow the streets, answer the calls, and maintain the parks; the projects underway in neighborhoods; and the community partners who make Mauston a good place to live. Residents should come away from the City's accounts informed, and also connected to the work being done on their behalf and to one another.

To that end, the City's social media accounts shall be managed proactively and strategically. Content should be planned, timely, accurate, and designed for the platform on which it appears, and the City will adapt its practices as platforms, audiences, and best practices evolve. Content the City publishes or elects to share on its accounts is the speech of the City.

DEFINITIONS

- **Social media:** Any online platform that allows users to create and share content, including but not limited to Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, LinkedIn, Snapchat, TikTok, YouTube, and blogs.
- **City social media accounts:** Any social media account authorized or created by City of Mauston or authorized for use by its officials or employees for official purposes for the City of Mauston.
- **Personal social media accounts:** Any social media account created by an employee or official for personal use and not authorized by the City of Mauston.
- **Public comment:** Any reply, comment, post, message, reaction, review, or other user-generated content submitted to or displayed on a City social media account.
- **Account administrator:** A City employee or authorized contractor designated by the City Administrator or the City Administrator's designee to post, moderate, or manage a City social media account.
- **Curated content:** Content created by a third party, such as a partner agency, school, nonprofit, civic organization, local business, or resident, that the City elects to share or repost on a City social media account.

- **User Account:** A platform account type intended for individual or non-commercial use (for example, a personal or creator account), which typically includes access to the platform's general licensed music and sound library for non-commercial use.
- **Commercial Account:** A platform account type intended for businesses and brands (for example, a business account), which typically limits licensed music and sounds to a commercially cleared library.

POLICY

1. **City Social Media Accounts:**
    - Only persons specifically authorized or designated by the City of Mauston may create or manage City social media accounts.
    - Only the City Administrator or the City Administrator's designee, on behalf of the Common Council, may authorize the creation or management of City social media accounts. The City shall maintain an inventory of authorized accounts, assigned administrators, recovery information, the account type of each (User Account or Commercial Account), and the business purpose of each account.
    - Content posted on City social media accounts must be authorized by the City Administrator or the City Administrator's designee and must be accurate, professional, accessible, consistent with the account's approved governmental purpose, and appropriate for release to the public. Account administrators shall promptly correct material errors and shall not use City accounts for personal, political campaign, commercial, or unauthorized purposes. Sharing curated content that meets the public-purpose standard in Section 3 is a governmental purpose and is not a commercial purpose under this policy.
    - City social media accounts created or managed under this policy are not intended to create public forums, except as authorized below, and therefore, public comments shall be disabled whenever the platform provides that capability. Otherwise, the City is not establishing a public-comment forum through its social media accounts. If a platform feature does not permit comments or other public interaction to be disabled, including certain Facebook event pages, the City may use that feature for an authorized governmental purpose. In that circumstance, the unavoidable availability of comments does not change the City's intent or create an invitation for public comment. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the City Administrator may authorize public comments on a specific City social media account when doing so serves the account's governmental purpose, such as engaging residents in community conversation. Where comments are authorized, the comment area is a limited public forum for discussion of the subject of the City's posts, and comments are subject to Section 5.
    - When public interaction cannot be disabled or comments have been authorized under this section, authorized staff shall manage the feature consistently with the platform's terms, applicable law, and any City-approved moderation standards. Staff shall not delete, hide, restrict, block, or otherwise act on user content based on viewpoint. Content may be addressed only under neutral, consistently applied standards approved by the City Administrator in consultation with legal counsel,

including the standards in Section 5, and staff shall preserve required records of the content and action taken.

- City social media content, including posts, messages, comments, account records, moderation actions, and related communications, may constitute public records. Authorized staff shall retain and produce such records in accordance with applicable law and the City's records-retention procedures and shall not rely solely on the social media platform to preserve them.
- Account credentials shall be protected, shared only with authorized personnel, and updated when access responsibilities change or an authorized user separates from service. Multi-factor authentication shall be used when available. Suspected compromise, impersonation, or unauthorized access shall be reported immediately to the City Administrator and appropriate information-technology personnel.
- City social media accounts are supplemental communication tools and shall not be used as the sole means of providing legally required notice, emergency instructions, public-records request procedures, or another communication that must be delivered through an official channel.
- City social media accounts are not monitored 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and shall not be used to request emergency services. Anyone needing emergency assistance should call 9-1-1.

2. **Content, Voice, and Platform Strategy:**
   - **Voice.** City content should be warm, clear, friendly, and approachable. It should reflect the personality of Mauston and the people who serve it, communicate a desire to inform and help, and avoid jargon. Content should refer to residents as "you," to the City as "we," and to the City and residents together as "us." Where the City has adopted voice or brand guidelines, content shall be consistent with them.
   - **People-first content.** The City should regularly feature the people behind City services, including employees, volunteers, partners, and residents, and show the work of local government as it happens. Before featuring an identifiable person, staff shall follow City practice on consent, and shall obtain permission from a parent or guardian before prominently featuring an identifiable minor.
   - **Platform-native content.** Social media platforms, their algorithms, and their audiences change continually. Content should be created or adapted for the platform on which it appears, reflecting that platform's formats, audience, and conventions. Posting identical content across every platform, or relying primarily on flyers, press releases, or text-heavy graphics, is discouraged.
   - **Best practices.** Account administrators are expected to follow current best practices for each platform. As of the adoption of this policy, these include short-form vertical video featuring real people and places; captions on all video and a clear message in the first few seconds; behind-the-scenes, explanatory, and storytelling content alongside announcements; timely participation in platform trends and formats consistent with this policy; and prompt, helpful responses to residents.
   - **Performance and planning.** The City shall use platform analytics, such as reach, engagement, shares, saves, and watch time, to evaluate what is working and adjust its content strategy, and shall review performance at least quarterly. Account

administrators are encouraged to maintain a content calendar aligned with City priorities.

- **Accessibility.** The City shall make reasonable efforts to ensure its social media content is accessible to people with disabilities, consistent with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and applicable accessibility standards. This includes alternative text for images, captions for video, sufficient color contrast in graphics, and plain-language writing. Important information presented in an image or flyer should also be provided in text.
- **Emergency communications.** During emergencies or situations involving immediate public safety, the City may expedite review and publication of critical information. Emergency communications take priority over the other practices in this section.
- **Adding and retiring platforms.** The City Administrator or the City Administrator's designee may approve new platforms and retire existing ones based on where Mauston residents are and how they engage. Accounts shall be archived in accordance with Section 8 before they are closed.

3. **Community Content and Curation:**
   - **Purpose.** The City encourages account administrators to actively seek out and share high-quality content from partner agencies, schools, nonprofits, civic organizations, local businesses, and residents that informs the community or showcases worthwhile activity in Mauston. Curated content helps residents see the full life of their community, strengthens partnerships, and extends the reach of important information.
   - **City speech and editorial control.** Curated content the City shares becomes part of the City's own communications. The City selects all curated content at its sole discretion using the standards in this section. Sharing content does not create a public forum, and no person or organization has a right to have content shared by the City.
   - **No submission or promotion program.** The City does not operate a program for third parties to submit content or request promotion. Anyone may suggest content, but the City is under no obligation to share or respond to a suggestion, and sharing content once does not obligate the City to share similar content in the future.
   - **Public-purpose standard.** Curated content must serve a public purpose. Content qualifies when its primary purpose is public information or public safety; community service, charitable, or volunteer activity, such as a food drive or a fundraiser for a community cause; an event open to the public that contributes to civic or community life; recognition of community achievements or milestones, including participation in City or community events such as ribbon cuttings; programs or partnerships of the City or another public agency; or local history, culture, or quality of life in Mauston.
   - **Content that does not qualify.** The City will not share curated content whose primary purpose is advertising or selling a product or service, including sales, discounts, or promotional offers; supporting or opposing a candidate, party, or ballot question; or religious worship or instruction. Religious organizations remain eligible for content that otherwise meets the public-purpose standard, such as a community food pantry. The City will not share content that is not

appropriate for a general audience of all ages, or that would reasonably be perceived as the City endorsing a particular business's products or services.

- **Fairness.** The City shall apply this section consistently and shall not favor one business, organization, or individual over another based on personal or political relationships. The City shall not accept payment, gifts, or anything of value in exchange for sharing content. An employee or official with a personal or financial interest in a business or organization shall not take part in a decision to share its content.
- **Permission required.** Before reposting or re-uploading any curated content, the City shall obtain permission from the account owner or creator. Permission may be obtained by email, direct message, or other written means, and shall be documented (for example, by saving the email or a screenshot showing the date and account) and retained as a public record. If the City has reason to believe the source lacks rights to material in the content, such as photographs or music, the City shall not share it.
- **Attribution and removal.** Curated content shall credit the original creator, for example by tagging the account or naming the source. If a creator later asks the City to remove shared content, the City shall do so promptly, consistent with Section 8. Sharing curated content does not constitute City endorsement of any organization, business, product, service, or viewpoint.

4. **Copyright, Music, and Account Type:**
   - **City-owned content.** Content created by City employees within the scope of their employment for City social media accounts is the property of the City.
   - **Third-party content.** The City shall not post third-party content, including photographs, video, artwork, and music, without authorization from the rights holder, a valid license, or a good-faith determination by the City Attorney that the use is permitted by law. Curated content is also subject to the permission requirements of Section 3.
   - **Account type preference.** Because the City's communications are non-commercial public information, the City's preference is to operate City social media accounts as User Accounts where the platform's terms of service permit a government entity to do so. User Accounts generally provide access to the platform's broader licensed music and sound library, which supports the platform-native content described in Section 2.
   - **Limits on User Account music.** When operating a User Account, the City shall use platform-licensed music only for non-commercial City content. Platform library music shall not be used in any post that is boosted, sponsored, or otherwise paid for; in curated content that features a private business; or in content prepared under a paid partnership or sponsorship. Content in these categories shall use commercially cleared music, music the City has licensed for that use, public-domain music, or no music.
   - **Commercial Accounts.** The City shall use a Commercial Account on any platform where the platform's terms require one for a government entity, or for any account the City uses for commercial activity, such as selling goods or services, paid advertising programs, or monetization. Commercial Accounts shall use only commercially cleared or City-licensed music.

- **Platform-specific licenses.** Music licenses granted by a platform apply only to that platform. Content using platform-licensed music shall not be downloaded and reposted to another platform unless the music is licensed there as well.
- **Review.** Because platform terms and music licenses change, the City Administrator's designee shall review the account type and music terms for each City social media account at least annually and whenever a platform announces a material change.

5. **Public Comments:**
   - This section applies to any City social media account on which the City Administrator has authorized comments under Section 1, and to comments on any platform feature where comments cannot be disabled.
   - Where comments are authorized, the comment area is a limited public forum for discussion of the subject of the City's posts. Staff shall not hide, remove, or restrict comments based on the viewpoint expressed, including criticism of the City, its officials, or its decisions.
   - Comments containing any of the following may be hidden or removed:
     1. Obscene or sexually explicit material;
     2. True threats of violence, or incitement to imminent lawless action;
     3. Harassment directed at a specific individual;
     4. Personal identifying information about another person, such as Social Security numbers, financial account numbers, medical information, or home addresses;
     5. Commercial solicitation, advertising, or spam;
     6. Encouragement of illegal activity, or content that violates federal, state, or local law;
     7. Content that infringes a copyright, trademark, or other legal ownership interest;
     8. Information that may compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems, including links to malicious software;
     9. Impersonation of another person or organization;
     10. Repetitive or duplicative comments posted to flood a thread; or
     11. Content clearly unrelated to the subject of the post on which it appears.
   - Where a platform allows it, staff should hide a comment rather than delete it. Before any comment is hidden or removed, staff shall capture a record of it, including the commenter's name or handle, the date and time, the content, and the reason for the action.
   - Automated filters, such as keyword filters, may be used only to enforce the categories listed above and shall be reviewed periodically to confirm they do not restrict viewpoints.
   - The City may block or restrict a user only after repeated violations of this section, or immediately in the case of a true threat. Except in the case of a threat, the City shall first make a reasonable attempt to warn the user. Blocks shall be [temporary, not to exceed ___ days, unless violations continue], and each block and its reason shall be documented.
   - A user whose comment has been hidden or removed, or who has been blocked, may appeal by email or letter to the City Administrator within ten (10) business

days of the action. The City Attorney shall review the appeal, and the user shall be notified of the outcome in writing within a reasonable time.

- **Responses.** The City's standard practice is to respond to questions and individual concerns by direct message, which allows staff to give complete and personalized answers. When a question is of broad public interest, the City may also respond publicly. The City cannot guarantee a response to every comment or message but will make reasonable efforts to respond in a timely manner. Employees responding on behalf of the City shall not share personal information about themselves or other employees.
- A comment posted by a member of the public is the opinion of the commenter only, and its presence on a City social media account does not imply City endorsement. Users are also subject to each platform's terms of service, and the City may report violations to the platform.

6. **Personal Social Media Accounts:**
    - City Officials (including elected officials) that create their own social media accounts must clearly state that such personal social media accounts do not represent the views of, nor are they authorized by the City of Mauston. A disclaimer does not convert an account used to conduct City business into a personal account; officials shall avoid using personal accounts as a substitute for authorized City communication channels.
    - City Officials (including elected officials) or Employees may use personal social media accounts for personal purposes but must comply with this policy when their use relates to City business, relies on information obtained through City service or employment, uses City resources, or could reasonably be understood as official City communication.
    - Under the standard set by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Lindke v. Freed*, 601 U.S. 187 (2024), an official's social media activity may be government action when the official has actual authority to speak for the City on a matter and purports to exercise that authority. If the City determines that an account maintained in an official's name is being used to conduct City business, that account shall be managed in accordance with this policy, including Sections 1, 5, and 8.
    - Employees must clearly state that their personal social media accounts do not represent the views of nor are they authorized by the City of Mauston. Employees shall not use City logos, seals, titles, uniforms, equipment, photographs, email addresses, or other identifiers in a manner that implies City sponsorship or authorization, except as approved for official City business.
    - Employees may not post or divulge any confidential or proprietary information that they obtained arising from or through their employment with the City on their personal social media accounts. This includes information protected by law, attorney-client privilege, personnel confidentiality, law-enforcement restrictions, security requirements, or another applicable City policy. Questions about whether information may be released shall be directed to the City Administrator before posting.
    - Employees must comply with all privacy laws and regulations when using social media.

7. **Social Media Use Detrimental to Missions and Functions of City:**
    - Employees shall not use social media in a manner that unlawfully discloses confidential information, constitutes unlawful harassment or discrimination, makes knowingly false statements about City operations, materially interferes with assigned duties, or otherwise violates law or an applicable City policy. This provision is not intended to restrict rights protected by the First Amendment, applicable labor law, whistleblower protections, or other law.
    - Police Department employees hold positions of public trust and shall comply with applicable laws, departmental rules, confidentiality requirements, and standards of conduct when using social media. Social media activity may be reviewed when there is a specific, work-related basis to determine whether that activity materially impairs job performance, department operations, workplace safety, or the ability to maintain legally required public trust, while respecting protected speech and other lawful rights.
8. **Compliance with Laws and Regulations:**
    - Employees must comply with all laws and regulations when using social media, including but not limited to copyright, defamation, and discrimination laws.
    - Employees and officials shall comply with applicable public-records, open-meetings, election, ethics, intellectual-property, privacy, accessibility, and records-retention requirements when conducting City business through social media.
    - City social media records are subject to the Wisconsin Public Records Law, Wis. Stat. §§ 19.31–19.39. Requests for social media records shall be referred promptly to the City's legal custodian of records designated under Wis. Stat. § 19.33.
    - Social media records, including hidden or removed comments, moderation records, and permission records for curated content, shall be retained and disposed of only in accordance with Wis. Stat. § 19.21 and the retention schedules applicable to the City. Content shall be captured before it is hidden, removed, or deleted. After a public records request is received, related records shall not be destroyed except as permitted by Wis. Stat. § 19.35(5). No content shall be deleted, hidden, or altered to avoid disclosure, and inactive accounts shall be archived before they are closed.
    - Members of the Common Council and of City boards, commissions, and committees shall not use social media, including comment threads, group messages, or direct messages, to discuss City business among enough members to determine the body's course of action. Such exchanges, including a series of separate exchanges among members, may constitute a meeting subject to the Wisconsin Open Meetings Law, Wis. Stat. §§ 19.81–19.98.
    - City social media accounts and City resources shall not be used to support or oppose any candidate or ballot question. The City may provide factual information about referenda that affect the City.
9. **Monitoring and Enforcement:**
    - The City may monitor City social media accounts, City-owned devices and systems, and publicly available social media activity when reasonably related to

City operations, legal compliance, records obligations, workplace conduct, or an investigation. Nothing in this policy authorizes access to a private account or private content without lawful authority.

- Any violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Discipline shall be administered in accordance with applicable law, collective bargaining agreements, personnel policies, and due-process requirements. The City Administrator may suspend account access, require removal or correction of unauthorized content, preserve relevant records, and refer legal questions to the City Attorney.

10. **Training and Review:**
    - The City shall provide training to account administrators and, as appropriate, to elected officials and other staff. Training shall address this policy, current platform best practices, content creation, comment moderation and First Amendment considerations, public records and retention, copyright and music licensing, and accessibility.
    - The City Administrator may issue administrative guidelines addressing platform-specific practices, formats, account settings, and workflows. Such guidelines shall be consistent with this policy and may be updated as platforms change without action by the Common Council.
    - This policy shall be reviewed at least annually.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I, _____, acknowledge that I have read and will comply with the City of Mauston's social media policy. I understand that any violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Signature: Date:

THE CITY OF Mauston

MEMO

To: Mayor Teske – Personnel Committee

From: Daron J Haugh – City Administrator

Subject: Social Media and Communications Operating Guidelines

Date: 2026-10-27

Attached for review are the proposed City of Mauston Social Media and Communications Operating Guidelines. These administrative guidelines are intended to put the City's Social Media Policy into day-to-day practice by giving the Communications Specialist and other account administrators clear direction on posting authority, neutrality, content standards, public engagement, emergency communications, records, and account security. They also distinguish the purposes and appropriate uses of City of Mauston and Visit Mauston accounts.

The guidelines are needed to:

- Allow routine communications to be handled efficiently while identifying subjects that require advance review or immediate referral to the City Administrator.
- Establish viewpoint-neutral standards for elections, elected officials, observances, businesses, organizations, and public comments.
- Set expectations for a warm, clear, people-focused voice; platform-appropriate content; regular posting; staff participation; and performance review.
- Keep City of Mauston and Visit Mauston communications appropriately separated while providing consistent standards for cross-sharing, fair treatment, records, security, and licensed music.
- Provide practical procedures for responding to residents, escalating sensitive matters, communicating during emergencies, and documenting moderation decisions and permissions.
- Clarify records-management, account-security, and personal-account responsibilities for staff who administer City or Visit Mauston accounts.

City of Mauston
Social Media and Communications Operating Guidelines

Issued by: City Administrator, under Section 10 of the City of Mauston Social Media Policy
Applies to: Communications Specialist and any other City account administrator; City of Mauston and Visit Mauston accounts
Effective: [October 27, 2026]

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1. Purpose and Authority

These guidelines are issued by the City Administrator under Section 10 of the City of Mauston Social Media Policy (the "Policy"). They put the Policy into practice for the Communications Specialist and any other account administrator, and they apply to both City of Mauston accounts and Visit Mauston accounts operated on behalf of the Greater Mauston Tourism Association (GMTA).

Where these guidelines and the Policy differ, the Policy controls. The City Administrator may update these guidelines at any time as platforms, practices, and City needs change.

2. Approval Levels

The Communications Specialist is trusted to run the City's day-to-day social media independently. The levels below set out what can be posted directly, what needs a quick review, and what goes straight to the City Administrator.

- **Post directly.** The Communications Specialist may publish without prior review:
    a. Routine information about City services, programs, events, projects, schedules, and meetings;
    b. Stories and features about City employees, volunteers, partners, and residents, with consent as required by the Policy;
    c. Curated content that meets the Policy's public-purpose standard, with permission documented;
    d. Observances that fall within Section 4 of these guidelines; and
    e. Routine Visit Mauston content consistent with GMTA direction.
- **Review with the City Administrator before posting:**
    a. Content featuring or quoting elected officials, other than routine coverage of public meetings and ceremonies;
    b. Budgets, taxes, utility rates, fees, or borrowing;
    c. Development projects, land use, or annexation matters;

d. Anything about a matter pending before the Common Council beyond factual agenda and meeting information;
e. Any paid, boosted, or sponsored post; and
f. Any new account or platform.

- **Refer to the City Administrator immediately. Do not post or respond until directed:**
  a. Police or fire incidents, other than sharing information already released by the Police or Fire Department;
  b. Claims, litigation, or anything an attorney is involved in;
  c. Personnel or disciplinary matters;
  d. Inquiries from news media;
  e. Criticism or controversy that is escalating, spreading, or drawing outside attention;
  f. Threats against any person, or any post that raises safety concerns; and
  g. Questions about candidates, campaigns, or referenda beyond factual election information.
- **Department content.** Departments send ideas, photos, and updates to the Communications Specialist, and the department head confirms the accuracy of department information before it is posted. The Communications Specialist decides how and when content is presented.

3. Neutrality Standards

The City's accounts serve every resident. A post should read the same to a resident on any side of an issue. City and Visit Mauston accounts:

- Do not support or oppose any candidate, political party, or referendum. Election posts are limited to factual information, such as election dates, polling places, voter registration, and the wording of a question on the ballot. Any explanation of a referendum's effect on the City must be factual and approved by the City Administrator.
- Do not take positions on social or political issues, or on pending state or federal legislation.
- Do not express personal opinions. The voice on City accounts is the City's voice.
- Treat all members of the Common Council equally. Elected officials are featured in their official capacity, such as at meetings, ceremonies, and proclamations. From the start of nomination paper circulation through election day, the City should not feature an individual official who is a candidate beyond routine coverage of official actions.
- Treat businesses and organizations even-handedly, consistent with the Policy's curation standards.
- Respond to and moderate public comments without regard to the viewpoint expressed.
- When in doubt, ask the City Administrator before posting.

4. Observances

The City recognizes observances on its social media accounts in three situations, applied the same way to every observance:

- **City operations change.** Holidays and other days when City offices close or services change, such as Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and the winter holidays. These posts combine a brief, warm recognition with the practical information residents need, such as office closures and garbage collection changes.
- **Proclamation.** Observances recognized by proclamation of the [Mayor or Common Council]. The post states that the City has issued the proclamation and may include or link to it.
- **City work.** Observances tied to the work of City departments and services, such as National Night Out, National Public Works Week, Fire Prevention Week, Arbor Day, National Library Week, and recognition weeks for police, dispatchers, and other City employees.
- Observances outside these three situations are not posted on City accounts. The same standard applies to Visit Mauston accounts, which may also promote tourism events and seasonal activities.
- If a resident asks why the City did or did not recognize an observance, the Communications Specialist may respond: "The City recognizes observances when City operations change, when the [Mayor or Common Council] issues a proclamation, or when they relate to the work of City departments. Requests for a proclamation can be submitted to [the City Clerk]."

5. Voice and Content

- **Voice.** Follow the voice standards in the Policy: warm, clear, friendly, and approachable, using "you" for residents, "we" for the City, and "us" for the community together.
- **People first.** Show the people behind City services and the work as it happens. A strong week of content includes at least one post that features a person, not just an announcement.
- **Platform-native.** Create or adapt content for each platform. Favor short vertical video, real people, and captions. Avoid posting the same flyer or text-heavy graphic everywhere.
- **Cadence.** Maintain a content calendar. As a baseline, City accounts should post at least [three to five] times per week on primary platforms, with additional posts as events and news require.
- **Staff participation.** Make it easy for City employees to contribute ideas, photos, and short videos, and invite staff to appear on camera. Participation on camera is always voluntary.
- **Curated content.** Actively look for content from partner agencies, schools, nonprofits, and local businesses that meets the public-purpose standard. Get written permission by email or direct message before reposting, save the permission, and credit the creator.

- **Performance.** Review analytics monthly and provide a brief summary to the City Administrator at least quarterly, noting what is working and what will change.

6. City of Mauston and Visit Mauston

The Communications Specialist manages two distinct brands with different purposes. Keeping them separate protects both.

- **Different purposes.** City accounts provide public information and connect residents to their local government. Visit Mauston accounts promote tourism and visitor activity on behalf of GMTA.
- **Promotion belongs on Visit Mauston.** Promoting lodging, dining, attractions, shopping, and sponsors is appropriate on Visit Mauston accounts and is not appropriate on City accounts, except for curated content that meets the Policy's public-purpose standard.
- **Account type and music.** Visit Mauston accounts should be operated as Commercial Accounts and use only commercially cleared or licensed music.
- **Fair treatment.** On Visit Mauston, all eligible businesses and attractions should have a fair opportunity to be featured. Sponsor recognition follows GMTA's written sponsorship levels. No business receives special placement outside that program.
- **Cross-sharing.** City accounts may share Visit Mauston content that meets the public-purpose standard, such as community events open to the public. Visit Mauston may share City information useful to visitors, such as road closures, event parking, and park information.
- **Same neutrality.** The neutrality standards and observance standards in these guidelines apply to Visit Mauston accounts.
- **Records and time.** Treat Visit Mauston content, messages, and permissions as records and retain them in the same way as City records unless the City Attorney advises otherwise. Track time between City and GMTA work as directed by the City Administrator.
- **Access.** Visit Mauston account credentials shall be registered to an organizational email address, not a personal one, and protected with multi-factor authentication.

7. Engaging with the Public

- **Direct message first.** Answer individual questions and concerns by direct message, which allows a complete and personal response. Respond publicly when a question is of broad interest.
- **Timing.** Aim to respond within [one business day] during regular work hours. Accounts are not monitored around the clock.
- **Stay calm and factual.** Do not argue. Correct misinformation once, briefly and politely, with facts and a link to the source, then offer to continue by direct message.
- **Do not remove criticism.** Comments are not hidden or removed because they criticize the City. Any action on a comment must fall within the Policy's neutral standards, and the comment must be captured before it is hidden or removed.

- **Escalate.** Refer anything listed in the third approval level of Section 2 to the City Administrator before responding.
- **Sample responses:**
    a. "Thanks for reaching out. We've sent you a message so we can get you the details."
    b. "We understand the concern. Here's what we know right now: [fact and link]. We'll share updates here as we have them."
    c. "That's a great question for [department]. You can reach them at [contact], and we've passed your message along."

8. Emergencies and Urgent Situations

- Share official information from the Police Department, Fire Department, [County] Emergency Management, or the City Administrator. Do not speculate or share unconfirmed information.
- Pause scheduled posts that would be out of place during the emergency.
- Post in plain language, update on a regular schedule, and pin the most current information.
- Correct rumors with facts and point residents to official sources.
- If a City or Visit Mauston account is compromised, follow the security steps in the Policy and notify the City Administrator immediately.

9. Records and Housekeeping

- Capture any comment before hiding or removing it, including the name or handle, date, content, and reason.
- Save permissions for curated content and photo consents in an organized, searchable location.
- Maintain the content calendar, an asset library of photos and video, and the account inventory required by the Policy.
- Keep all account credentials registered to City-controlled or organizational email addresses with multi-factor authentication.

10. Personal Accounts

- The Communications Specialist does not conduct City or Visit Mauston business from personal accounts.
- When posting on personal accounts, the Communications Specialist shall not speak for the City or GMTA, shall not use City or Visit Mauston branding, and shall follow Section 6 of the Policy on personal social media accounts. Nothing in these guidelines restricts lawful personal expression on personal time.

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City Administrator Date