



**A RESOLUTION
IMPLEMENTING OF A POLICY FOR TOWN SOCIAL MEDIA COMMENTS**

WHEREAS, the Town of Buchanan operates certain social media and communications platforms;

WHEREAS, the Town of Buchanan welcomes use of these platforms for comments on matters of public interest, and for educational and informational purposes;

WHEREAS, the Town's social media sites are not a traditional public forum and only serve as a limited public forum; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council desires to set forth a policy by which comments and posts may be monitored by the Town based on the policies set forth in this resolution; and if necessary posts or comments may be rejected, removed, or hidden by authorized Town staff.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved, by the Council of the Town of Buchanan, Virginia, as follows:

The Town of Buchanan social media policy shall be:

The purpose of Town of Buchanan's official social media platforms is to provide information of public interest to the town's residents, businesses, visitors and other members of the general public. The Town's social media sites are considered as a limited public forum. We encourage all interested parties to engage with Town related activities through social media by submitting comments and questions regarding the posted topics and by sharing the Town's information. The Town of Buchanan Social Media Comments Policy provides people who choose to communicate with the Town via its official social media sites with guidelines for engagement. Please note that the comments expressed on the Town of Buchanan social media sites do not reflect the opinions and position of Town of Buchanan government or its officers and employees.



Comment Monitoring and Removal

The Town considers its social media platforms to be moderated online discussion sites. As a result, the Town reserves the right to remove comments that contain:

- Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity
- Content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination against protected classes
- Content that violates legal ownership interest of any other party, such as copyright or trademark infringement
- Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems
- Profane language or content
- Promotions of particular services, products or political candidates or organizations
- Sexual harassment content
- Solicitations of commerce or advertisements including promotion or endorsement
- Spam or comments that include links to external online sites
- False information

Violators of this policy may have their comments removed from the Town's official social media sites. Continued or egregious violations of this policy may prompt the Town to further restrict an individual's commenting on official Town social media platforms.

When appropriate, town staff will reply to questions directed to the town. The reply comments from town staff should be generic and non-opinion comments. If more than a generic comment is needed the social media administrator will approve and send a response.

Administrators

The Town's social media platforms are administered by staff designated by the Town Council. When the Town's social media administrators suspects a violation of the Town of Buchanan Social Media Comments Policy, he or she will review and authorize removal of a comment or post when appropriate. The designated staff will capture a screen shot of the comment or post prior to removal. Appeals regarding the designated staff's decision to remove a comment or post shall be made to Town Council by email to ityree@buchanan-va.gov or in person at Town Hall 19753 Main Street, Buchanan, Virginia. Appeals will follow the guidelines for petitions to Town Council addressed in section 2 of the Rules of Conduct for Public Comment and Public Hearings, as may be amended.



FURTHER RESOLVED, that Town Council designates the Town Manager as the administrator of the Town's social media sites; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that Town Council directs the Town Manager to add this Town Social Media Policy to the Town's website and to identify the presence of this policy on the Town's social media sites.

Updated & Approved by Town Council March 2020