



Tanya D. Lane
Town Manager

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

Thursday, April 12, 2018

Town Hall

Conference Room L-101

131 Cedar Street Newington, Connecticut 06111

5:30 P.M.

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

RECORDED FOR RECORD
IN NEWINGTON, CT

2018 APR 26 AM 10:04

John O. Knight
Town Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER

- Meeting was called to Order by Councilor Serra at 5:30 P.M.

II. ROLL CALL

- Councilor Arace (5:37 P.M.)
- BOE Member Branda
- Councilor Manke
- Councilor Serra
- James E. Krupienski, Recording Secretary

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- Michael Fox, 1901 Main Street:
 - Concerned with regulating Elected & Appointed Officials and their use of Social Media;
 - Spoke to issues with possible conflicts when posting information regarding applications before boards;
 - Concerned with monetary impact to the Town;

IV. DISCUSSION/PROPOSED SOCIAL MEDIA LANGUAGE

- Councilor Serra supplied reference information from Ancel Glink, "Social Media & Governments – Legal & Ethical Issues" and the adopted "Town of Easton Social Media Policy for Appointed and Elected Board/Committee Members".
- Councilor Serra reviewed the specific charge of the commission in creating a Social Media policy for the Town Appointed & Elected officials and Board of Education elected officials;
 - Members should make a conscious effort to prevent miscommunication or incorrect information
- Councilor Manke felt members should be held to a higher standard, but was concerned with how to limit what is allowed
- BOE Member Branda indicated that the review of the supplied Town of Easton Policy outlined how a member should behave on social media;
- Councilor Arace suggested separate personal/political pages to limit confusion as to how a members comments should be viewed;
- BOE Member Branda was concern for possible liability to the Town for inappropriate actions when posting. Questioned how a member might be reviewed for possible inappropriate actions;

- Commissioners agreed that the individual would likely be reviewed by the Board of Ethics regarding a possible violation; Would need to review the Town Charter for possible removal process of “officials”;
 - Councilor Arace questioned if the Town had a Grievance Officer. Commissioners indicated that the Board of Ethics would be the individuals to review violations;
 - BOE Member Branda questioned how the policy could be enforced with the member refusing to sign the policy.
 - Councilor Serra indicated that the final policy would be incorporated into the revised Boards & Commissions Booklet for receipt of the policy.
 - Discussion took place regarding how the proposed policy could affect members and the degree of what would be considered a violation of the policy;
 - Discussion took place regarding implied acceptance or rejected of a situation based on an “official” of the Town posting comments on specific issues, whether they have decision making authority or not;
 - Discussion took place on Freedom of Information Act standards for public/private posts or email on personal devices;
- ❖ Proposed language changes to Section I. Policy, B. Purpose:
 - ***Purpose.** The purpose of this policy is to provide [expectations and guidelines] notice to appointed ~~and elected board and committee members~~ [board, committee or commission members and elected officials] that their use of social media must conform to the law and this policy. This policy is designed to promote and govern the professional and personal use of social media in a responsible manner and to avoid uses that can: (1) breach confidentiality by revealing protected information about the Town, its citizens, or its employees; (2) ~~expose the Town to liability for behavior that may be harassing, offensive, or maliciously false;~~ or (3) interfere with productivity and/or ability [of Town employees] to perform the duties and responsibilities as Officials of the Town.*
 - ❖ Proposed language changes to Section III. General Provisions, Section B
 - *This section describes ~~acceptable~~ [guidelines and expectations] and unacceptable uses of all social media by Officials. Officials should use their best personal judgment when using any form of social media and must ensure that their use does not violate this or any other Town policy.*

- Discussion took place to outline the timeline to complete the review and creation for integration into the Boards, Commissions & Committees Guidelines Booklet;

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. None

VI. SCHEDULING OF FUTURE MEETING

- Subcommittee scheduled next Special Meeting as April 26, 2018 at 5:30 P.M. in the Council Chambers, Room L-101

VII. ADJOURNMENT

- Councilor Arace, seconded by BOE Member Branda moved a Motion to Adjourn. Motion carried unanimously.
- Meeting Adjourned at 6:32 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



James E. Krupinski
Recording Secretary