



WEST VALLEY WATER DISTRICT
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**SPECIAL EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
MEETIN GAGENDA**

MONDAY, AUGUST 22, 2022 - 6:00 PM

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that West Valley Water District has called a meeting of the External Affairs Committee to meet in the Administrative Conference Room, 855 W. Base Line Road, Rialto, CA 92376.

On March 4, 2020, Governor Newsom declared a State of Emergency resulting from the threat of COVID-19. On September 16, 2021, Governor Newsom signed Assembly Bill No. 361 into law. Assembly Bill No. 361 amends Government Code section 54953(e) by adding provisions for remote teleconferencing participation in meetings by members of a legislative body, without the requirements of Government Code section 54953(b)(3), subject to the existence of certain conditions. The West Valley Water District adopted a resolution determining, by majority vote, that, as a result of the declared State of Emergency, the District is adopting the State protocol which allows meetings in person and/or via teleconference. Accordingly, it has been determined that all Board and Workshop meetings of the West Valley Water District will be held pursuant to Assembly Bill No. 361, the Brown Act and will be conducted via teleconference and in person. Members of the public may listen and provide public comment via telephone by calling the following number and access code: Dial: (888) 475-4499, Access Code: 840-293-7790 or you may join the meeting using Zoom by clicking this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8402937790>. Public comment may also be submitted via email to administration@wvwd.org. If you require additional assistance, please contact administration@wvwd.org.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Director, Channing Hawkins
Director, Angela Garcia

I. CONVENE MEETING

II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The public may address the Board on matters within its jurisdiction. Speakers are requested to keep their comments to no more than three (3) minutes. However, the Board of Directors is prohibited by State Law to take action on items not included on the printed agenda.

III. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. GENERAL UPDATES TO THE EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**
- B. SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT**
- C. SPONSORSHIP**
- D. LEGISLATIVE REPORT**
- E. UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS**
- F. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**
 - 1. Social Media Policy.
- G. OUTREACH CAMPAIGN WATER SAVINGS STARTS WITH YOU**
- H. WATER PROFESSIONALS WEEK/CUSTOMER SERVICE WEEK**

IV. ADJOURN

DECLARATION OF POSTING:

I declare under penalty of perjury, that I am employed by the West Valley Water District and posted the foregoing External Affairs Committee Agenda at the District Offices on August 8, 2022.



Nancy Albitre, Acting Board Secretary



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
STAFF REPORT**

DATE: August 22, 2022
TO: External Affairs Committee
FROM: Van Jew, Acting General Manager
SUBJECT: SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

BACKGROUND:

On July 16, 2020, the West Valley Water District (WVWD) Board of Directors unanimously approved to adopt WVWD's social media policy (attached **Exhibit A**). The policy was created to provide guidelines for social media use for WVWD's Public Affairs Department or any designee. The policy laid out the standards for posting, responding to or interacting with the public and/or ratepayers on social media platforms.

The policy functions as a guide to protect brand reputation, create internal regulations, encourage open communication between WVWD and its ratepayers and outline clear expectations for social media use.

DISCUSSION:

The current social media policy in place requires the Board of Directors to review and re-approve the policy every two years. At this time, staff is not recommending any edits to the policy.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the social media policy as presented in Exhibit A.

Respectfully Submitted,

Van Jew

Van Jew, Acting General Manager

VJ:sp

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. Social Media Policy[22973]

Social Media Policy

SECTION I: PURPOSE

SECTION 2: POLICY DISTRICT CODE

SECTION 3: POSTING GUIDELINES

SECTION 4: TRANSPARENCY

SECTION 5: SOCIAL MEDIA SITES BOARD OF DIRECTORS' USE

SECTION 6: SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

SECTION 7: POLICY ADOPTION AND REVIEW

SECTION I: PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to establish the goals of the District for social media use, provide criteria for choosing social media outlets, identify employees who will represent the West Valley Water District (WVWD) through these outlets, and the type of information that will be conveyed via social media.

The Water District's presence on social media is an extension of the District's communications and outreach efforts and is jointly overseen by the general manager or their designee, public affairs department, and the director of general services. Social media includes any internet-based networking site, including, but not limited to, blogs, *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *YouTube* and *Instagram*.

There are two main purposes for WVWD to have a presence on social media:

- I. To disseminate time-sensitive information as quickly as possible, such as in the event of an emergency;
- II. To increase the District's ability to broadcast its message to the widest possible audience.

Social media is, by nature, interactive. It is inherently less controllable than traditional media and should be undertaken with full awareness that not all comments and conversations will show the Water District in a positive light. In addition, by creating a presence on social media, the Water District is potentially creating a community of users who can talk to each other about the organization. However, it is an important opportunity to engage the community in a dynamic conversation, quickly convey information, and to address any comments about Water District programs and services through conversations that are taking place on social media. It affords two-way communication opportunities that are difficult to create through more traditional communication methods.

SECTION 2: POLICY

1. All Water District social media sites shall be (1) approved for content by the general manager or their designee; and (2) approved by the public affairs manager. In an emergency situation, the public affairs manager may post content and notify the general manager.
2. The public affairs and information technology departments will work together to use social media proficiently, effectively, and safely to communicate Water District messages and have meaningful dialogue with the public on relevant topics.

3. Any users of WVWD's social media channels must comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws, and the District's Computer Use Policy. This includes adherence to established laws and policies regarding copyright, records retention, California Public Records Act, e-discovery laws, First Amendment, privacy laws, and information security policies established by the District, and therefore must be able to be managed, stored, and retrieved to comply with these laws.

4. The Water District reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this policy or any applicable law. Content violating the Water District Social Media Policy shall be reported to the general manager, public affairs manager and legal counsel. The Water District reserves the right to remove comments or content including, but not limited to, those that contain:
 - i. Profane language or content;
 - ii. Pornographic content;
 - iii. Content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination;
 - iv. Sexual harassment content;
 - v. Solicitations of commerce or advertisements including promotion or endorsement, unless already part of a Water District-sponsored event;
 - vi. Content that, in the sole discretion of the general manager or their designee(s), is patently offensive or violently hostile;
 - vii. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
 - viii. Promotion or endorsement of clear and specific political issues not involving the District, groups or individuals;
 - ix. Information that will compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;
 - x. Content in support of, or opposition to, political campaigns, candidates or ballot measures not related to West Valley;
 - xi. Content that WVWD reasonably believes violates a legal ownership interest of any other party, such as trademark or copyright infringement;
 - xii. Making or publishing of false or malicious statements concerning any employee, the Water District or its operations;
 - xiii. Violent or threatening content;
 - xiv. Disclosure of confidential or proprietary information;
 - xv. Content pertaining to confidential or privileged information.

5. Each Water District social media site shall include an introductory statement, which clearly states the purpose of the site. All social media sites shall include an entry that clearly indicates that content posted or submitted for posting are subject to public disclosure.

6. All District social media sites shall clearly indicate that they are maintained by the Water District and shall have the agency's contact information prominently displayed.

7. The public affairs manager shall name a designee to monitor content on social media to ensure adherence to this policy, appropriate messaging, consistent branding, and consistency with the Water Districts goals.
8. Social media pages will be monitored regularly. Comments that contain profanity, or are spam, will be removed.
9. Any employee who discovers negative or inaccurate comments about the Water District on the District's, or other, social media sites should notify the general manager or their designee immediately in order to correct misinformation.

SECTION 3: POSTING GUIDELINES

One of the main goals of social media is to create a *voice* for the District. As such, it is important that content be posted in a similar context or tone across District social media outlets. The general manager or their designee will work with authorized users to identify the tone and review posts to ensure they align with the voice the District is working to convey.

Authorized users are to follow these guidelines when interacting on District social media sites:

- Double check the facts before posting to a site;
- Maintain professionalism, honesty, and respect;
- The tone of social media content is often informal, however staff is encouraged to adhere to the District's more formal writing style whenever possible;
- Some questions cannot and should not be answered on social media. It may be more appropriate to ask the poster (person) to contact the Water District directly;
- The District's social media sites will be viewed as a District resource. Water District employees and board member should keep campaign regulations in mind and avoid any type of campaigning on the District's social media sites.

SECTION 4: TRANSPARENCY

WVWD is committed to using social media to enhance transparency and open communications with customers and the general public. In doing such, the general manager or their designee will not remove any comments from the public that are negative or disparaging to the District unless the post:

- Contains profane, obscene, or pornographic content and/or language;
- Promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination;
- Makes threats to any person or organization, is defamatory, or is a personal attack;
- Is irrelevant to the topic being discussed.

SECTION 5: BOARD OF DIRECTORS' USE

This section is to provide guidance for the use of social media accounts by Board members.

A. Use of District Resources Prohibited

Board members participating in social media are prohibited from utilizing District resources and representing that he/she is speaking on behalf of the District, the Board or any other

Board member. Therefore, regardless of whether an account is personal or public, as explained below, it is required that Board members include on their accounts, for example on the profile page, a disclaimer along the following lines:

"I am a member of the Board of Directors of the West Valley Water District but posts, comments, and messages are personal and not those of the Board of Directors or the District."

B. Removal of Comments and/or Block Followers

Board members could have First Amendment obligations to the public if they have turned those personal accounts into public ones. Conversely, if Board members operate purely private accounts, then they would not have First Amendment obligations and could block individuals and remove comments. Of course, a Board member may wish to have a public account with the First Amendment obligations that come with it.

When evaluating whether a private account has become a public one, the factors that a court would consider include (without limitation):

- Whether an account is open to all or is set to a private setting. Can anyone join or "like" an account or must someone send a request to the Board member and the Board member can decide whether to accept or reject that individual as a "friend" or "follower?"
- Whether the Board member uses the account to engage with constituents/residents;
- The way in which the account is presented. Does it have the look of a public account dealing with District issues or is it limited to comments and pictures involving the Board Member's personal life, such as family and vacations?

A Board member can block a member of the public from his/her personal social media page, and remove comments, unless the page has become public.

C. Best Practices to Avoid Private Accounts Becoming Public

If a Director does not wish to have a public account, then the following are some best practices on how to avoid turning a private social media account into a public one:

- Add a disclaimer to the account that notes that the page is a private page only.
- Make the account a private account where only family and friends may access it.
- Primarily post about personal topics, such as family and vacations, as opposed to District-related matters.
- Do not designate or indicate that the account is an "official" or governmental account.
- Do not engage in District business on the account (e.g., asking for customer details on the publicly-viewed portion of the platform)
- Do not take action on District business on the account. For example, if a constituent posts a request for governmental help (e.g., questions on how to dispute a water bill) direct the constituent to District staff or the District's website.
- Do not use District staff to help maintain the personal account.

- If it is unclear whether a private account has turned into a public forum, refrain from blocking users with differing viewpoints.

D. Best Practice for a Public Account

Consider adding a policy or link to a policy describing why a post may be taken down or someone may be blocked from the account (e.g., posting of profanity or obscene material). If a Director believes that his/her account has become public, it is advisable that the Director post his/her own policy on his/her page that describes why a third party post or comment may be removed by the Director. Such a policy would address removing obscene or offensive posts and blocking individuals who engage in rude or disruptive behavior.

SECTION 6. VIOLATIONS OF THIS POLICY

Violations of the WVWD Social Media Policy by any WVWD employee could result in disciplinary action including but not limited to termination. Violations of the WVWD Social Media Policy by the Board Members could result in a censure by the Board of Directors.

SECTION 7: COMMENT BY PUBLIC

- Public comment shall be permitted per this Social Media Policy.

SECTION 8: SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

Facebook.com/westvalleywaterdistrict

Twitter.com/myWVWD

Instagram.com/myWVWD

YouTube.com (channel has yet to be assigned url due to recent establishment)

SECTION 9: POLICY ADOPTION AND REVIEW

This policy shall be adopted by resolution of the Board. Moreover, the policy shall be reviewed on a biennial basis and the Board must approve modifications, if any.