Subject: **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

Policy No.: **A-9** **(Renumbered January 1, 2013)**
Effective: **August 9, 2012**

Originator: **City Council**
Supersedes: **A-025**

POLICY

This policy establishes guidelines for the establishment, use, and administration of Social Media sites by the City of Simi Valley as a means of conveying City of Simi Valley information to its citizens. This policy addresses the rapidly growing and changing landscape of the Internet, which also includes the use of Social Media or "Web 2.0." The City encourages the use of Social Media outlets to further the goals of the City and the objectives of its departments, as appropriate, to communicate its message to a broader audience in the community.

PROCEDURES

Definitions

For purposes of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

1. "Social Media" or "Social Media site(s)" refers to various activities that integrate web based and mobile technology, social interaction, and content creation into an interactive dialog. Social Media sites allow people to create web content, organize content, edit or comment on content, combine content, and share content. Social Media sites use many technologies and forms. Examples of Social Media sites include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, blogs, MySpace, RSS, YouTube, Second Life, LinkedIn, Delicious, wikis, and Flickr.

2. "Comments" include, but are not limited to, information, articles, pictures, videos, or any other form of communicative content posted on a City of Simi Valley Social Media site.

3. "Content" or "Digital Content" refers to information stored in digital media technologies, such as question-answer databases, digital video, blogging, podcasting, forums, review-sites, social networking, and digital images and photography.

4. "Users" refer to any and all persons who have access to Social Media sites.

5. "Administrator" refers to any and all persons who have administrative control over Social Media sites, including Public Information Officers ("PIOs"). Examples of administrative control include, but are not limited to, the ability to delete other Users' content, restrict or expand User access to Social Media sites, delete the City's entire presence within a Social Media site, or other rights as provided by the Social Media site.

General Policies

1. Creation of any City of Simi Valley Social Media sites shall be done only with the written approval of the City Manager, or his/her designee, who has the sole authority to establish and/or terminate any City of Simi Valley Social Media sites, accounts, and pages.

2. The City of Simi Valley's website at http://www.simivalley.org will remain the City's primary and predominant Internet presence.

3. Wherever possible, content posted to City of Simi Valley Social Media sites will also be available on the City's main website to maintain a consistent message to the community. City Social Media sites should link back to the official City of Simi Valley website directing users to forms, documents, online services, and other information necessary to conduct business with the City of Simi Valley whenever possible.

4. The City Manager shall designate an Administrator(s), who will manage and oversee all content on each Social Media site to ensure adherence to the City of Simi Valley's Social Media Policy, including appropriate use, message, and branding that is consistent with the goals and objectives of the City of Simi Valley.

5. The City of Simi Valley's Social Media Policy shall be displayed to users or be made available by hyperlink on all Social Media sites, when possible.

6. Those designated to authorize or administer Social Media are responsible for complying with applicable federal, state, and county laws, regulations, and policies. Those responsibilities include adherence to established laws and policies regarding copyright, records retention, Freedom of Information Act, California Public Records Act, First Amendment, privacy laws, acceptable use of City owned or controlled digital equipment, Internet access, and information security policies established by the City of Simi Valley.

7. Those designated and authorized to administer Social Media sites do so under the premise that they are representing the City of Simi Valley via Social Media outlets and must conduct themselves at all times as representatives of the City of Simi Valley and in accordance with all City policies. This policy also includes site administration outside of the workplace.

8. All City of Simi Valley Social Media sites shall clearly indicate that they are maintained by the City and shall prominently display City contact information. Branding the City's Social

Media pages an official site of the City of Simi Valley is required. For example, "This is the official (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.) page for the City of Simi Valley (Department Name), California."

9. All City maintained Social Media pages shall include the Official City Seal and/or Logo, when possible.

10. All content posted on Social Media sites may be subject to the California Public Records Act. Any content maintained in a Social Media format that is related to City business, including a list of subscribers, posted communication, and communication submitted for posting, may be a public record subject to public disclosure. There should be no expectation of privacy in regards to the information posted on any City Social Media sites. The City Manager or his/her designee must approve any other image used on City Social Media sites.

11. Ownership of content varies on Social Media sites based on the site's policy. It is the responsibility of Public Information Officer(s) to understand, communicate, and adhere to those policies.

12. Any violation of the City of Simi Valley's Social Media Policy standards may result in the removal of City pages from Social Media sites. Employees found in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

13. The City of Simi Valley's Social Media Policy may be revised at any time by the City Manager or his/her designee.

<u>Account Set Up and Settings Policy</u>

1. City account profiles must contain a valid City of Simi Valley e-mail address.

2. Official account names or user names on Social Media sites shall be established using "(Site Name)cityofsimivalley: or "simivalleyca" as the leading identifier, where "(Site Name)" is the name of the Social Media site. For example, "FacebookCityOfSimiValley." The department name, purpose, or individual name may also be included or appended.

3. Profiles or posted content must never contain a personal e-mail address or any other personal information, except the name of the employee whose job duties include being available for contact by the public via a City e-mail account.

4. The City Manager or his/her designee has the authority to remove content and accounts and, therefore, must be provided user names and passwords. Upon creating an approved Social Media account, staff shall provide the City Manager with the account URL, user name, password, and/or all other login information.

5. For the security of the City's network, staff may not use the same password for Social Media sites as used for logging into the City's network.

6. Staff shall not share City Social Media account passwords with anyone not authorized to post in an official capacity on that space or with that account.

Comment and Content Policy

1. As a public entity, the City must abide by certain standards to serve all its constituents in a civil and unbiased manner.

2. The intended purpose behind establishing City of Simi Valley Social Media sites is to disseminate information from the City, about the City, to its citizens.

3. All information posted to Social Media sites on the City's behalf must:

   a. Present the City in a positive light and a professional manner;
   b. Contain information that is freely available to the public and not be confidential as defined by a City policy or state or federal law;
   c. Not contain any personal information except the names of employees whose job duties include being available for contact by the public;
   d. Comply with any current or future local, state, and federal laws.

4. Comments and/or posts containing any of the following inappropriate forms of content shall not be permitted on City of Simi Valley Social Media sites and are subject to removal and/or restriction by the City Manager or his/her designee:

   a. Comments or content unrelated to the original topic or article;
   b. Profane, obscene, or pornographic content and/or language or links to such language or content;
   c. Comments or content in support of, or in opposition to, any political campaigns or ballot measures;
   d. Solicitations of commerce, including but not limited to, advertising of any business or product for sale;
   e. Comments or content that encourages illegal activity;
   f. Actual or potential legal claims, lawsuits, or other legal issues;
   g. Personnel matters;
   h. Crime investigations and content about a crime scene;
   i. Emergency situations including, but not limited to, actual or perceived threats to public health, safety, or property (unless the person authorized to post content represents the Police Department);

j. Any information or links that are illegal or that might compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;
k. Comments or content that violates a legal ownership interest, such as copyright, of another party;
l. Defamatory or personal attacks;
m. Threats to any person or organization;
n. Comments or content that violates any federal, state, or local law;
o. Comments or content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, age, religion, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, veteran status, parentage, marital status, medical condition, sexual identity, sexual orientation, as well as any other category protected by federal, state, or local laws.

5. Comments on topics or issues not within the jurisdictional purview of the City of Simi Valley are subject to removal by the City Manager or his/her designee.

6. If comments do not violate any other provisions in this policy and are in the context to the topic at hand, then the content should be allowed to remain, regardless of whether it is favorable or unfavorable to the City of Simi Valley.

7. A comment posted by a member of the public on any City of Simi Valley Social Media site is the opinion of the commenter or poster only, and publication of a comment does not imply endorsement of or agreement by the City of Simi Valley, nor do such comments necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of the City of Simi Valley.

8. The City of Simi Valley reserves the right to deny access to City of Simi Valley Social Media sites for any individual who violates the City of Simi Valley's Social Media Policy, at any time and without prior notice.

9. Departments shall monitor their Social Media sites for comments requesting responses from the City and for comments in violation of this policy. Any comments or content in violation of this policy shall immediately be brought to the attention of the Administrator(s) responsible for the site.

10. When a City of Simi Valley employee responds to a comment, in his/her capacity as a City of Simi Valley employee, the employee's name and title should be made available; however, employees shall not share personal information about themselves or other City employees.

11. Employees administering a Social Media site on behalf of the City of Simi Valley are expected to understand the current terms of service for that site.

12. The City of Simi Valley reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed to be in violation of this Social Media Policy or any applicable law. City Manager, or his/her designee, review and/or authorization is required prior to any content restriction or removal from Social Media sites, in consultation with the City Attorney.

13. All restricted and/or removed content shall be preserved and maintained according to the City's Records Retention Schedule.

HISTORY

August 9, 2012	Policy approved by the City Council.
January 1, 2013	Policy A-025 converted to current format as Policy A-9.