

1.11 INTERNET AND SOCIAL MEDIA.

1.11.01 Internet and Social Media Policy.

The Town Board is responsible for adopting and maintaining a written internet and social media policy. The purpose is to ensure that all digital communication conducted on behalf of the Town is consistent, professional, and compliant with all applicable state and federal laws, including but not limited to, Wisconsin's Open Records and Open Meetings Laws (§§19.21-19.39 and 19.81-19.89, Wis. Stats.). The policy applies to all Town-sponsored or affiliated social media accounts, websites, and any personal use of social media that pertains to Town business. The Town Board reserves the right to make additions, deletions, or amendments to these policies with a majority vote of the Town Board.

1.11.02 Internet and Social Media Use Guiding Principles.

Transparency and Public Records. All content posted on Town-sponsored social media accounts, including comments, messages, and posts, are considered public records and must be managed in accordance with the Town's public records retention schedule and Wisconsin's Open Records Laws. All communication, including direct messages or private conversations related to Town business, must be preserved.

Open Meetings Law. Social media platforms shall not be used to conduct Town business in a manner that would violate Wisconsin's Open Meetings Law. A quorum of a governmental body shall not engage in a discussion of public business through social media comments, private groups, or other online platforms.

Official Representation. Only designated individuals, as authorized by the Town Board, are permitted to create and manage official Town social media accounts. All communication on these accounts must be in a professional tone and accurately reflect the official positions and policies of the Town.

Content and Conduct. Content posted on official Town social media accounts should be directly related to Town business. It should not contain partisan political content, copyrighted material used without permission, defamatory statements, or content that violates state or federal law.

Personal Use. While this policy does not govern personal social media use, members and employees are reminded that their personal online conduct can reflect on the Town. Individuals should exercise caution and good judgment when discussing Town business on personal accounts and must not represent personal opinions as official Town positions.

Public Comment. The Town reserves the right to manage public comments on its social media platforms to ensure they are relevant to the topic of the post. The Town may remove comments that are obscene, harassing, defamatory, or violate the law. A clear policy on public comment moderation will be posted on all official Town social media pages.

1.11.03 Implementation and Enforcement.

The Town Clerk is designated as the primary custodian of all official Town social media accounts and is responsible for their administration, record retention, and compliance with this policy.

Any violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including removal from a committee or commission, or termination of employment.

The Town Board shall review and update this policy as necessary to adapt to changes in technology and legal requirements.

Adopted this 16th day of October, 2025

Town of Bridge Creek Board