

BOROUGH OF HIGH BRIDGE SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Adopted date: 01/04/2024

By Resolution: 014-2024

PURPOSE

This policy sets forth guidelines for the establishment and use by the Borough of High Bridge ("the Borough") of all social media sites as a means of conveying Borough-related information to its residents and visitors.

For purposes of this policy, "social media" is understood to be content created by individuals, using accessible, expandable, and upgradable publishing technologies, through and on the Internet. Examples of social media include Facebook, blogs, RSS, YouTube, Twitter, and Vimeo. For purposes of this policy, "comments" include information, articles, links and pictures.

SCOPE

This policy shall apply to any and all employees, individuals, volunteers, agencies, departments, officials, and/or council members who are now or hereinafter permitted as authorized users by the Borough of High Bridge to post content on the Borough's social media sites.

GENERAL POLICY

Because the Borough of High Bridge has an overriding interest and expectation in deciding who may "speak" and what is "spoken" on behalf of the Borough of High Bridge on social media sites, this policy is established for the use of all social media.

A. The Borough of High Bridge shall have a unified presence on social media sites deemed appropriate for use by the governing body.

B. No Borough of High Bridge social media site shall be established without prior approval by Ordinance or Resolution of the Borough Council. All Borough social media sites shall be administered by permissible users which shall be the Mayor and/or the Mayor's designee(s). Any pre-existing social media sites acting on behalf of the Borough or posing as an entity of the Borough shall be required to obtain approval of the Borough Council in order to function under the Borough of High Bridge's unified presence.

C. The Mayor and/or Mayor's designee, which may include a third party vendor, approved by the Mayor and Borough Council, shall monitor the High Bridge social media pages to ensure adherence to this policy, including appropriate use, messaging, and branding that is consistent with the interests, goals, and objectives of the Borough. The designated Committee Chair and Co-Chair will be responsible for the

content of any Borough social media sites they may create. Event planners within Committees will be responsible for administering and monitoring the platforms for these events, with approval of the Committee Chair and/or Co-Chair.

D. Any and all permissible users shall be provided with a copy of this policy and sign an Acknowledgment of Use (Addendum A) prior to utilizing Borough social media sites.

E. The Borough social media sites shall clearly set forth that they are maintained by the Borough and designated Committee Chairs and that all sites follow this Social Media Policy.

F. Wherever possible, the Borough social media sites should link back to the official Borough website for forms, documents, online services and other information necessary to conduct business with the Borough of High Bridge.

G. The Borough of High Bridge website at <http://www.highbridge.org> will remain the Borough's primary and predominant internet presence.

H. The Borough of High Bridge social media sites are intended to be informational only and are not intended to be used as an open forum for making comments, including any official communications to the Borough, for example, reporting crimes or misconduct, reporting dangerous conditions, giving notice required by any statute by, ordinance or regulations such as but not limited notices of claim. Prominent notice of this paragraph shall be displayed on every Borough social media site, along with the appropriate contact information for submitting official communications.

I. This social media policy and the Borough's Terms of Use Disclosure (Addendum B) shall be placed on the Borough of High Bridge Website and displayed to social media users or made available by hyperlink.

J. The Borough's social media sites and this Policy are subject to all applicable federal and NJ laws and regulations, as well as applicable record retention requirements. This includes adherence to established laws and policies regarding copyright, records retention, [Freedom of Information Act](#) (FOIA), [Open Public Records Act](#) (OPRA), First Amendment, privacy laws, Open Public Meetings Act and information security policies established by the Borough of High Bridge, its departments, affiliated boards, commissions and authorities.

K. This Social Media Policy may be revised at any time by Ordinance or Resolution of the Borough Council.

L. Any social media site created by the Borough of High Bridge, including all the followers and friends generated by the site remain the property of the Borough,. If a site representative no longer serves in such capacity, for any reason, they must relinquish everything related to the site including user names, passwords and/or access codes or information.

M. For purposes of this policy, Borough social media falls into two distinct categories:

i. The High Bridge Borough Government Website does not allow for any public comments whatsoever. It is reserved for the Borough government to engage in its own expressive conduct to promote its own message and disseminate information. Examples of this type of site include the Borough's official website and the social media sites where public comment has not been enabled.

ii. Limited Public Social Media Forums are Borough social media sites where public comment may be enabled; however, it is not intended for discussion on specific topics as signified by postings by permissible users or consistent with the purposes of this policy. Submission of comments by members of the public constitutes participation in a limited public forum.

COMMENT POLICY

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

B. When a post, comment, link, photograph, or other notification is made by an authorized designee on behalf of the Borough of High Bridge, the authorized designee shall not share personal information about himself or herself, or other High Bridge employees and or officials.

C. A comment posted by a member of the public on any Borough social media site is the opinion of the commentator or poster only, and publication of a comment does not imply endorsement of, or agreement by, the Borough, nor do such comments necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of the Borough.

D. Any attempt to hack or otherwise compromise the Borough's internet or social media sites will be reported to law enforcement and the perpetrator will be denied access to the sites.

E. The Borough of High Bridge reserves the right to deny access to its social media sites for any individual, who violates the High Bridge Social Media Policy, at any time and without prior notice.

PROHIBITED CONTENT

A. Comments containing any of the following inappropriate forms of content shall not be permitted on any of the Borough's social media sites and are subject to removal or restriction, in whole or in part, by the appointed designee:

i. Profane, obscene, violent or pornographic content and/or language or links to such materials;

ii. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of

race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation;

iii. Encouragement of illegal activity;

iv. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;

v. Threats to any person or organization;

vi. Conduct that violates any federal, state, or local law;

vii. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party;

viii. Solicitation of commerce, including but not limited to advertising of any business or product for sale. This prohibition does not apply to advertising of the Borough's activities;

ix. Content that incites violence;

x. Comments containing vulgar, offensive, threatening, or harassing language, personal attacks, or unsupported accusations;

xi. Comments unrelated to the particular post being commented upon

xii. politically biased viewpoints

LEGAL

A. The Borough reserves the right to report any violation of a social media site's Rules, Terms and Conditions, Rights and Responsibilities, etc., to that site with the intent of that site taking appropriate and reasonable responsive action. All High Bridge policies are applicable to interactions on social media sites when acting in an official capacity and representing the Borough.

ADDENDUM A

**Borough of High Bridge Acknowledgement of Official Use by Borough
Authorized Permitted User**

I, _____, acknowledge that:

A. I received a copy of the Borough of High Bridge's social media policy dated on
01/06/2022;

B. I have been given an opportunity to ask questions about said policy and I have been
provided with satisfactory information in response to my questions;

C. I understand the language used in this policy;

D. I acknowledge that the Borough reserves the right to add, amend or discontinue any of the
provisions of this policy for any reason or none at all, in whole or in part, at any time, with or
without notice;

E. I acknowledge that I understand this policy and I agree that I will comply with all of its
provisions.

Date Signature

ADDENDUM B

Terms of Use Disclosure (to be posted on all High Bridge Social Media Sites)

1) Information Disclaimer

The Borough of High Bridge, its officers, employees or agents shall not be liable for damages or losses of any kind arising out of or in connection with the use or performance of information, including but not limited to, damages or losses caused by reliance upon the accuracy or timeliness of any such information, or damages incurred from the viewing, distributing, or copying of those materials.

2) Linking Policy - Links To External Sites

The Borough of High Bridge site may contain links to outside websites. These websites are not owned, operated, controlled or reviewed by the Borough of High Bridge. These links are provided solely as a courtesy and convenience to the visitor.

The Borough of High Bridge its officers or employees, exercise no control over the organizations, views, accuracy, copyright or trademark, compliance or the legality of the material contained in these outside websites.

The Borough of High Bridge, its officers or employees, do not sponsor, endorse, or approve the information, content, proceeds, materials, opinions or services contained on such outside websites. The visitor proceeds to these outside websites at his/her own risk. The Borough of High Bridge specifically disclaims any and all liability from damages, which may result from the accessing of a third-party site, which is linked to the Borough of High Bridge website or from reliance upon only such information.

3) Endorsement Disclaimer

Reference in this website to any specific commercial products, processes, or services, or the use of any trade firm or corporation name is for the information and convenience of the public, and does not constitute endorsement, recommendation, or favoring by the Borough of High Bridge or its officers, employees or agents.

4) Copyright and Trademark Limitations

The Borough of High Bridge makes no warranty that materials contained herein are free of copyright or trademark claims or other restrictions or limitations on free use or display. Making a copy of such material may be subject to copyright or trademark laws.

5) Use of Material from this site

The Borough of High Bridge has made the content of these pages available to the public and anyone may view, copy or distribute Borough of High Bridge information found here without obligation to the Borough of High Bridge for non-commercial, personal use only, unless otherwise stated on particular material or information to which a restriction on free

use may apply.

The design of this site, original graphics, and original content are all copyrighted by the Borough of High Bridge and may not be re-engineered, distributed, modified, transmitted, re-used, reposted, or duplicated without the express written permission of the Borough of High Bridge in each instance. All requests to use any part of the original design, code, graphics or content of this site should be made via e-mail to the Borough Administrator

6) Unauthorized Modifications

Unauthorized attempts to modify or otherwise alter any information or image stored on any Borough of High Bridge government website may result in criminal prosecution.