

MUNICIPAL WEBSITE CONTENT POLICY

TOWN OF GRAY MAINE

Adopted May 17, 2011
Amended January 7, 2014
Amended November 14, 2017

PURPOSE

The sole purpose of Town of Gray websites is to provide information about the town, including various resident, business, and visitor services, news & events, and resources available in the Town of Gray, or as may be available from other governmental agencies.

In providing an official municipal website, the Town of Gray does not intend in any manner to create a forum for public discourse, feedback, exchange of opinions, or discussion on issues of any nature, with the single exception of an occasional survey to assist the town in service delivery.

GOALS

Goals of the Town of Gray website are:

- A. To encourage increased citizen participation in town government by making public information more readily available;
- B. To provide electronic access to town information through a logical single point of entry at (<http://www.graymaine.org/>);
- C. To keep the public informed of community news & events, municipal meetings, and Town programs;
- D. To encourage both commerce and tourism.

DEFINITIONS

- A. **Business Directory**
Businesses and/or organizations located within the town of Gray may be listed in the Business Directory by business type. Contact details may include business/organization name, slogan/catchphrase, address, phone number, and website address/link.
- B. **Community Event Calendar**
The Town of Gray website will offer a calendar for non-municipal community events and information.
- C. **Connected News Portal**
The Town of Gray “Connected” news & event portal informs the public of community news and/or events.
- D. **Contributor**
Individual or organization approved as contributing author of Connected News Portal content. Submitted original content reviewed/approved by Town of Gray authorized personnel prior to publication.
- E. **Links**
The Town of Gray website may provide links to websites that encourage citizen participation in government; promote local businesses, organizations and attractions; and inform the public of community news and/or events.

The Town is not responsible for and does not endorse the information on any linked website unless otherwise stated.

F. Original Content

Contributors must affirm that submissions are original works and/or that they own or have necessary licenses, rights, consents, and permissions to publish the submitted content.

G. Organizations

For the purposes of this policy, an “organization” is a corporation which is registered with the Maine Secretary of State Division of Corporations, or which has a Federal Tax Employer Identification Number.

H. Website Administrator (Administrator)

The Gray Town Manager shall appoint a Website Administrator, who is responsible for the appearance, behavior, content, and technical aspects of the website. All information prepared for posting on the Town Website shall be routed through the Website Administrator. The Gray Town Council establishes policy governing the Town of Gray website. The Website Administrator is responsible for carrying out Town web policies day-to-day, but is subject to the authority of the Town Council. These policies may include defining the look and feel of the website or deciding who may post information on the site. The name and e-mail address of the Website Administrator shall be visible on the town website

PUBLICATION CRITERIA

The following criteria will be used to determine if submitted content is appropriate for the website.

- A. Community Calendar - The Town of Gray website may provide event details for volunteer, not-for-profit organizations providing recreation or enrichment programs for the Gray community.
- B. Connected News Portal – Original news & events in the categories of business, lifestyle, people, or events concerning Gray and/or of direct interest to the Town of Gray community.
- C. Business Directory - The Town of Gray website may provide contact details and links to websites for businesses physically located within the Town of Gray.
- D. *News About Town* E-Newsletter - News and information related to the duties, obligations and goals of various Town departments, committees, and boards may be submitted for publication in the Town of Gray’s monthly e-newsletter “News About Town” for electronic distribution only. News and/or event content that otherwise meets the website publication criteria may also be submitted. Suggested content may include, for example:
 - 1. Current Town Department, Board, and Committee activities and initiatives of interest to the community;
 - 2. Requests for community input / involvement / assistance with activities of a particular Board or Committee;
 - 3. Membership drives for Board and Committee vacancies
 - 4. Citizen surveys;
 - 5. Feature Stories highlighting the accomplishments and outcomes of specific Town Department, Board, and Committee initiatives and projects.

- E. Other Content - The Town's Website may provide news items, announcements, e-mail distribution and/or links to websites for:
1. Government and not-for-profit educational institutions serving the Gray community;
 2. Elected local legislators for the purpose of disseminating legislative information and updates;
 3. Generally recognized volunteer community organizations, established in, or having a significant membership / participation from Gray.
 4. Not-for-profit organizations providing information about employment opportunities in the Town of Gray.
 5. Not-for-profit organizations providing information about tourist attractions in Gray.
 6. Local incorporated branches of State recognized political parties.
 7. Religious organizations located in Gray or serving a significant number of Gray residents.

EXCLUDED CONTENT

Except as specified elsewhere in this policy, the Town's Websites will not publish content including:

- A. Copy protected images and/or content.
- B. Opinions or endorsements regarding candidates for office, political issues, or municipal, county, state, or federal initiatives.
- C. Promotion or advertisement of businesses or special interest groups.
- D. Campaign Websites for incumbent and challenging candidates for local, state, or federal office. Further, if an existing website link of a seated candidate is found to be of a campaigning / self-promotional nature, it will be removed from the Town of Gray website.
- E. Political organizations or other organizations advocating a candidate; a position on a local, state, or Federal issue; or pending legislation.
- F. Corporate or other for-profit organizations unless they fit any of the criteria stated above.
- G. Individual or personal home pages.
- H. Any submission considered by the Website Administrator to be inappropriate or out of line with the Purpose and Goal of the Website or the criteria herein.

APPLICATION FOR PUBLICATION TO THE WEBSITE

Any person, business, or organization requesting publication to the Town of Gray website should complete the [Website Publication Request](#), [Business Directory Listing Request](#), or contribute a [Connected](#) news/event article and demonstrate that their request meets the criteria for inclusion in the site. Applicants who are denied publication on the website may, within 5 (five) business days, follow the Appeals procedure defined elsewhere in this Policy.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidential information should not be posted on the town's website. While the Town of Gray website may track overall site traffic, it does not collect individual user details unless a user voluntarily submits

such information. It does not share that information with outside sources, and is committed to keeping such information confidential. If at any time a user believes that the Town of Gray's website is not protecting his or her privacy, the person should e-mail the Website Administrator, who will attempt to assess and, if necessary, correct the problem.

APPEALS

Complaints about any aspect of the web policy should be brought first to the attention of the Website Administrator. If a complainant is unsatisfied, s/he may appeal any decision of the Website Administrator to the Town Manager who will respond within 15 business days. Further, any resident may appeal the decision of the Town Manager to the Gray Town Council. The decision of the Gray Town Council is the final word on matters arising from implementation of this policy. Residents who wish to change this policy should contact a Town Councilor.

DISCLAIMER

The materials and information contained on or obtained from the Town of Gray website are distributed "as is" without warranties of any kind, either express or implied, including without limitation, warranties of title or implied warranties of merchantability of fitness for a particular purpose. Information contained on the Town of Gray website, including information obtained from external links thereon, is provided without any representation of any kind as to accuracy or content and should be verified by the user. The Town of Gray is not responsible for any special, indirect, incidental or consequential damages that may arise from the use of, or the inability to use, the website and/or the materials contained on the site whether the materials contained on the website are provided by the Town of Gray, or by a third party. Data contained on the website are subject to change without notice.