City of Willoughby Hills

POLICIES FOR CITY-OPERATED COMMUNICATIONS MEDIUMS

Introduction:

The City of Willoughby Hills utilizes several mediums for dissemination of information to the public. The intent of this document is to clarify how these mediums are employed and to help facilitate successful communications between the city, its residents, and those interested in the activities of the city government.

A. Mediums:

The communications mediums operated by the City are used for the dissemination of official information and are not used to promote the amendment rights of individuals or groups. The City is not responsible for the presentation of incorrect information caused by the submission of erroneous information by an applicant, or by the occasional error of any city employee or volunteer working in the production staff.

The management, organization, operation, and editorial policy of the communications mediums are directed by the Mayor, within the parameters of this policy. The day-to-day point of contact for the operations will be the Public Information Coordinator, as designated by the Mayor.

1. The Willoughby Hills Government Information Channel (Cable TV) is the official government access channel that broadcasts public information for the subscribers of cable TV service in the City of Willoughby Hills.

2. WWW.WilloughbyHills-OH.gov is the official website for the City of Willoughby Hills.

3. The Hills Herald is the official newsletter for the City of Willoughby Hills.

Collectively, these mediums comprise the common means of broadcast communications mediums currently used by the City. As they evolve, certain characteristics may change as technologies and technical capabilities dictate.

B. Goals:

The goals for the City's communications mediums are as follows:

- Serve as a source of information about the city for the public, city employees, and elected officials.
- Provide quick and easy access to documents and forms, such as recreation program applications, building department permits, council agendas and ordinances, community center rental forms, etc.
- Increase community awareness of City services, projects, and important local issues.
- Assist in the City's economic development efforts by providing information on upcoming projects, services, and special events and activities.
- Make public proceedings more accessible to residents by providing relevant data.
- Provide coverage of City Council and other important public meetings.
- Promote special events in the community that are sponsored by the City or service/civic organizations where there is a public purpose.
- Provide coverage of relevant cultural, recreational, and historical events.
- Document and archive City events and activities for historical purposes.
- Create a "City identity" that residents will recognize as a primary source for timely public information pertaining specifically to Willoughby Hills.
- Utilize calendars, bulletin boards, and other visual media while providing information.
- Serve as a source of information during local emergencies.

C. Types of Programming for electronic media:

- *Community Bulletin Board* - This service consists of character-generated information regarding activities, programs, events and services offered by the City; or not-for-profit organizations whose activity is sponsored or cosponsored by the City. It may also, at the discretion of the Mayor, include activities that are not sponsored or co-sponsored by the City, but are conducted by not-for-profit organizations located in, or serving, the City of Willoughby Hills, where the activity:
    - Is legal
    - Will occur within the City limits, or the general area
    - Is open to the general public or is not exclusionary in nature; and
    - Is for a public purpose.

  Examples of character-generated materials include, but are not limited to:
    - Dates and times of City Council and other official meetings.
    - Information regarding road closures.
    - Information regarding arts and cultural activities.
    - Public alerts and warnings.
    - Emergency declarations and instructions.
    - Information regarding recreational program registration dates, times, and instructions; whether sponsored by the City or a not-for-profit organization meeting the criteria in this policy.
    - Dates and times of special events; whether sponsored by the City or a not-for-profit organization meeting the criteria in this policy.
    - Summaries of City services.
    - Pictures and biographical information on various City officials and/or employees.
    - Posting of employment opportunities with the City.

  Live Broadcast - The televising of an event while it is happening. Live coverage may include, but is not limited to, the broadcast of:
    - City Council meetings, Council Committee meetings, and workshops.
    - Special "Town Meetings" convened by the Mayor or City Council.
    - Meetings of other boards or Commissions, including, but not limited to the Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Board of Zoning Appeals.
    - "Meet the Candidates Night", provided it meets the criteria described in Section F of this policy.
    - Other meetings of general public interest, as determined by the Mayor or City Council, provided the meeting meets the criteria established in this policy.

  Delayed Broadcast - The televising of an event after it has happened using a recording medium. This would include:
    - Re-broadcast of meetings described above during additional time-slots for the convenience of the viewing public.
    - Broadcast of meetings described above that were conducted at venues not permitting live broadcast.
    - Broadcast of meetings described above where technical difficulties prevented live broadcast.
    - Broadcast of meetings described above where a conflict in the broadcast schedule requires the meeting to be shown in another time slot.

Locally Produced Programming - An event or activity that is recorded by City staff or volunteers under the supervision of the City using videotape, DVD, flash memory, or any other media; which is edited and processed into a television program for broadcast. The purpose of such programming may be to provide detailed information on public facilities and services, document an important event for historical purposes, provide in-depth information on a subject of major public importance, or provide for wider dissemination of entertainment, cultural, or arts events for persons who were unable to attend.

Examples of such programming would include, but not be limited to:

- Tours of City facilities.
- Programs concerning services offered by the City.
- Emergency preparation seminars.
- Presentation of concerts, arts, and cultural events.
- Tours of historical buildings or other areas of interest in the City.
- Programs on how to improve your house, pick a contractor, or obtain a building permit.
- Programs on how to improve landscaping.
- Programs on how to conserve water.
- Programs on how to improve the appearance of property.
- Programs regarding the conservation of natural resources.

Public Service Announcements (PSA's) - Brief film clips or character generated information announcing events or discussing issues of importance to City residents. PSA's may be produced internally, obtained from another governmental organization, or submitted by any legitimate not-for-profit public-interest organization, private individual, or group. All PSA's shall meet the editorial criteria in this policy. Examples of PSA's include, but are not limited to:

- Seat belt safety.
- Pedestrian safety.
- Drinking and driving.
- Illegal drugs.
- Child abduction.
- Crime prevention.
- Emergency preparedness.
- Littering.
- Smoke alarms and fire prevention.
- Recycling.
- Public transportation.
- Senior Center services.
- Recreation services.
- Wellness and public health

Externally Produced Programming - The Mayor or Council may, at their discretion, purchase or otherwise obtain programming from other governmental organizations, civic organizations, private foundations or companies, or individuals where that programming meets the goals and objectives of this policy and is in the public interest. Copyrights will not be violated and rights concerning the use of intellectual property will be respected. However, submitters should remember that programming in the possession of the city will be considered a public record and is therefore available to the public upon request.

D. Schedule Priorities:

The priorities for scheduling programming for publication or broadcast shall be as follows:

- Announcements or programs concerning emergencies affecting resident safety or health.
- City Council meetings, Council Committee meetings, and workshops.
- "Town Hall Meetings" called by the Mayor or City Council.
- Meetings of the Planning and Zoning Commission or Board of Zoning Appeals.
- Other public meetings concerning important public issues.
- Special programs believed to have a high level of interest among the public and whose message is time sensitive.
- Recurring programs or informational series that have a customary time slot.
- Other special programming that is deemed to be of interest to the community.
- Community Bulletin Board.
- Public Service Announcements.

E. Programming Formats for Official Meetings:

When applicable, the following standards will apply to all official meetings of the City, including, but not necessarily limited to, City Council meetings, Council Committee meetings and workshops, special "Town Hall Meetings" called by the Mayor or City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission meetings, and Board of Zoning Appeals Meetings.

- Meetings will be covered gavel-to-gavel and shall not be edited or subject to editorial comment. The broadcast will begin when the Chairperson calls the meeting to order, and the broadcast will end when the Chairperson adjourns the meeting.
- Within technical and studio operator limitations, the camera will be focused on the officially recognized speaker. Where there is no officially recognized speaker, the camera will provide a wide-angle view of the dais. When visual information is being presented, such as PowerPoint presentations, pictures, film clips, or site plans, that information will be broadcast within the technical limitation of the equipment used for production.
- There shall be no close-up reaction shots of persons on the dais, staff, presenters, or persons in the audience.
- A character generated message may indicate the following:
  - I) Type of meeting.
  - 2) Date of meeting.
  - 3) Name and title of speaker.
  - 4) Subject matter of the issue being discussed.

F. Content Restrictions:

Political Restrictions -The FCC places considerable restrictions on the use of government access broadcast systems used for political purposes. Pursuant to those regulations, the following restrictions will apply:

1) Candidates for Public Office: Candidates for public office, including the elected officials of the City of Willoughby Hills, shall not appear on a broadcast except when:
   - a) Incumbent City Official is appearing in meetings at which such official would normally attend.
   - b) The name and picture of the City Official is shown along with the names of other elected officials.
   - c) A meeting where all candidates for an elected office are invited to participate in an issues forum which is fair and balanced and moderated by an impartial third party.
     - A person shall be considered a "candidate" upon a public announcement of their candidacy for office, or upon the filing of petitions to be included on a ballot for any upcoming election (as reported by the Board of Elections), whichever is earlier.

2) Position Advocacy on City issues: The broadcast mediums shall not disseminate an editorial position on a city-related referendum, ballot initiative, or on an issue that is before the City Council for action.
3) Position Advocacy on Issues before other Legislative Bodies: The broadcast mediums may disseminate an editorial position concerning a referendum, ballot initiative or issue before a County, Regional, State, or Federal legislative body, provided the position is publicly endorsed by the City Council.
4) Commercialism: There shall be no commercial advertising or other information promoting the sale of any product or service, except for promotional announcements for events that are sponsored or co-sponsored by the City, and for not-for-profit organization activities meeting the standards described elsewhere in this document.
5) Lotteries: Advertising or other information concerning any illegal lottery or raffle is prohibited.
6) Promotion of Religion: Programming which directly promotes religious beliefs or philosophies shall not be presented in any broadcast.
7) Defamatory Material: Subject matter that is deemed by the Mayor, or his designee, to be defamatory in nature shall not be presented in any broadcast medium.
8) Indecent or Obscene Content: Subject matter that is deemed by the Mayor, or his designee, to be indecent or obscene shall not be presented in any broadcast medium.

G. Eligibility for submitting material for display:

Not-for-profit organizations based in the City of Willoughby Hills, or whose territory encompasses Willoughby Hills or a portion of Willoughby Hills in accordance with their Charter or Articles of Incorporation, may make application for presentation on the city's broadcast mediums.

H. Editorial and Operational Control:

The Mayor, or his designee, shall have full authority to approve, deny, or edit any item for broadcast or publishing, and to determine the time slots and the length of time the material will be presented. He shall also maintain full editorial and operational control over all aspects of the City's broadcast mediums, subject to the provisions of this policy.

I. Information to be submitted:

Using the prescribed form attached herein, eligible parties may submit an application to the office of the Mayor no less than two business days prior to the time the information is requested to be displayed. At minimum, the following information shall be provided on said form:

- Desired medium for publication
- Desired start date and end dates of publication
- Name of organization
- Name of representative
- Title of representative
- Contact information for representative
- Type of event
- Start and end date of event
- Start and end time of event
- Location (name) of event
- Location (address) of event
- Purpose of event
- Is this a recurring event? If so, what is interval of recurrence?
- Who is invited?
- Information about event that could be published
- Instructions for those interested
- Fees, admission charges, or donations requested
- Contact name to be published
- Contact information to be published

J. Public Records, Retention, and Public Records Requests:

All information submitted to the City becomes a public record upon receipt and all records will be maintained for not less than three (3) months from date of last presentation in any medium. Public records requests for copies of materials presented shall be initiated by contacting the Office of the Mayor. Requested materials shall only be provided in the format and media in which they are maintained. The City shall assume no obligation to convert requested items to a different media or format specified by the requester. If a cost is incurred by the City in providing such copies, the actual cost shall be passed on to the requestor.

K. Complaints:

Complaints concerning the materials appearing on the city's broadcast mediums, or regarding the operation of the broadcast mediums, should be directed to the Office of the Mayor.

L. Procedure for requesting coverage:

Applications for coverage by any city-operated communications medium may be obtained at City Hall, via fax (by contacting the Mayor's office), or on the city website (www.WilloughbyHills-Oh.gov). Website forms will be available both in a manual format (a pdf file), or in an electronic format (a Microsoft Excel file). Forms may be submitted in person (at the Mayor's office), via fax, or as an e-mail attachment to: Communications@WilloughbyHills-Oh.gov. The requirements for submitting an application are as follows:

For independent events and notices that pertain to meetings that are <u>not</u> formal city government functions:

1. Representatives of organizations must submit the attached form, either manually or electronically in advance of the desired start date of the coverage, as outlined below.
   a. For appearance on Cable TV – the form must be submitted 2 business days prior to the desired start date of the coverage.
   b. For appearance on the website – the form must be submitted 4 business days prior to the desired start date of the coverage.
   c. For appearance in the city newsletter – the form must be submitted two weeks prior to the projected publish date of the newsletter.
2. Every applicable field should be completed on the submission form.
3. If available, an event flyer or other advertising brochure should accompany the application.
4. If the event is recurring, users may submit a list of upcoming dates with program information.

For official city events and meetings notices that pertain to formal city government bodies, including meetings of city council, boards, and commissions:

1. Authorized representatives of the government body may submit the attached form, either manually or electronically in advance of the desired start date of the coverage.
2. Alternately, the representatives of the government body may submit the formal meeting notice that is customarily used to notify the public and the media of upcoming meetings.
   d. For appearance on Cable TV – the form must be submitted 1 business day prior to the desired start date of the coverage.
   e. For appearance on the website – the form must be submitted 2 business days prior to the desired start date of the coverage.
   f. For appearance in the city newsletter – the form must be submitted two weeks prior to the projected publish date of the newsletter.
2. If using the prescribed form, only applicable fields need be completed on the submission form.
4. If the event is recurring, users may submit a list of upcoming meeting dates.

For emergency notifications that 1) pertain to the safety and welfare of citizens or 2) are formal city government emergency messages, individuals should contact (in the following order):

1. The Mayor's Office
2. The Fire Department
3. The Police Department
4. Elected Officials

M. Specific rules for various mediums:

All parameters regarding the display of events remain at the discretion of the Mayor (and/or his designee).

1. For cable TV postings
   a. Users may submit their own slide designs, or concepts thereof, if desired. They can be drawn manually, or created electronically (by submitting a Microsoft PowerPoint file)
   b. Slide content should be easily read and understood, containing essential details, but without superfluous detail (what, where, when, who, purpose, cost, invitees, contact info, etc.)
   c. Slides in the rotation are typically shown for approximately 10 seconds and are shown in no particular order
   d. Events for groups and organizations not sponsored by the city are typically displayed for a maximum of three weeks prior to the event unless circumstances dictate otherwise
   e. City-sponsored events are typically displayed for only the amount of time required, or an adequate amount of time to develop sufficient interest in the event being advertised (usually about three weeks), unless circumstances dictate otherwise
   f. Content for events not sponsored by the city is limited to two slides per organization at any given time
   g. Content for events sponsored by the city is limited to ten slides per organization/department at any given time
   h. Display of slides for an event will cease within 48 hours of the conclusion of the event.

2. For website postings
   a. Users may submit their own designs, or concepts thereof, if desired. They can be drawn manually, or created electronically (by submitting a Microsoft Word or pdf file)
   b. Content should be easily read and understood, containing essential details, but without superfluous detail (what, where, when, who, purpose, cost, invitees, contact info, etc.)
   c. Space for content may be limited, so brevity may be beneficial
   d. Events for groups and organizations not sponsored by the city are typically displayed for a maximum of three-four weeks prior to the event unless circumstances dictate otherwise
   e. City-sponsored events are typically displayed for an adequate amount of time to develop sufficient interest in the event being advertised (usually about three weeks), unless circumstances dictate otherwise
   f. Content for events not sponsored by the city is limited to two items per organization at any given time
   g. Content for events sponsored by the city is limited to ten items per organization/department at any given time
   h. The display of content for an event will cease within 48 hours of the conclusion of the event.

3. For newsletter postings
   a. All material must be submitted in advance of the deadline specified by the editor
   b. Users may submit their own designs, or concepts thereof, if desired. They can be drawn manually, or created electronically (by submitting a Microsoft Word or pdf file)
   c. Content should be easily read and understood, containing essential details, but without superfluous detail (what, where, when, who, purpose, cost, invitees, contact info, etc.)
   d. Space for content may be limited, so brevity may be beneficial
   e. Events for groups and organizations not sponsored by the city are typically displayed for a maximum of two consecutive issues unless circumstances dictate otherwise
   f. City-sponsored events are typically displayed for an adequate amount of time to develop sufficient interest in the event being advertised, unless circumstances dictate otherwise
   f. Content for events not sponsored by the city is limited to two items per organization at any given time
   g. Content for events sponsored by the city is limited to ten items per organization/department at any given time
   i. Once the submission deadline has passed, no changes to submitted material can be made

City of Willoughby Hills

APPLICATION FOR INCLUSION IN CITY-OPERATED COMMUNICATIONS MEDIUMS

Desired medium: Cable TV ____ City Website ____ City Newsletter ____ Other: _____
(*select as many as applicable*)

Start date for publication: _____ End date for publication: _____

Name of organization: _____

Name of representative submitting this application: _____

Title of representative submitting this application: _____

Contact information for representative submitting this application: _____

Type of event: _____

Start date of event: _____ Start time of event: _____

End date of event: _____ End time of event: _____

Location (name) of event: _____

Location (address) of event: _____

Purpose of event: _____

Is this a recurring event? _____ If so, what is interval of recurrence? _____

Who is invited? _____

Information about event that could be published: _____

_____

Instructions for those interested: _____

_____

Fee, Admission charge, or donation: _____

Contact name to be published: _____

Contact information to be published: _____

Date Submitted: _____ Time: _____

Signature: _____

For staff use only	**date**	**time**	**By (initials)**
Submitted to medium:			