

Agenda Item: 2.b

Meeting Date: May 5, 2026

MEMORANDUM

To: City Commission

Through: Jennifer K. Bramley, City Manager

From: Sue Burness

Date: 2026-05-01

Subject: Social Media Comment Policy

Presenter(s): Sue Burness, Director of Communications

Staff Recommendation: Recent national data and research indicates that social media is no longer an engagement tool for local government agencies. The sentiment findings show that social media has become antisocial in many ways as it spreads misinformation, dissension, threatening and safety concerns for residents and staff. We have seen many examples of this on our social media platforms where comments create confusion with misinformation. Often the intent of our posts is lost or hijacked by comments that have nothing to do with the original content or post.

Social media still has a purpose - to provide our residents with public information, news and updates on city projects, programs, emergency updates during storms and point them to the City website or other agency/partner website for additional information resources.

As part of our ongoing effort to streamline communication and provide residents with accurate, timely information, the City of Dunedin will be disabling comments on our social media posts effective May 5, 2026.

We have researched the legal side of this decision. Social media is a limited public forum. Many cities all over the country have disabled comments on their social media platforms for the reasons cited above. There is a 2023 federal court case where a local government (LG) adopted a policy which did not allow comments on all LG-owned social media accounts. The policy provided that the accounts were designed to further the educational mission of the LG by providing information to the community and public and were not to create a public forum.

This policy will allow us to focus on delivering clear and consistent

updates to the community by ensuring our messages are clear and easily accessible.

While commenting is not available on our posts, there are still many ways to connect with us and share feedback.

Website

Residents are welcome to message us directly through the City website at communications@dunedin.gov

Contact City Commission at Commission@Dunedin.gov

Contact City Manager at: jennifer.bramley@dunedin.gov

Each Department section has a contact for the Director under "Contact Us"

Commission Meetings

Residents are encouraged to participate in Commission meetings and monthly Workshops in person at City Hall where public comment is available for items on the agenda and items not on the agenda. The meetings are also livestreamed on Facebook, YouTube, the website or Spectrum Cable 639. Once the meeting agendas are posted the public can provide comments/questions directly to the Commission through the eComment portal prior to the meeting.

Boards & Committees

The City of Dunedin has 20+ Boards and committees comprised of citizen volunteers which serve as advisory bodies that make recommendations to the City Commission on certain City business (e.g. parks and recreation, historic preservation, library, zoning, charter review, etc.). They are a way for citizens to be involved with the City while advising on specific topics.

Information and how to get involved:

<https://www.dunedin.gov/Your-Government/Boards-and-Committees>

Posts are Still Shareable

Although commenting is disabled on our original posts, all City social media content remains shareable. If you wish to express your thoughts or start a conversation, you are welcome to share any of our posts to your account or community page, and comment there.

Strategic Themes:	Communication & Technology
Boards & Committees:	N/A
Budget Impact:	N/A
Past Action:	N/A

Next Action: N/A

Attachments: [A. Social Media Comment Policy May 2026.pdf](#)

Background: N/A