Resolution 010-2016

CATRON COUNTY SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners met at a special meeting at 9:00 a.m. September 3, 2015, in the Catron County Commission Chambers, 100 Main Street, Reserve, New Mexico; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of the County of Catron exercises the powers of the County as a body politic and corporate pursuant to NMSA 1978, Section 4-38-1(1884); and,

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners is the body that is statutorily charged with making such orders concerning the property belonging to the county as it deems expedient pursuant to NMSA 1978, Section 4-38-13 (1876); and,

WHEREAS, the proper functioning of the County relies upon the public’s confidence and trust in the individual employed by and serving the County; and,

WHEREAS, any matter which brings the County into disrepute has the corresponding effect of reducing public confidence and trust in the County, therefore impeding the ability to work with and serve the public; and,

WHEREAS, professionalism is the most significant factor in providing the highest level of service to the public, which in turn builds the public confidence and trust: and,

WHEREAS, while employees have the right to use personal/social networking web pages, tweets, sites, and/or blogs, as employees of the County, they are public servants who are held to a higher standard than the general public concerning general conduct and ethical standards; and,
WHEREAS, it is therefore the policy of the County to maintain a level of professionalism in both on-duty and off-duty conduct and employees shall not engage in conduct that contradicts or impedes the mission of the County; and,

WHEREAS, Catron County wishes establish and publish the County’s position on the permitted and prohibited use of all forms of social media by County representatives, for both personal and business use.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Catron County Board of County Commissioners hereby adopts the following social media policy, for both personal and business use.

DEFINITIONS:

For the purposes of this policy the following definitions shall apply:

SOCIAL NETWORKING OR MEDIA SITE

An internet site specifically focused on the building and verifying of social networks with the ability to create groups that share common interests or affiliations, upload files including pictures, music or videos, hold discussions in forums and/or host Weblogs (Blogs) for members of the site and includes internet dating services.

WEBLOG (BLOG)

A web-based publication where users post informal journals on their thoughts, comments and philosophies based on the views of its creator. Weblogs are generally referred to blogs.

TWEETS

Brief text messaging, usually one-hundred forty (140) characters or less, posted on a social media site.

RULES AND PROCEDURES:

Procedures

Employees who have personal web pages, memberships with social networking web sites or other types of internet postings, which can be accessed by the public, shall not identify themselves directly or indirectly as an employee of the County.

A. Photographs or other depictions of County emblems, department uniforms, badges, patches, marked patrol cars, or any other item or material which is identifiable to the County shall not be used on personal employee internet postings.
B. Employees shall not authorize any other party to use photographs or other depictions of County emblems, department uniforms, badges, patches, marked patrol cars, or any other item or material which is identifiable to this department without written permission from the County Manager.

C. Employees are encouraged to seek the guidance of supervisors regarding any posting that may adversely reflect upon the County.

D. Exemptions to these provisions may be granted at the discretion of the County Manager, based on specific application and after careful consideration of the time, place, manner, and forum.

Restrictions

A. Absent authorization from the County Manager, employees are prohibited from posting, or in any other way broadcasting, or disseminating information on the internet, social networking sites, tweets, or other medium of communication, the business of the County including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Photographs/images related to any investigation by the County or any of its departments.
2. Video or audio files related to any investigation by the County or any of its departments.
3. Any other information related to any investigation by the County or any of its departments.

B. Employees who have these sites shall not reference the County specifically as their place of employment or discuss/divulge County business on their website or via any other medium of communication as addressed in this policy.

C. Employees are prohibited from posting, broadcasting or otherwise disseminating any sexual, violent, racial, ethnically derogatory material or any other type of material that is designed to intimidate, humiliate, denigrate, offend, insult, antagonize or provoke any other person, whether such material is in written comments, pictures, artwork, video or other references on their websites or through any other medium of communication. Determination of whether this provision has been violated shall be based on community standards including due consideration of the content of the website itself.

D. Employees shall not post any material on the internet that brings discredit to or may adversely affect the efficiency or integrity of the department.

E. Employees are prohibited from accessing these types of websites while on duty, unless the employee is conducting a criminal or administrative investigation that has been approved by a supervisor.
F. Employees are prohibited from using County equipment and resources to access these types of websites while on duty or off duty, unless the employee is conducting a criminal or administrative investigation that has been approved by a supervisor.

G. Employees undertaking covert operations on behalf of the Sheriff’s Department shall not post any personal identifying information to the internet that may identify them or anyone connected to them as police officers. Posting such information may jeopardize their safety, the safety of their family, co-workers and/or any investigations.

H. All employees shall report any undesired posting of personal identifying information about themselves by another person to their immediate supervisor. The immediate supervisor shall then notify the County Manager.

I. Employees that are issued laptops with wireless cards are prohibited from using this equipment to access social networking sites, blogs and/or instant messaging. Improper privacy settings can allow others to view information that is sent. Use of the wireless network without proper privacy settings increases the risk of hackers and viruses to access the system.

J. Text messaging, emailing, posting blogs or tweets, as well as interacting on any social networking site, regardless whether the hardware is owned personally or by the department, while operating department-owned fleet vehicles is strictly prohibited, whether the employee is on or off duty.

Safety Implications Associated with Internet Use

Employees should consider the possible adverse consequences of internet postings, such as future employment, cross examinations in criminal and civil cases, and public as well as private embarrassment.

A. Employees are reminded that information posted on social networking internet sites is not private.

B. Posted information may be viewed by any member of the public including members of criminal organizations and legal entities.

C. Care must be exercised by any employees who choose to post personal information on the internet. Once it is posted, it should be considered accessible by anyone, indefinitely.

D. If any employee chooses to post personal information on the internet, they should be aware that such information may result in the fraudulent and/or misuse of that information. Caution must be exercised when disclosing:

1. Photographs
2. Names
3. Date of birth
4. Hometown
5. Occupation
6. Position
7. Location
8. Information about family members
9. Any other personal identifying information

E. Employees must be aware they may be jeopardizing other members' personal confidentiality and safety by posting photographs and personal details about other members.

F. Employees who permit their personal identifying information to be posted to a social networking site must be aware that such public display of personal information could directly or indirectly impact their effectiveness as an employee of the County.

APPROVED, ADOPTED AND PASSED on this 3rd day of September, 2015.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
CATRON COUNTY, NEW MEXICO

Anita A. Hand, Commission Dist. 1
Glyn Griffin, Commission Dist. 2
Van J. "Bucky" Alred, Commission Dist. 3

ATTEST:
Mr. Keith Riddle, Clerk