

Communications Policy

Adopted date: May 11, 2022	Amended date:	Next Review: 2027
----------------------------	---------------	-------------------

OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that communications from Van Anda Improvement District (VAID) are well coordinated, appropriately managed, cost effective and responsive to the diverse information needs of the Public and to:

- define policies and procedure for effective, accessible, and consistent communications
- enhance appropriate internal communications among employees and trustees
- facilitate proactive communications with other levels of government, non-government organizations and the public at large
- ensure that the information provided by Van Anda Improvement District is accurate.

DEFINITIONS

“Chair” is the Chair or Acting Chair of the Board of Trustees

“District” is the Van Anda Improvement District.

“Internal communications” relate to communications among employees and trustees.

“External communications” refer to communications that employees and trustees have with other levels of government, non-governmental organizations, and the public at large.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees of the District, Trustees and Committee Members.

POLICY

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

The District encourages positive and proactive communications within the organization. Internal employee communication tools include regular employee and management meeting, ongoing electronic communications as well as written and verbal communications. All employees and trustees will have access to appropriate level of technology in order to complete their work-related responsibilities.

POLICY

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

The Chair is the designated spokesperson for the District and the Board of Trustees. From time to time, the Chair may request another Trustee, the Fire Chief, or the Administrator, to speak on behalf of the District. The Administrator is the authorized spokesperson on behalf of the District regarding matters affecting the administration of the District. The Fire Chief is the authorized spokesperson on behalf of the District First Responder operations. Employees are authorized to speak regarding adopted policy and technical matters, or matters related to their work program. Employees and trustees will forward inquiries to the designated spokesperson(s) where appropriate.

There are various means to enhance communications and provide information to the public about the activities of the District as follows:

- a) Notice published in newspapers as part of a statutory requirement under the provisions of the Local Government Act, the District's Letters patent, or any other Government Statute, will not be subject to prior approval from the Board of Trustees.
- b) Employees are authorized to advertise routine operation and business information in print media (newspapers) and web based media;
- c) Employees are encouraged to use news releases to communicate recent activities, decisions, projects, and services. Employees are to submit a draft news release to the Chair before publishing. If the news release includes a quotation from an individual trustee or employees, then approval must be obtained in advance from the trustee or employees member. News releases will be copied to employees, trustees and the media and the posted on the District's website. The District will maintain a website for public access to up-to-date user-friendly information such as District meetings, activities, decisions and resources.

The following publishing procedures apply to all District websites:

- a) A designated employee will post routine information to the website. For any non-routine information employees are to submit a draft to the Chair for approval and verification before publishing;
- b) Information appearing on the District's website will not promote an identifiable individual or business over any other or individual or business.

PROCEDURES

1. Water Operators Report (Waterworks and Dam Report) to be prepared monthly. Will include current and ongoing activities and issues facing the District. Will be presented at Regular Board meetings.
2. Administrator's Report to be prepared monthly. Will include the previous month's activities. To be include in the Trustees packages for the Board meeting.
3. Fire Chief Report - to be prepared monthly. Will include current and ongoing activities and issues facing the District. Will be presented at Regular Board meetings.
4. Media releases and contacts should be directed to the Chair of the District or the Administration Office. Care must be taken to ensure that all involved party's interests are respected. Verification of information regarding legal issues or development issues should be confirmed by

POLICY

the administrator or the chair prior to release to the media to ensure confidentiality is maintained when necessary.

5. Posting of board minutes, annual financial statements, policies, contact information, and other initiatives of the District will be posted on the website and available for viewing at the District office. Ensure that the District website is regularly updated, accurate, easy to understand and accessible.
6. Advertise regularly in the local paper(s) and on the District website for the Public to sign up for periodic electronic communications distributed via e-mail. The e-mail list would be used to distribute periodic newsletters (incorporating relevant information from the various outputs noted above), information alerts, notice of public meetings, etc.
7. Provide the Public with timely, accurate, clear, objective, and complete information about its policies, bylaws, programs, services and initiatives. Employ a variety of ways and means to communicate to the Public - such as District Office visits, the telephone and mail to print media, the District website and periodic electronic communications. Information must be broadly accessible throughout the District. All means of communications - from traditional methods to new technologies - should be considered to reach and communicate with the Public.
8. Identify and address communication needs and issues routinely in the development, implementation and evaluation of policies, bylaws, programs, services, and initiatives. Internal and external communication requirements must be identified and met when planning, managing, or reviewing policies, bylaws, programs services or initiatives.
9. Responsible use of district funds to obtain maximum value is a fundamental requirement in all communication activities.
10. Encourage employees to communicate openly with the Public about policies, bylaws, programs, services, and initiatives they are familiar with and for which they have responsibility. The public interest is best served by communicating openly and responsively about such policies, bylaws, programs, services, and initiatives that employees help to administer, while treating sensitive information with the discretion it requires. Employees are expected to provide information services in a non-political fashion.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Use of Information Technology Resources