

## KINGSTON GOVERNMENT CHANNEL GENERAL POLICY

### **I. PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this document is to provide overall guidance and direction to staff and volunteers engaged in operation of the Government Channel. The Government Channel's Mission is to make local government more accessible and transparent to Kingston residents.

#### **A. Channel Designation**

The Town of Kingston will establish a Government Television Channel, which shall be known as the Kingston Government Channel or "KGC". This channel will be established on cable channel 21. The term KGC applies to channel 21, and the on-line content delivered by the Town of Kingston.

#### **B. Channel Administration**

General day to day operations of the government channel, including oversight of policies and procedures, are overseen by the Selectmen or their designee. Policies are reviewed and adopted by the Board of Selectmen.

### **II. PROGRAMMING POLICY**

The Town of Kingston's Government Channel is not the same as a "Public Access" channel. Programming shall be generally limited to serve Town functions and operations.

#### **A. Types of acceptable programming include:**

1. Emergency notifications from municipal departments and state authorities that concern the community will be given priority.
2. Live cablecasts and or recorded cablecasts of municipal government meetings, including "video on demand" of meetings via web and future content platforms. Generally, this will consist of: Board of Selectmen, Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment meetings and workshops. Other municipal meetings can be considered as staff time and schedule allows. Meetings of official public record, which are broadcast live, are shown gavel to gavel and are not edited for content. Meetings in which there are long delays for recesses or executive sessions may be edited out of repeats/playback, providing original copy is not edited.

3. Bulletin Board Messaging. Municipal departments may use the bulletin board to post messages including, but not limited to community emergencies, public meeting schedules, dog licensing, car registration, voter registration, road construction detours, water/sewer work, and information on programs offered by the library and recreation departments. Announcements of events and activities must be sponsored in-part by a municipal department. Announcements from County, Federal and State agencies are permitted as staff time and cablecast schedule permits.
4. Educational, Outreach Programming and Public Service Announcements. Programming produced by staff serves the objective of creating a better understanding of municipal government functions and services, as well as illustrating issues that impact municipal functions and our community. Public Service Announcements must identify the Town of Kingston and Town Department, where appropriate, as sponsor or producer.
5. Other Programming. The KGC upon occasion will air special programming such as city sponsored events, budget hearings, and election night results. Other requests from administration will be considered if an event meets policy criteria outlined in this document. Candidates' forums produced by a nonpartisan group are allowed when the format allows for all candidates or sides of an issue to be heard on an equal basis and within the same presentation format and of equal time.
6. Programming produced by an outside agency. Programming whose subject matter addresses goals and concerns of the municipal departments, or local state and federal government, may be considered, subject to approval by Town staff, and as scheduling time allows. Example: Public service announcements produced by the Ad Council on seat belt safety. Storm Water produced by the Stormwater coalition and UNH.

## **B. Programming Restrictions**

The following types of programming are prohibited from broadcast on the Government Channel by State and Federal law:

1. Political / partisan programming, (except within the context of official public meetings).
2. Promotion of political and candidate events outside of Town of Kingston public meetings or forums.
3. Forums hosted by a partisan group.
4. Candidate's statements or commercials for any public office.
5. Commercial Programming - Commercial programming, including paid advertising material.
6. Copyrighted material will not be broadcast unless clearances have been obtained and documented.
7. Programming that contains material that violates local, State or Federal statutes.

## **C. Use of Town Equipment**

Town-owned video and related production equipment shall be restricted to use by Town personnel or authorized volunteers for Town activities. Loaning of equipment for personal or outside agency use shall not be authorized.

#### **D. Recorded Meeting Access**

1. DVDs of meetings are generally retained for a period of up to one year, but retention period is subject to change to meet storage needs, costs and changing technologies. Requests for copies of recorded meetings on DVD can be made through the Selectmen's Office for a fee.
2. Retention and Ownership of Recorded Media Digital recordings shall be the property of the Town of Kingston. It shall be a general policy to not retain all recordings of produced programs, meetings, and recorded events. Recordings of Public Meetings shall not be considered an official record of any meeting and there shall be no liability for inadvertent erasure or omissions.
3. Human Errors. In the event that human error or technical difficulty results in the failure to broadcast or record a public meeting, or in the event human error results in the broadcast of incorrect information over the KGC, the Town of Kingston, its officers, employees and agents shall be held harmless.

### **III. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

#### **A. Editorial Rights**

The Service is an operating entity of the Town of Kingston and as such reserves the right to identify any material as unsuitable for production or distribution.

#### **B. Appeal process**

Requests that are a departure from established policy are subject to approval by the Kingston Selectmen. A significant departure from established policy is subject to authorization by the Selectmen after review by Town Counsel.

### **IV. AMENDMENTS**

The policy established herein for the use of the Town's government access channel may be amended at the discretion and approval of the Kingston Selectmen. Upon initial adoption and any subsequent amendment by the Selectmen, the Selectmen's Administrative Assistant shall promulgate such administrative procedures as are necessary to ensure the efficient operation of the Town's government access channel in compliance with this policy.