

From: Rebecca Arends
Sent: Saturday, May 30, 2026 2:19:49 PM
To: City Council; Dohoney Jr., Milton; Planning
Subject: Clarification request

Mayor Taylor and Members of the Planning Commission,

I am writing seeking clarification regarding the standards of conduct expected of elected and appointed public officials.

Ann Arbor's Council Rules emphasize civility, professionalism, honesty, integrity, and respectful public discourse. These principles play an important role in maintaining public confidence in local government.

Recently, I observed a social media post by Planning Commissioner Daniel Adams stating that "pictures of random piles of trash and dog poop don't vote." While some may view this as ordinary political commentary, others may perceive it as dismissive of residents who raise concerns regarding neighborhood conditions and quality-of-life issues.

My purpose is not to seek discipline regarding any individual official. Rather, I am interested in understanding which standards apply when elected and appointed officials communicate publicly, and how those standards are consistently interpreted and applied.

In recent years, Ann Arbor has experienced significant public discussion regarding the conduct of public officials, social media use, and expectations for professional behavior. As a result, many residents have questions not only about particular incidents but about whether standards are applied evenly regardless of the individual involved or the viewpoint being expressed.

I also recognize that public officials, candidates, and residents are all human, and that most of us have likely fallen short of our highest standards at one time or another. For my own part, I have concluded that social media often creates more division than understanding. If elected, I intend to communicate primarily through direct constituent engagement, public meetings, newsletters, and a public blog, rather than through social media commentary. I believe public trust is strengthened when officials focus on respectful dialogue and substantive discussion of issues rather than online exchanges.

Could you please clarify:

1. What standards of professionalism and civility are expected of Planning Commissioners and Council Members when communicating publicly?
2. What ordinances, policies, bylaws, ethics rules, or other governing documents establish those expectations?
3. Is there a process through which residents may raise concerns regarding conduct they believe falls short of those standards?
4. How does the City ensure that expectations are applied consistently across elected officials, appointed officials, and board and commission members?

I appreciate your time and consideration. Public trust depends not only on having standards, but also on ensuring that those standards are clearly understood and applied fairly.

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