



City of Duluth, Minn.

City of Duluth maximizes its legislative process with
Boards and Commissions



32-40

Hours saved per month by managing
board appointments digitally

30

Active boards with 265 seats

\$10K

Recouped per year in
staff costs

OVERVIEW

In many municipalities, legislation begins with research and forums organized by various boards and commissions, whether it's education, traffic safety, or public zoning. In the City of Duluth, Minn., these crucial democratic processes were being held up by an inefficient boards and commissions tracking system. After utilizing Granicus solutions, the City has changed the way it manages these processes, and as a result, maintains a digital view of their boards and commissions.

SITUATION | PROCESS LAG TIME IN DULUTH A CHALLENGE

Since city clerks are among some of the busiest workers in the public sector, it helped that when Bobbi Pirkola, Duluth City Clerk, first arrived at her position, the City of Duluth had already implemented Granicus' Boards and Commissions software. But they were still tracking appointments and vacancies manually. As the new clerk, one of Pirkola's first undertakings was to make stronger use of the solution. "We used to keep a large ledger of all of the positions on all of our boards and commissions, and of course it was that huge paper trail," Pirkola says of the process.

Pirkola also cites open board positions as a catalyst for finally making full use of the Boards and Commissions system. When commissions stay unfilled, Pirkola says, "You're not going to have your forums to pass anything substantial to bring before the City Council." Bringing new legislation before city councils is a crucial role for boards and commissions across the country; it's how cities are able to pass grassroots legislation driven and supported by citizens.

MUST HAVE SOLUTION

Boards & Commissions

Legistar

Granicus Video

Granicus Minutes

“This year, for the first time, we've been able to fill each board position before it expired, up to 98 percent.”

Bobbi Pirkola, City Clerk



SOLUTION | TAKING CONTROL OF A MANUAL PROCESS TO ENGAGE CITIZENS

Now that the City Clerk's office is fully utilizing the Boards and Commissions application from Granicus, it has changed the way the legislative process looks on a municipal level, with each board and commission position filled. "This year, for the first time, we've been able to fill each position before it expired, up to 98 percent," says Pirkola. This is important, because boards and commissions in each municipality play an essential role in getting new legislation passed. Additionally, they're able to recruit citizens using real-time information. As soon as a vacancy opens in any of the boards or commissions, it is automatically posted on the City's website. "It's made a great change," Pirkola says.

RESULTS | A BETTER PROCESS FOR BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Soon after taking over as the City Clerk in Duluth, Bobbi Pirkola realized that if her organization made use of Granicus' Boards and Commissions software, they would have a much easier time of managing the entire process. Now that they are fully digitized, the City experiences 98 percent fulfillment of 30 active boards, and as a result, a higher level of citizen engagement.

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Bobbi Pirkola, City Clerk

