

TEANECK, NEW JERSEY

Teaneck, New Jersey, Saves Time and Money with Streamlined Meeting Management

Teaneck is the second largest municipality in Bergen County, New Jersey, with a population of 39,776, and is a bustling suburb of New York City. With its diverse and active residents, it is home to Fairleigh Dickinson University, Holy Name Hospital, the Hackensack River Greenway and multiple business districts, cultural centers and municipal parks.

ACCELA HELPS ORGANIZE, DISTRIBUTE AND STORE COUNCIL CONTENT

For this growing community, Teaneck Township Clerk Jaime Evelina was seeking an innovative technological tool to provide immediate access into key government decisions for Teaneck residents while promoting organization, time management and cost savings in-house.

Upon her appointment in 2011, Jaime knew she had to do something to change the way “things were always done.” She was faced with an archaic agenda creation process. Each agenda would take a full week to organize with multiple departments. Pre-punched paper was purchased in bulk for resolutions. Hard copies of agenda packets, including all proposed legislation, were made for each meeting for the governing body, administration and the public. The lack of organization was creating unnecessary work, and Jaime found herself constantly seeking clarification as to whether items were reviewed by legal counsel and/or approved by administration prior to them hitting her desk.

A simple online search for software management highlighted Accela Agenda and Minutes, part of the Legislative Management suite, and after a demo, Jaime decided to present the software to the Township Council.

“As public servants, we have an obligation to transmit the communities we serve into a greater, better and more beautiful condition than they were transmitted to us, and Accela has brought me one step closer to making the community I serve a model for others to follow.”

Jaime L. Evelina, RMC, Township Clerk



Population

39,776

Challenge

Chaotic, paper-based agenda process wasted time and resources, agenda changes were difficult to make, requiring multiple steps, and agency lacked transparency into Council meetings for citizens

Solutions

Accela Agenda and Minutes, Accela Civic Streaming

Results

Simplified agenda creation and distribution process to a few clicks

Saved staff time, which enabled them to focus on citizen-facing support

Reduced expenses on paper and video recordings



Simplifying the agenda creation process

HOW ACCELA EMPOWERS TEANECK

Since the decision was made to move forward with the solution, the agency has offered training for new users, enabling them to quickly become proficient, and has empowered staff to access materials 24/7 from the office or home and make changes in real time. For Jaime, she saves time by eliminating steps when a change needs to be made to the agenda. Today, instead of ten manual steps, she simply makes a few simple clicks and the agenda is updated and the agenda outline can be converted into a minutes outline with just one click. Additionally, the solution can manage minutes and transcripts even with multiple people speaking simultaneously.

The solution is a great fit for the community's demands. Although New Jersey law does not require municipalities to post their meetings on the Internet, Evelina and the Township Council wanted to broadcast meetings live for the public through the agency's web portal, providing immediate access to agendas, legislation and proceedings. The time-stamping feature allows members of the public to jump directly to the agenda item they want to see, and gives citizens the transparency to get what they want, when they want it.

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THE BOTTOM LINE

The solution has saved Teaneck Township the cost of purchasing recordable DVDs, and has eliminated citizen requests for information, as they can now easily search for and find meeting content and agenda items online. The solution provides unlimited storage and hosting, which helps lower agency costs.

In addition to saving time and avoiding frustration, the solution has saved the Township from purchasing 10,000 sheets of resolution paper every year.

About Accela

Accela provides cloud-based productivity and civic engagement solutions to more than 2,200 government agencies worldwide. The Accela Civic Platform includes solutions for asset management, citizen relationship management, environmental health, finance and administration, land management, legislative management, licensing and case management, recreation and resource management, right of way management, and utility billing. More than fifty percent of America's largest cities use the Accela Civic Platform. The Company is headquartered in San Ramon, California, with offices in San Francisco, New York, Boston, Portland, Melbourne and Dubai.

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