

# Keene, NH

Cutting costs by increasing public access



The City of Keene has distinguished itself as a government technology leader in New Hampshire, a small state made up of just 13 cities and 221 towns. It is the first municipality in the state to take government transparency to the next level by using both online video and an in-depth transparency portal for their public meetings with the goal of engaging the public in powerful new ways. After concluding a comprehensive master-planning process, and hearing from nearly 2,000 citizens through focus groups and surveys, Keene found that transparent government and responsible leadership were two important themes that surfaced as top municipal goals for their community.

Citizens of Keene desired to be more aware and involved in their local government, likewise, the city wanted to become more participatory and connected to the community online. Driven by a goal of transparency, Keene began revamping its system to better coincide with the level of participation and connectivity desired.

As a result, the city's 15-member City Council, the Mayor, and the City Clerk's Office put an action plan in place to deploy Granicus' Government Transparency solution. Since going live with the Granicus solution, Keene has not only had an overwhelmingly positive response from their community, they even achieved cost-savings after rolling out the new system.

“Citizens wanted more involvement. That was really what drove us to start webcasting.”

- Patricia Little, City Clerk of Keene

## Success Highlights

- Accelerates public access with a multimedia meeting research library
- Reduced time spent handling meeting inquiries by 65%
- Cut paper usage by more than 50%
- Nearly 90% of public meeting inquiries are now self-service
- Have had nearly 6,000 hits to their videos since they launched

### Fast Facts

**Agency Type:** City

**Population:** 23,409

**Solution:**

Granicus Platform

Government Transparency Suite

**Active Since:** 2009

## Digital Agenda Packets

Instead of spending countless hours printing, assembling, and distributing agenda packets, Keene's Granicus solution created a digital environment for agendas to be stored and retrieved. This helps save time and promotes paperless workflows that are good for the environment, helping Keene cut paper usage by more than 50% in their council meetings.

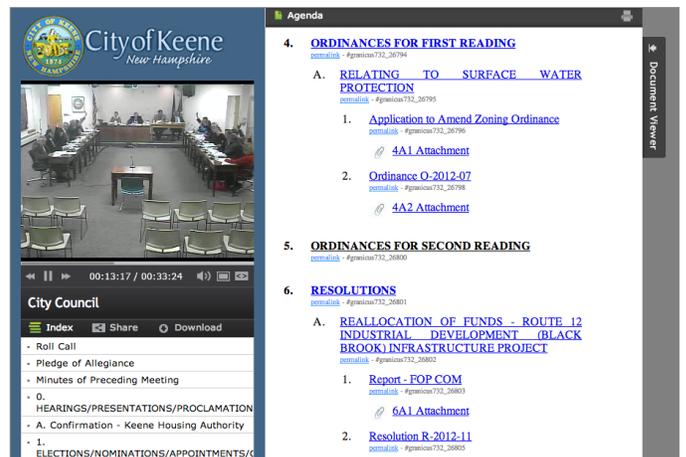
### Key objectives accomplished

- ✓ Consistently post agendas and minutes on the city's website
- ✓ Produce a synchronized agenda and video web stream of captured meetings online
- ✓ Digitize agenda packets with links to background material
- ✓ Facilitate an email subscription for citizens that desire to automatically receive agendas, minutes, and videos
- ✓ Televisе City Council, Planning Board, and Council Standing Committee meetings

## Searchable Web Portal of Agendas & Meeting Webcasts

With Granicus, Keene was also able to become more transparent by webcasting their council meetings live and on-demand from a searchable portal located centrally on their website. In addition, the videos are cross-linked to the city's digital agendas. As a result, citizens and department members are able to conveniently stay aware of topics covered anywhere, anytime from their computer or mobile device. City Clerk Patricia Little noted that this is a huge benefit for citizens petitioning for certain items. Previously, the Clerk's Department would send out voting results on paper. Now they are

able to email the single page of the packet containing the results and a permalink to a video clip of the meeting discussion on a specific agenda item. Additionally, the ability to use key word search to find specific agenda items has shown some unexpected benefits. Deputy City Clerk Bill Dow would typically receive several hundred research requests per year, each taking 40 minutes on average. With Granicus, average request time has been cut by half.



With the help of Granicus, Keene was able to successfully undertake the initiatives they were striving for, including posting agendas and minutes to the city's website, synchronizing agenda and video, digitizing agenda packets, and utilizing permalink and search capabilities. Keene chose to take on transparency and responsible leadership as two leading municipal goals, and as a result, will see improvements to their community for years to come.

“ Granicus is my front line for research requests. Now that we've built 2 or 3 years worth of meetings in there and all the items attached to it, it's very, very comprehensive and puts it all right in front of you quickly. ”

- Bill Dow, Records Manager / Deputy City Clerk