

Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Software drives value in organizing and streamlining citizen board appointments



City of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, City Clerk Jeff Modarelli admits that when it comes to how his organization handles memberships, appointments and qualification of citizens for the City's 35 advisory boards and commissions, they do things a bit differently.

"All of our advisory boards are different, all have different membership requirements, different qualifying questions, and different term lengths," Modarelli said. "We are a very difficult city when it comes to managing our advisory boards."

For years, the City had managed the process of tracking applications and rosters for its citizen advisory boards by taking in paper applications, transferring that data to no fewer than eight different spreadsheets, and then piecing the data together for reporting purposes.

So in 2014, when Granicus released its Boards and Commissions software to help clerks and staff easily manage government body appointments, vacancies and

SUCCESS HIGHLIGHTS

- Allows for citizens to apply for boards and commissions online
- Removed 8-10 tracking spreadsheets from the City's workflow
- Gave staff the ability to create unique applications for each of the City's 35 boards
- Report generation available with just a few clicks
- Data and history stored in one central location

FAST FACTS

Agency Type: City

Population: 165,521

Solution: Webcasting, Legistar, SpeakUp & eComment, Boards and Commissions, iLegislate

Active Since: 2012

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applications, Modarelli, who was the Deputy City Clerk at the time, and City Manager Lee Feldman took notice, wondering if the software could handle the complicated nature of their processes.

After evaluating the technology, Fort Lauderdale, which had already been using Granicus software for legislative and agenda management and to webcast its public meetings, signed up to be one of the first municipalities in North America to adopt Granicus' Boards and Commissions software.

"We wanted to make it easier for our citizens and neighbors to apply," Modarelli said, "and also have a way to be more accurate and transparent with the information about each board."

MOVING MANUAL DATA ACROSS MULTIPLE SPREADSHEETS

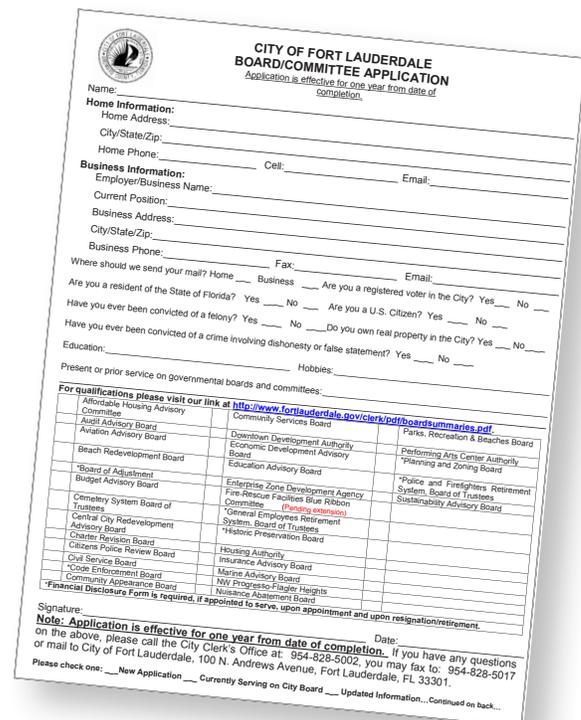
Before implementing Boards and Commissions, Fort Lauderdale's process was difficult to manage and somewhat scattered.

Interested citizens would apply for the various boards using paper applications, which could be picked up at the city office or downloaded as a PDF online. The application was one page, and the citizen would mark which board he or she was interested in, and then complete the rest of the questionnaire with background and qualification information.

One of the biggest issues the City faced was that for each board, there were different qualification questions necessary to determine if the applicant

was a viable fit to serve on a particular board or not. Combined with a manual tracking system, the process was a tedious one for City Clerk staff.

"We did everything hard copy and in Excel - maybe 8-10 different spreadsheets. That was difficult because whatever we needed to track or log or account for, it was on several different sheets," Modarelli said. "Whenever a citizen would apply, we would take that form and try to vet the application as best we could with the information they filled out. But the problem was we would have to update all the difference sheets with all the info. When there was a change, we'd have to make those changes on multiple sheets."



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE BOARD/COMMITTEE APPLICATION
Application is effective for one year from date of completion.

Name: _____

Home Information:
Home Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
Home Phone: _____ Cell: _____ Email: _____

Business Information:
Employer/Business Name: _____
Current Position: _____
Business Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
Business Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Where should we send your mail? Home Business Are you a registered voter in the City? Yes No
Are you a resident of the State of Florida? Yes No Are you a U.S. Citizen? Yes No
Have you ever been convicted of a felony? Yes No Do you own real property in the City? Yes No
Have you ever been convicted of a crime involving dishonesty or false statement? Yes No
Education: _____ Hobbies: _____

Present or prior service on governmental boards and committees: _____

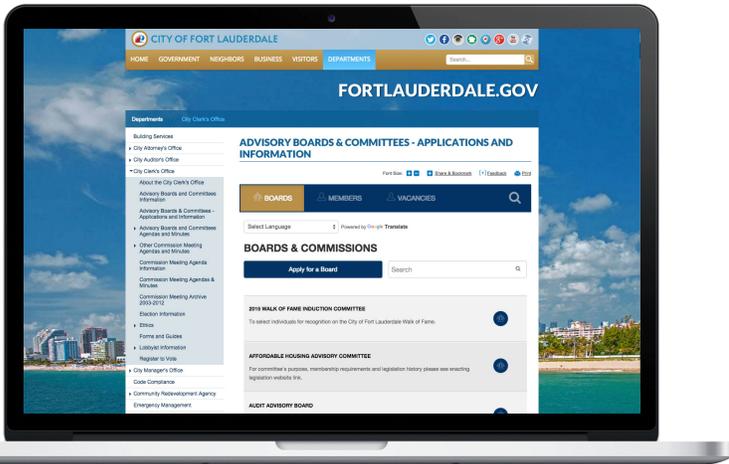
For qualifications please visit our link at <http://www.fortlauderdale.gov/cityclerk/pdf/boardsummaries.pdf>

Alford Housing Advisory Committee	Community Services Board	Parks, Recreation & Beaches Board
Audit Advisory Board	DownTown Development Authority	Performing Arts Center Authority
Health Advisory Board	Economic Development Advisory Board	Planning and Zoning Board
Beach Redevelopment Board	Education Advisory Board	*Police and Firefighters Retirement System, Board of Trustees
*Board of Adjustment	Enterprise Zone Development Agency	Sustainability Advisory Board
Budget Advisory Board	Fire Rescue Facilities Blue Ribbon Committee (Propos. extension)	
Community System Board of Trustees	*General Employees Retirement System, Board of Trustees	
Central City Redevelopment Advisory Board	*Historic Preservation Board	
Charter Revision Board	Housing Authority	
Citizens Police Review Board	Insurance Advisory Board	
Civil Service Board	Marine Advisory Board	
*Code Enforcement Board	NW Progresso-Flagler Heights Wellness Assessment Board	
Community Appearance Board		
*Financial Disclosure Form is required, if appointed to serve upon appointment and upon resignation/retirement.		

Signature: _____ Date: _____
Note: Application is effective for one year from date of completion. If you have any questions or mail to City of Fort Lauderdale, 100 N. Andrews Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301.
Please check one: New Application Currently Serving on City Board Updated Information...Continued on back...

Prior to implementing Granicus' Boards and Commissions software, the City of Fort Lauderdale used paper and PDF applications for its citizen advisory boards and committees.

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A MORE STREAMLINED, ACCURATE WAY TO REPORT

Consistently early adopters of technology, Modarelli and Feldman opted to have Fort Lauderdale become a Beta community for Granicus' Boards and Commissions software.

Since implementing the solution, citizens can now see who is currently serving on a board, how long they've been there, when their term expires, and what vacancies are currently open for application through a user-friendly web portal integrated into the City's website. Applying for a board is just a click away, and for each individual board, there is a different questionnaire to fulfill the qualification needs of the City that were previously so difficult to obtain.

"The accessibility to apply online is huge," said Erica Franceschi, Assistant City Clerk, who joined the City Clerk's office after Boards and

Commissions had been implemented. "The old way, I can just imagine that it used to be a huge deterrent for someone who was interested in serving on a board. This is really a one-stop shop."

While the citizen experience has certainly improved, Modarelli and Franceschi agree the greatest value driven from the software has been the cloud-based solution's simple-to-use yet powerful administrative reporting and data-capturing ability.

From pulling reports of board member expirations to current vacancies to new applicants, Franceschi said knowing the information is all in one place and easily accessible puts her mind at ease.

"When we create agenda items for the Commission, we don't have to pull together data from various spreadsheets and the paper application itself," Franceschi said. "In Granicus, we can create the report, and 90 percent of what we pull out of Granicus is ready for the Commission and we can be confident in that data when we present it to the Commission."

Modarelli added: "In a general sense, I believe, at our city, the number one positive for us is that we can qualify an advisory board applicant in a much better way than we could in the past. That is invaluable for us. And the fact that the application process is all online and the data is all organized for us in one place, the software has been fabulous for that."