

# Hyattsville, Maryland

Efficiency, Engagement and Transparency  
Get a Boost in Maryland



In late 2015, technology was a frustration and a pain point for Hyattsville (Md.) City Clerk Laura Reams.

Hyattsville had implemented agenda management software a couple years prior in an effort to bring its meeting preparation process up to date, but the results had been less than desirable.

Reams says every time she and her staff assembled an agenda through the software, they got the same questions from City staff, citing “quirks in the system or things that weren’t quite that intuitive that people would need assistance with every time.”

Not to mention the associated webcasting system from the same provider would routinely fail during Council meetings.

“I would sum it up in one word: inefficient,” Reams says. “It was a little labor-intensive in terms of putting the agenda together. We spent a lot of time and back and forth with departments and division heads to get an

## SUCCESS HIGHLIGHTS

- Reduced staff confusion around the agenda preparation process with Peak Agenda Management
- Provided a stable webstreaming platform for citizen information, which stores meeting history and data all in one place
- Introduced higher level of citizen engagement through SpeakUp and Boards and Commissions

## FAST FACTS

**Agency Type:** City

**Population:** 17,557

**Solution:** Webcasting, Peak, Boards and Commissions

**Active Since:** 2014

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agenda put together ... But our main problem was the video streaming quality. It just wasn't meeting our expectations."

Reams began to evaluate her options at about the same time Granicus released its Peak Agenda Management software as a complement to its enterprise-class Legistar® system.

"Peak just seemed like it had the right features and provided enough to help us automate our process and make things easier," Reams says. "It's really user-friendly. As we looked at it, it had all the key features we needed."

The more Reams dug into Granicus' entire end-to-end legislative management suite, the more her vision of technological efficiency for her office expanded. Eventually, Hyattsville transitioned away from its previous software

provider for both agenda management and webcasting, and also adopted Granicus' Boards and Commissions and SpeakUp citizen engagement tools.

**“Peak is just really intuitive to use. As we were going through training for Peak, there really weren't a lot of questions from our staff on how to use the system. Because where you think a button should be, that's where it is. And what you think should happen after you click that button, that's what happens. That in itself has eased the burden of our process.”**

Now, technology is serving the Hyattsville City Clerk's office the way Reams originally intended.

"The software took a pretty manual process for me and made it really automated. It helped take a lot of work burden off of me, and it also made things a lot clearer for the public," she says. "It's an enhanced level of civic engagement, increased transparency, and improved accessibility.

"We want to make sure any individuals who can't attend our 8 p.m. meetings have access to it in a variety of forums, and we want the online interface to be simple, easy, and intuitive."

