



eSCRIBE Meeting Management Platform Saves Time and Lowers Stress for City of Greensboro

The Client
The City of Greensboro, North Carolina

- City of Greensboro turned to eSCRIBE to overcome software issues and poor customer service from previous legislative management solution vendor
- Staff pleasantly surprised by smooth transition process facilitated by eSCRIBE
- The switch to eSCRIBE saved time and money while streamlining processes and reducing stress

The Challenge

With a history of forward-thinking innovation and diverse population of nearly 300,000 people, the City of Greensboro, North Carolina has a mission of shaping an inclusive future for equitable economic opportunity and sustainable, safe neighborhoods through resident-focused services and programs.

The Greensboro City Clerk's Office oversees more than fifty council and committee meetings yearly. The team had used legislative management software for their meetings and agendas for roughly seven years, but were frustrated by product issues and declining customer service from its vendor.

"We would submit support tickets but not receive any feedback, even for time-sensitive issues," said Tebony Rosa, Deputy City Clerk at the City of Greensboro. "We once had a meeting in progress where everything crashed, but we couldn't reach customer service. I also sometimes spent entire mornings correcting typos in agenda items, rearranging them and reformatting them, only to have all my changes lost because of software problems."

"Our own staff seemed to know more about the product than our vendor," said Angela Lord, Greensboro's City Clerk. "Every time we called to follow up on an issue we would get a different support rep, and had to repeat the same background info and problem description over and over."

The Solution

In addition to better reliability and customer service, the City also wanted usability improvements and new capabilities in its next meeting management solution.

"We wanted a solution that would streamline our processes rather than hinder them," explained Lord. "With our previous vendor, it took multiple steps just to publish an agenda, and it was painful if we then needed to make a correction."

"Our previous solution's interface was antiquated and difficult to use," added Rosa. "We wanted something a lot more user friendly for both Clerks and council members."

The Greensboro team also wanted the option for council members to participate remotely when they could not be in the chambers – a capability that would prove unexpectedly crucial during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lord met an eSCRIBE representative at an IIMC conference in 2020. While she found the eSCRIBE meeting management solution ideal for the City's needs, it was the customer experience that impressed her the most. "The constant communication and personal attention were what sold me," she recalled. "It was clear that they really cared. That level of customer service did not go away after the sale either. It has continued throughout our eSCRIBE experience, from implementation to after we went live."

The Transition

With Greensboro's significant financial and time investment in the previous vendor's solution over the years, Lord worked hard to get buy-in from the City Manager, staff, and elected officials for the change. eSCRIBE assisted during this process, even creating a short, customized video for her to share with stakeholders.

The City signed its contract with eSCRIBE in December 2020, augmenting the core Meeting Manager platform and Report Manager with optional modules including Internet Publishing, Webcasting Plus, Vote Manager & Request to Speak, Public Comments, Approval Manager, and the Meetings Pro mobile app.

The project to deploy the eSCRIBE solution and migrate the data from Greensboro's earlier system kicked off in January 2021. The City's IT team were key contributors, but Lord, Rosa, and Assistant City Clerk Torie Howell were 'hands-on' throughout the transition – the ease of which vastly surpassed their expectations.

"I was pleasantly shocked at how smoothly and calm the transition went," said Lord. "I had warned my family that I would be swamped and around less for a few months, but it didn't turn out that way. eSCRIBE walked us through the process and helped us look at it in small chunks so it wasn't overwhelming. It was a very even-paced and educational experience."

The Results

The City conducted its first live council meeting with eSCRIBE on July 13, 2021. eSCRIBE is also used to manage work sessions during the City's busy election cycle, and 21 City departments now use eSCRIBE to create items. "eSCRIBE lets us put the responsibility for agenda items back in the laps of the

departments, where it belongs," said Lord. "We spend less time chasing down last-minute contributions."

Rosa highlighted that the switch to eSCRIBE will deliver ongoing cost savings compared to the City's previous vendor, and praised the eSCRIBE software's ease of use. "With eSCRIBE it's easy to edit agenda items and re-organize them with simple drag-and-drop," she said. "I also like that we can re-order or remove items very easily without needing to republish the document. And being able to pre-populate minutes during the meeting saves us time finalizing them afterwards."

"It's always good to stay on top of the latest technology with new ways to make the City of Greensboro government more transparent. I believe a city and its staff should be open to learning new technology and ways to streamline what they are doing in their respective governmental entities. The eSCRIBE platform is easy to use and helps simplify managing our council meetings and work sessions, while improving our meeting processes by presenting information in a much more reader-friendly way."

Marikay Abuzuaiter, At-Large Councilwoman, Greensboro

The eSCRIBE Meetings Pro mobile app has proven popular with council members. "We brought everyone in for training on the app, and within minutes several of them were excitedly exploring how they could use it more," said Lord. "Our first live meeting with eSCRIBE was in-chamber, and we used the electronic voting and request-to-speak tools. Three meetings later, we were forced back to fully virtual through Zoom but continued using the app."

"eSCRIBE lowers our stress and frees up our time to do other things we need to do," concluded Rosa. "It has been a breath of fresh air."

Get in Touch for more Information

eSCRIBE understands every organization is different. Get in touch for a free-of-charge ROI assessment to help quantify the specific benefits your organization can gain.

