



# Town of Yountville

6550 Yount Street  
Yountville, CA 94599

## Staff Report

**Agenda Item #:** {{section.number}}B

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## Yountville Town Council Staff Report

**DATE:** September 21, 2021

**TO:** Mayor and Town Council

**FROM:** Steve Rogers, Town Manager, Michelle Dahme, Town Clerk, and  
Eddy Gomez, Deputy Town Clerk

**PREPARED BY:** Steve Rogers, Town Manager, Michelle Dahme, Town Clerk, and  
Eddy Gomez, Deputy Town Clerk

**SUBJECT:**

Discussion and possible direction regarding the potential to allow phone-in public comments during Town Council meetings and review of current staffing allocation.

### DISCUSSION/BACKGROUND

At the Town Council meeting held July 20, 2021, the Council unanimously adopted Resolution Number 21-4066 changing the Council meeting regular start time to 3:00 p.m. and implemented the process of accepting emails up until a vote is taken on an agenda item. As part of the discussion, Vice Mayor Dorman requested staff research allowing phone-in public comment during Council meetings for discussion at a future meeting.

### Napa County Municipalities and Current Meeting Process

Staff contacted each municipality within Napa County as well as Napa County to gather information regarding their meeting process and staffing structure and if they utilize phone-in public comment during their meetings. The status of each municipality at the time of this staff report preparation is shown below.

City/County	Meeting Type* (In-Person, Zoom or Hybrid)	Phone-In Public Comment
American Canyon	Zoom Only*	No
Napa	In-Person Only	No
Yountville	Zoom Only	No
St. Helena	Zoom Only*	No
Calistoga	Zoom Only*	No
Napa County	In-Person Zoom – Listen Only	Yes

\* Members of the public participate via Zoom (voice only) and raise their Zoom hand to speak. Staff monitoring Zoom unmutes the person and they provide their public comment.

### Staffing for City/County Allowing Phone-in Public Comment

When the City of Napa was using the teleconference option to conduct Council meetings, phone-in public comment was an option and required two (2) members of staff to monitor the phones in addition to the City Clerk. When monitoring phones and emails, four (4) members of City staff were needed to monitor both.

The County of Napa Board of Supervisors accepts phone-in public comment to a dedicated line and utilizes two (2) to three (3) staff to monitor their Cisco phone system which includes a call attendant feature, allows calls to be parked/stacked and then the Clerk releases individual calls and places receiver near microphone so public comment can be heard. Callers are not required to register prior to phoning in. Calls ring back in the office until call attendant parks the calls.

Due to the recent increase in the COVID-19 Delta variant cases, several municipalities are in a “wait-and-see” position and at this time it is unclear if in-person meetings will resume; and if they do, will a hybrid solution be provided. City of Napa and County of Napa are an exception as they are both holding in-person meetings.

### Equipment Needs for Phone-In Public Comment

Staff contacted Source One, who provides phone service to the Town, to determine if the current configuration in Council Chambers could accommodate a phone line and phone, and Source One determined that it was possible to utilize the current phone line jack in the floor for this purpose. There would be minor costs associated with the line, phone, and installation at the Clerk’s location. Source One would provide the line and phone and Town Public Works would need to provide any modifications to the Clerk’s location as well as any safety needs to prevent tripping hazards of the phone line which is currently located near the podium when set up for Council meetings.

Additional staffing would be needed to allow phone-in public comment and the process of how calls would be handled needs to be evaluated to determine if staff is in Council Chambers and either receives or calls out or if it’s possible for staff to be stationed in Town Hall offices to accept calls and transfer to Clerk’s phone in Council Chambers. In addition, staffing would need to be available to assist with reading emails into the record with the new policy allowing emails up until Council takes a vote on an agenda item. Additional information is provided below regarding equipment and staffing needs to provide Zoom hybrid meetings.

### Equipment and Staffing Needs for Hybrid Meeting

Currently, no city in Napa County nor the county provide a hybrid system (both in person and Zoom) for their meetings. However, the NVTA held a Board retreat September 13<sup>th</sup> using a hybrid format, and staff reached out to learn more about the logistics associated with conducting the hybrid meeting. NVTA staff shared that it was important to have an AV Technician at the meeting to help manage the audio and commented the back end of technology could be challenging for non-tech staff. NVTA has been using three staff members for Zoom meetings with one to run the meeting, one to run the Zoom screenshare and one to manage the Zoom request to speak feature. NVTA staff anticipates using a Zoom hybrid meeting structure when in-person meetings resume and like other municipalities is waiting to see if the Governor’s Executive Order is extended beyond September 30, 2021.

Staff researched the equipment needed to conduct a hybrid meeting which include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Reliable high-speed internet connection
- A laptop computer
- External wide-angle camera with built-in noise cancelling microphone
- A tripod to have the camera at eye level that can easily pan the camera when needed
- 10-foot USB extension cord
- A TV monitor or projector at location that can connect to the laptop for the present audience to see the person providing public comment

- An external speaker that is loud enough for the live room to hear audio playing over the laptop
- A staff member that can serve as the Zoom technician at the meeting who is familiar with Zoom host controls to monitor participants, renaming participants, muting when necessary, handling raising hands, toggling between gallery view and speaker view, among other things

Council Chamber's space needs would need to be evaluated before purchasing any new equipment. Provided there is enough space for equipment, multiple practice tests would need to be done prior to implementation of a hybrid meeting to make sure the Town can run a successful Town Council hybrid live and virtual meeting using Zoom. Staff has reached out to Napa TV (the Town's contract Audio/Visual Team) for more information on running a Zoom hybrid meeting and staff will provide an update during the Council meeting.






Another question to consider is would there be a community expectation that the hybrid meeting format also be utilized by the Zoning & Design Review Board (ZDRB) and the Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission (PRAC) meetings?

Additional staff time and research would be required to obtain a cost estimate for the equipment and installation needed for a hybrid meeting.

### Current Public Comment Options

The Town of Yountville currently provides several options for members of the public to communicate with the Town Council. These options include the following:

- The [publiccomment@yville.com](mailto:publiccomment@yville.com) email which is accepted up to the time Council takes action on each agenda item;
- The public comment bubble provided on the Town's website by clicking on the [Meetings and Agendas button](#) and selecting the particular Agenda the public would like to comment on. Below is an example of the upcoming Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission Meeting with the public comment bubble appearing in the Options column;

Current And Upcoming Meetings				
View All Boards And Commissions				
Meeting Title	Date/Time	Documents	Options	
Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission Meeting	Sep 16, 2021 06:00 PM	 HTML Agenda  Agenda	 	

- General email to each Council Member; and
- Correspondence via USPS or hand delivery to Town Hall.

### Town Clerk Department Current Staffing and Long-Term Operating Structure

Researching the phone-in public comment option led staff to evaluate the current staffing allocation and the long-term operating structure of the Town Clerk/Records Management Department.

Currently, the Town Clerk's Department has one (1) full-time employee, one (1) Interim Deputy Town Clerk in-training which will end on December 17<sup>th</sup> when the Town Clerk anticipates retiring, and one (1) part-time Records Coordinator (position has a maximum of 960-hours) which has been vacant for approximately one year.

The Town has been recruiting for the part-time Records Coordinator since mid-July and has received only two applications. One applicant accepted another position with benefits and the other did not have the applicable skills necessary for the position.

## Staffing Allocation and Operating Structure of Other City Clerk Departments

In addition to contacting the City Clerk Departments within Napa County, staff contacted City Clerk Departments in the following neighboring jurisdictions to learn more about their operating structures: City of Sonoma, City of Cotati, City of Healdsburg, and Town of Windsor. Details are provided below.

Town/City/County	Town/City Clerk Department Staffing Allocation	Total Number of Positions in Town/City Clerk Department	Number of Employees Town/City/Countywide
American Canyon	City Clerk Deputy City Clerk	2	67
Napa	City Clerk (PIO) Deputy City Clerk Records Analyst Office Assistant II Imaging Clerk	5	500 +/-
Yountville	Town Clerk/Records Manager Deputy Town Clerk/Management Analyst* Part-time Records Coordinator (Vacant) <i>*Position Ends 12/17/2021</i>	1.5 <i>(2.5 Until Deputy Position Ends 12/17/2021)</i>	31
St. Helena	City Clerk(PIO) Administrative Records Assistant	2	70
Calistoga	City Clerk	1	113
Napa County	Administrative Manager/Clerk of the Board Deputy Clerk of the Board Board Clerk I Board Clerk II Extra Help – Admin Support Technician	5	1,300
Sonoma	City Clerk Deputy City Clerk/Records Manager	2	35
Cotati	City Clerk Deputy City Clerk	2	41
Healdsburg	City Clerk Deputy City Clerk	2	120 +/-
Windsor	Town Clerk Deputy Town Clerk Senior Administrative Assistant	3	113

For the City's and Town's above, a majority have a minimum staffing of two (2) full-time positions in the Clerk's Department.

As the Town Council knows, the Town is experiencing several retirements in key Town positions and with those retirements a significant loss of invaluable, institutional knowledge about the Town's operations. The Town has been very fortunate to have a Town Manager and Management Team that has worked successfully together for 7 to 15 years. Having this level of longevity in staff has enabled the Town to provide a high-level of service to the community and has provided continuity in how the Town operates.

The Town Clerk/Records Management Department is undergoing a significant transition due to the upcoming retirement of the long-time Town Clerk/Records Manager (over 15 years), and this is a good opportunity to evaluate the staffing needs and a succession planning strategy to meet the long-term goals of the Department. The Department consisted of one-person up until July 2018 when the Town Council approved a part-time Records Coordinator position (maximum of 960-hours).

Prior to approval of the part-time Records Coordinator position, some members of Council may recall when Kaizen Infosource, Records Management Consultant, gave a presentation during a Town Council Meeting and was asked by Council how many employees are realistically needed for the records management program, and Kaizen's response was a minimum of two (2).

The Town was fortunate when they hired a part-time Records Coordinator who worked for the Town from October 2018 to September 2020. The Records Coordinator had a very unique skill set which was instrumental in launching the Town's electronic records repository and helping to develop the Town's Document Library (public portal) now available on the Town's webpage. When the Records Coordinator left employment with the Town for extended travelling, he recommended the Town hire a full-time person for his position in order for the new electronic records management program to be successful.

The Records Coordinator position has been vacant since September 2020 and since that time slow progress has been made with the Town's Records and Information Management (RIM) Program.

Areas of the RIM Program that could use additional staff support include, but are not limited to the following:

- Final indexing of records scanned into Laserfiche which are currently in a staging area
- In conjunction with Department experts, develop a common naming nomenclature for consistency when naming Town records for final indexing
- Reviewing and preparing additional records for scanning
- Adding more records to the Town's Document Library (Public Portal) webpage
- When indexing, review how the templates and metadata fields are functioning and make adjustments, as needed.
- Dedicated person focused on how Laserfiche and all of its features work in order to share with Departments
- Establishing a working group comprised of a records person identified from each department to strategize on maximizing the use of the Laserfiche system
- Developing workflows to support automation of routine processes (paperless)

The Town Council has made a significant investment in modernizing the Town's Records and Information Program (RIM) including a modernized Records Destruction Schedule and providing a public portal to access Town records in support of their commitment to transparency. With that said, the Town Clerk/Records Manager Department's operational effectiveness would benefit significantly from having a full-time Deputy Town Clerk to be the dedicated back-up support to the Town Clerk/Records Manager for agendas, meetings, minutes, and elections, with a core focus on Records and Information Management. The current staffing structure does not provide the depth the department needs to provide continuity of business operations as was experienced in 2015 when the Town Clerk was out for an extended period due to illness. The Town had to hire an interim retired clerk to perform the core functions of the Town Clerk while utilizing the Human Resources Manager to Clerk Council Meetings. With the recent advancement of technology in the Town Clerk's Department and the increased responsibility of the Human Resource Manager, this position is unable to perform the full spectrum of duties of the Town Clerk position.

The Town Clerk Department has been very fortunate to have a Town Manager and Town Council who are very supportive of advancing the Town's use of technology. The Town Clerk has been able to implement numerous technological improvements over the years which include two different paperless Agenda Management Systems, web-streaming of Council meetings and other Town meetings, on-line applications for Boards and Commissions, on-line filing of Statements of Economic Interests, DocuSign, on-line Municipal Code, Master Fee Schedule, and numerous upgrades to equipment in Council Chambers to broadcast Council Meetings using dedicated PEG funds. The continued effective and efficient operations of the Town Clerk Department at the current service level will be difficult to sustain at the current staffing level.

It is also expected that when the current Town Clerk/Records Manager retires this position will assume or continue with a variety of the PIO functions in terms of media releases and social media postings, website maintenance, and other special projects previously provided by the Management Fellow position.

The Town Clerk Department has benefited from a 35% allocation of time from the Management Fellow position not including the PIO functions. This time allocation is no longer available as the Management Fellow has transitioned to the Interim Deputy Town Clerk.

Staff is requesting feedback and direction for the following:

1. Based on the information provided above in response to Council request, please provide feedback and direction regarding interest to implement phone-in public comment.
2. Based on the information provided above staff is requesting direction from the Town Council regarding the analysis and staffing impacts to the Town Clerk/Records Management Department outlined above. If there is Town Council support to consider the conversion of the part-time Records Coordinator to a full-time Deputy Town Clerk/Records Coordinator, this position could be put in place with a mid-year budget adjustment or be added during the next fiscal year budget process.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

Not Applicable

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Is there a Fiscal Impact? Yes

Is it Currently Budgeted? No

Where is it Budgeted? N/A

Is it Mandatory or Discretionary? Discretionary

Is there a Staff Resource Impact? Yes

### **STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL**

Is item Identified in Strategic Plan? Indirectly

If yes, Identify Strategic Goal and Objective. **Exceptional Town Services and Staff:** The Town supports its talented staff who deliver high quality municipal programs and services while maintaining public infrastructure for the benefit of the community.

Briefly Explain Relationship to Strategic Plan Goal and Objective. The Town prides itself on providing high-quality municipal programs and services and in order to maintain that high level of service. With the upcoming retirement of the Town Clerk, it is important to consider the conversion of the part-time Records Coordinator to a full-time Deputy Town Clerk/Records Coordinator in order to provide back-up and support to the Town Clerk, Records and Management Information Program as well as Social Media outreach.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Receive staff report and direct questions to staff.

Receive public comment.

Conduct Council discussion and provide direction regarding the potential to allow phone-in public comments during Town Council meetings and to consider conversion of the part-time Records Coordinator position to a full-time Deputy Town Clerk/Records Coordinator.