

September 2, 2021 (Agenda)

Local Agency Formation Commission
105 East Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara CA 93101

Review and Discuss the Proposed Paperless Agenda Packet Program

Dear Members of the Commission

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Commission review and discuss the paperless Agenda report.

DISCUSSION

A paperless Agenda process can reduce costs for Agenda review, reproduction and mailing, while providing a common platform for Santa Barbara LAFCO. Over a four-year cycle it is estimated that LAFCO will save approximately \$55,000 in printing, mailing, and staff costs. Some of the key objectives in adapting to a paperless Agenda system include:

- Allow Commissioners to easily navigate the Agenda with minimal steps to open documents and different agenda items.
- Ensure that Commissioners have their own 'instance' of the agenda that they can easily markup, highlight and bookmark in a similar way they did on the paper Agenda.
- Create a simple and secure way to deliver the Agenda to a viewing device.
- Provide a simple user interface, suitable for users with varying levels of tech competency and that is resistant to user mistakes and viruses.
- Allow for quick Agenda document publishing and changes/updates.
- Provide a system that does not introduce significant new security concerns to agency networks.
- Provides a common portable platform that is compatible across multiple agencies.

First, the Agenda itself would be a PDF (portable document format) document, and second, the Agenda will be viewed on electronic device.

Currently, Agendas are assembled and 15 photocopies of each item are mailed directly to Commissioners, Counsel, and interested parties. This process takes a large portion of the Clerk's billable time and postage budget. The Commission generally meets 11 times per year. For each meeting, the Clerk coordinates the compilation of 15 agenda packets that include the staff report and supporting documentation for each item on the agenda. The agenda packet for a LAFCO meeting typically ranges from 50 pages to 1200 pages, with a recent high of 682 pages on May 6, 2021. The total number of sheets of paper used for the 15 agenda packets for the May 6, 2021 meeting was 10,230. For half of a calendar year in 2021, paper agenda packets consumed approximately 39,570 pieces of paper. Over a 4-year cycle that would equal 316,560 pieces of paper.

LAFCO contracts with the County Clerk of the Board to assemble and print the agenda packets for each meeting. LAFCO spends approximately \$13,860.00 annually to print the agenda packet. This is a high cost for a single-use paper product.

In order to reduce costs and paper usage, while increasing efficiency and portability, many municipalities throughout the state have implemented paperless agenda packets. Staff has consulted with several other agencies to inquire about usability, integration with current business processes, security, Brown Act compliance, and general best practices. From this research and extensive planning, staff developed the framework of a paperless agenda packet program for implementation as soon as possible.

BACKGROUND

With advances in technology, the continued use of paper agenda packets has become a more expensive and less efficient means of production. Tablet devices offer excellent readability and include annotation software that allows for editing and markup of the electronic document. The prices for tablet devices are dropping and the usability and functionality are at a very high level. These devices have been successfully implemented in several agencies. Legislative bodies have been able to integrate the devices into their duties without significant disruption and in accordance with the Brown Act and transparent government practices. The staff reports and supporting documents in the agenda packet are currently available to the public in electronic format on LAFCO's website. The tablet device will replace the paper agenda packet that is produced for Commissioners and designated staff. Paper agenda packets will continue to be available to the public in the Clerk's office and the standard posting places as is the current practice. The Program could include training for Commissioners and staff. The Clerk or Executive Officer will provide assistance with the use of the tablet and annotation software.

Attachments

Attachment A – Paperless Agenda Packet Program Summary

Please contact the LAFCO office if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M. Prater".

Mike Prater
Executive Officer

Paperless Agenda Packets Program

Device

The program can be initiated with the Apple iPad or Android tablet device. Both devices are easy to use, popular among legislative bodies and the most common tablet device used for this purpose. The annotation software for the devices is easy to use and available for PC/Android/iPad devices.

General Policies

1. The intended uses of the device are: 1) electronic agenda packet, 2) receiving and sending e-mail, 3) camera, 4) internet access.
2. Upon full implementation, the Clerk will cease to print Agenda Packets in hard copy (except for the public binder packet and the Library packet, etc.).
3. The Clerk's Office will serve as the primary staff support for the general use of the device and the annotation software. The Executive Officer can assist when needed.
4. County Department of Information Technology will manage the wireless network allowing for device connectivity.
5. Commissioners and staff can either pay for their own device kit or LAFCO could purchase and supply the device (iPad, case, stylus, annotation app).
6. Any replacement or upgrade will be paid from the user. The replacement schedule for the device and peripherals is 4 years.
7. An extensive training component will be implemented to assist staff and officials with the use of the device prior to the phase out of the paper packet.
8. This program does not prohibit users from printing hard copies of certain agenda reports or packet materials at their own expense for use at the meetings.

Legal and Regulatory Policies

1. Currently, all Commissioner and staff devices used for official business that include phone and e-mail functions are subject to the same rules that currently apply with regards to the Brown Act would apply equally to the tablet device.
2. Safeguards will be in place for security of the wireless access and security of the device. The tablets are wireless devices that require over the air access to download the agenda packets.

3. The tablet will either be a personal-owned device or LAFCO issued. The device, Internet and e-mail access provided are tools to assist LAFCO business.
4. All data and electronic communications stored on the device may be subject to the Public Records Act.

Tablet Allocation

The initial purchase of the tablet devices will be allocated in same manner as the printed agenda packet.

Commissioners (11)

Counsel (1)

Staff (2)

Cost Estimates

Item	Quantity	Cost	Cost Type
iPad	14	\$4,550	4-year cycle
Android	14	\$3,710	4-year cycle
	Total	\$4,550 maximum	

iPad 10.2" 32GB 8th Gen @ \$325 ea

Galaxy Tab7 10.4" 64GB w/64GB MicroSD @ \$265 ea

Estimated 4-Year Cost for Paper Packets:

\$55,440 +\-

Estimated Savings: \$50,000 +\-