

Grimes County, TX: from a backlog of minutes to finished the next day

After a budget season of weekly Commissioners Court meetings, the County Clerk's office cleared its backlog of minutes and now has them ready the day after each meeting.



Grimes County
Texas

Population

34,252

Product

Govably AI Minutes

Location

Grimes County, Texas

Department

**County Clerk's
Office**

Keys to project

Clearing a backlog of minutes, accurate motions and votes, a team that listens and makes changes

The challenge

Writing minutes from the video took days per meeting, and weekly budget meetings added to the pile faster than anyone could write them

The solution

Govably writes the first draft of the minutes, and the clerk proofreads and publishes them

The result

The backlog cleared, and minutes ready the day after a meeting

OVERVIEW

A county clerk cleared her backlog of minutes and got her time back

Grimes County, Texas has about 34,000 residents, and the County Clerk's office writes the minutes for Commissioners Court. Barbara Kimich served as chief deputy before becoming County Clerk.

Budget season brought a Commissioners Court meeting every week, and the minutes piled up faster than anyone could write them by hand. With Govably, Barbara cleared the backlog, and her most recent minutes were finished the day after the meeting.

"Minutes are actually fun now. I open Govably and let it rip."

Barbara Kimich

County Clerk, Grimes County, Texas

"I come in every morning knowing I don't have to worry about minutes. That is more than a great feeling."

Barbara Kimich, County Clerk, on what changed once the backlog was cleared

CHALLENGE

Writing minutes by hand took days, and budget season added a meeting every week

Before Govably, Barbara recorded motions and votes in CivicPlus during the meeting. Afterward she went back to the video and listened from start to finish, condensing what was said without losing anything that belonged in the record. Working on minutes at home meant two computers, one for CivicPlus and one for the video.

“I would listen to the video, type what I remembered, then rewind and listen again. Some meetings took me a full week to finish.”

Barbara Kimich

County Clerk, Grimes County, Texas

A meeting with a big agenda could take as much as 32 hours of work, fitted in around everything else a County Clerk’s office handles. Barbara worked on minutes at the office, came in on weekends, and took her laptop home.

Commissioners Court normally meets twice a month. In budget season it met every Wednesday, starting in mid-July, and each of those meetings needed its own set of minutes.

“By the time I was close to finishing one set of minutes, we had already held the next meeting.”

Barbara Kimich

County Clerk, Grimes County, Texas

SOLUTION

The minutes are written before she sits down, and her job is to check them

Govably writes the first draft of the minutes, including the motions and votes on a long agenda. Barbara reviews it, makes any corrections, and publishes. The meetings that took the most time before became some of the fastest.

“The budget hearings, with every dollar figure and every department presenting, took me two or three days just to capture the highlights. Govably had them done in fifteen minutes.”

Barbara Kimich

County Clerk, Grimes County, Texas

“I love watching Govably write the minutes. Then I proofread them and check the video once or twice to be sure.”

Barbara Kimich

County Clerk, Grimes County, Texas

A team that listens and makes changes

Barbara works directly with Ruth Rivard, Govably’s client success manager, who wrote meeting minutes herself when she worked in local government. Barbara has sent a steady stream of questions and suggestions, and the changes she asked for have been incorporated into the product. Most were small details, and in minutes the small details are what matter.

“It is rare to find a vendor that responds the way Govably does. Every email gets an answer right away, and when something wasn’t working, they made changes to fix it. It has been a breath of fresh air to work with people who actually listen.”

Barbara Kimich

County Clerk, Grimes County, Texas

“Every part of the country does things a little differently. Govably made the software work the way our office needs it to, and that has been a huge help.”

Barbara Kimich

County Clerk, Grimes County, Texas

“Ruth has celebrated every step with me. She was just as happy as I was the day I told her we were caught up.”

Barbara Kimich

County Clerk, Grimes County, Texas

RESULTS

The backlog is cleared, and minutes are finished the next day

By the end of September, the backlog was cleared. At her most recent Commissioners Court meeting, the minutes were finished the next morning, and the only thing that held up publishing was waiting for signed attachments.

“Our meeting was on a Wednesday morning, and the minutes were ready by Thursday morning. The only thing I was waiting on was the attachments.”

Barbara Kimich

County Clerk, Grimes County, Texas

The hours she used to spend replaying video now go to the rest of the office, including the reporting the county sends to the state.

“Now I can focus on the work that needs my attention, like our reporting to the Office of Court Administration. And I don’t take minutes home anymore.”

Barbara Kimich

County Clerk, Grimes County, Texas

WHAT COMES NEXT

Her advice for the clerks taking office in January

A number of Texas counties will seat new clerks in January. Barbara’s advice to any of them, and to any office with a stack of minutes waiting, is simple.

“If another clerk is buried under a backlog of minutes the way I was, they need to talk to Govably. Minutes are part of the job, but they shouldn’t consume your whole week.”

Barbara Kimich

County Clerk, Grimes County, Texas



See it on one of your own meetings

Send us a recent agenda and recording. We will build your minutes in Govably and walk you through the result on a 20-minute call. No cost, no commitment.

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