

# COUNTY OF YORK

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** June 6, 2025

**TO:** York County Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Mark L. Bellamy, Jr., County Administrator 

**SUBJECT:** Modernizing County Communications for Broader Reach and Greater Engagement

A fundamental role of local government is to foster open, effective communication with the community it serves. Over the years, York County has taken pride in building a strong foundation of outreach through a variety of channels—including social media, online streaming, *Citizen News*, printed materials, and dedicated government television stations. As communication technology continues to advance and resident preferences shift, this is an opportune moment to enhance and modernize how we connect with our citizens.

In recent months, York County introduced two dynamic tools to strengthen community feedback: FlashVote, a rapid, statistically valid polling platform that delivers timely insights, and Polco, a comprehensive survey system that benchmarks our data against peer localities nationwide. These platforms are already helping us better understand what matters most to our residents.

To build on this progress, we conducted a FlashVote survey asking citizens, “In the last 12 months, which of the following, if any, have you used to obtain information about York County government activities, programs, or services?” The responses highlighted a key opportunity: our government-access television channels—which require the highest production investment—were among the least utilized. When asked how they would *prefer* to receive information, television again ranked lowest among non-mandatory options.

Currently, the County operates three television channels—through Cox, Verizon, and soon, Shentel—dedicated to government meetings, school programming, and job postings. These channels are only accessible within York County, require specific viewing times or DVR scheduling, and are unavailable to residents who are traveling or living part-time elsewhere. In contrast, today's digital platforms offer far greater flexibility, allowing residents to watch content on-demand, on any device, from anywhere.

With this in mind—and inspired by the success of the York County School Board's livestreaming efforts on Facebook—County staff recommends a strategic shift away from traditional television broadcasting. In coordination with YCSD and our cable providers, we propose discontinuing the three County-operated channels and transitioning to YouTube and other widely used online platforms for livestreaming Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission meetings.

In addition to live meetings, this new platform will also host our County video news segments, feature stories, community updates, and more—providing a centralized, easy-

to-access location where residents can stay informed about what's happening in York County anytime, anywhere.

To support this change, the Public Affairs Department will develop easy-to-follow instruction for accessing content on YouTube via smart TVs, mobile devices, computers, and the County's website. We will also offer hands-on training sessions for anyone who would like additional assistance navigating the new system.

The transition to this updated platform will begin on July 1, 2025, with full implementation across the County expected by October 31, 2025.

This evolution in our communication strategy is more than a technological update—it represents a commitment to greater transparency, accessibility, and citizen engagement. By reallocating resources toward more impactful and inclusive tools, we can continue to enhance the way we inform, involve, and serve the people of York County.

We look forward to this exciting next chapter in how we connect with our community.

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