

Councilmember Eric Ziedrich is supportive of the new service as well. "I think that OpenGov can and should be a tremendous tool for our community, as I think that a most-informed public is essential to good governance," he said.

"Too often we see the public responding to issues based upon emotions or limited information. I am hopeful that a growing segment of our community will appreciate the value of OpenGov, take the time to fully research and analyze important issues, and then begin the process of swaying public opinion. On the City Council, we often find ourselves dealing with issues that unfortunately only arise because of misinformation, limited information or rumor."

According to Ziedrich, financial transparency is critical. "We're dealing with the public's money," he said. "We are supposed to represent their interests. Their feedback is of no value if they don't fully understand all aspects of the city's sources and uses of funds ... those that have taken advantage of the resource have been quite impressed with the breadth and depth of the available information."

Jim Brush, a Healdsburg CPA and Board President of the Healdsburg Museum & Historical Society, has not visited OpenGov but agrees with the concept and thinks it will make research easier. "I think it's a great idea," he said. "It's public information to begin with, and the times that I have gone to go ask for information, I prefer not to bother somebody. It's inconvenience, time and effort to get information."

Anyone who has questions or comments about OpenGov can contact Garcia at egarcia@ci.healdsburg.ca.us.