Policy regarding cost of public record requests

As of January 2021, there is no written policy directing staff as to what they should bill for public records requests that are filled. There is however, an "unwritten policy" that is can be followed.

This unwritten policy was first brought up at the November 2020 Council Meeting.

From the minutes of that meeting:
> **G. Discussion Regarding Public Records Requests**
>
> This item was heard at 8:06 p.m. Vice Mayor Pete Bacheler asked the Village Attorney if there was a way to limit public records requests due to the amount of staff time involved.
>
> The Village Attorney stated information could be provided to him.
>
> The Village Clerk stated since she has held the position, staff has been generous with their time by not charging the public for the first hour of staff time spent fulfilling a records request. She noted this was not the normal practice with most cities as most cities began charging after the first 20 or 30 minutes. She offered to pose the question to other municipal clerks. She stated that cost recovery for staff time may be a mechanism for addressing the issue.
>
> Vice Mayor Bacheler opined that the cost recovery may be a way of addressing the volume of requests.

During calendar year 2020, the Village Clerk's Office processed 710 public records requests.

At the January 14, 2021, the Village Clerk made a recommendation to Council to:

> Direct staff to **immediately** begin applying a fee for records requests that exceed 30 minutes of staff time and to bill that time in fifteen-minute increments. Council was told that a resolution regarding this policy would be presented at a future Council meeting.

The rate for Fiscal Year 20-21 is $26.44/hour.

According to the staff report **most** records requests do not require a significant amount of time to fulfill. However, over the past year the Village Clerk's Office has seen an increase in voluminous records requests.

Budget Impact:
The budget impact is favorable as revenue generated from extensive records requests provides a mechanism for cost recovery associated with staff labor costs required to fulfill the requests.