



Delaware Municipal Clerks Association

DELAWARE MUNICIPAL CLERKS ASSOCIATION
QUARTERLY BUSINESS MEETING
THURSDAY OCTOBER 02, 2025
VIRTUAL

IN ATTENDANCE:

MEMBERS

Stephanie Coulbourne, Town of Milton*
Katrina White, City of Milford*
Linda Sommermann, Town of Elsmere*
Ashley Walls, City of Dover*
Tracy Torbert, Sussex County

Shelley Lambden, Town of Bridgeville
Christine Letterman, Town of Clayton
Kim Layton, Town of Delmar
Andria Bennett, City of Dover

*Officer

CALL TO ORDER

Katrina called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

APPROVAL OF THE TREASURER'S REPORT: August 31, 2025

Ashley Walls moved to approve the Treasurer's Report dated August 31, 2025. The motion was seconded by Christine Letterman and unanimously carried.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: June 26, 2025

Ashley Walls stated that the meeting minutes from June 26, 2025, would be provided at the December meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Audit

Kim reported that all records for 2024 were reviewed. She stated that everything appeared to be well accounted for and properly approved by vote. The review concluded with no recommendations. She noted that the accounts reflected a strong ending balance, which she was pleased with, particularly considering the expenses associated with the conference. She confirmed that there were no findings, issues, or discrepancies identified during the review, and again emphasized that no recommendations were necessary for the past year.

Tracy Torbert moved to approve the audit. The motion was seconded by Ashley Walls and unanimously carried.

b. Clerk of the Year

Ashley reported that she contacted Nick Smith after not receiving any information from the League. She thanked Tracy for double-checking with her. She stated that the League is currently seeking a new director, which resulted in some items falling through the cracks. Nick Smith was unaware of the Clerk of the Year or Town Manager of the Year programs. These awards will now be presented on January 22, and she will distribute the necessary documentation and information.

Tracy explained that in previous years, as chair, she had distributed the applications to clerks, to SCAT via Kayla, and to the League through Kevin. She noted that these have traditionally been the three distribution channels used.

Christine acknowledged that the group needed to revisit the process.

President Coulbourn expressed concern that SCAT or Kevin may not have distributed the information consistently.

Tracy responded that Kevin did send it out last year and received responses directly, which had raised some confusion because DMCA typically handles the process. She also believed Kayla distributed it as well. She concluded by noting that distribution is only effective if recipients pay attention to the emails, which is outside of the committee's control.

c. Education

Ashley reported that she is developing ideas for activities at the in-person meetings and is reviewing what other associations offer. She noted that the New England association provides many on-demand online classes, which she has taken and found to be beneficial, though lengthy. She has no further updates currently.

d. Nominating

Kim reported that no work has been completed yet by the Nominating Committee and apologized for the delay. She stated that the committee will meet so she can present information at the next meeting.

e. Scholarship

Tracy reported that Sarah Cahall from the Town of Cheswold received a scholarship to attend clerk classes, which are currently underway. Once completed, she will submit proof of completion and receipts for reimbursement. Tracy also noted that the scholarship application deadline for conference reimbursement, up to \$1,000 for Region II or International, is October 17. She will send a reminder to members in the future.

f. Web Development

Ashley reported that she is updating several pages on the website and working to increase information shared on social media, including newsletter content. She invited members to share any ideas they may have.

Linda noted that Ashley developed the contact list idea due to ongoing issues with outdated email lists being used, resulting in individuals who were no longer members receiving communications. Linda stated that having members access information directly from the website should significantly reduce these problems.

Kim added that some individuals had complained about receiving emails despite no longer being part of the organization.

Linda confirmed that membership status is included and explained that it is helpful given recent confusion surrounding membership payments. She referenced the IIMC model, which uses a fiscal-year approach and sends members confirmation of the year covered by their dues and their membership expiration date.

Tracy clarified that the organization currently operates on a calendar-year membership cycle because members' fiscal years differ.

Linda noted that confusion has arisen when individuals pay late in the year and incorrectly assume their payment applies to the following year. She emphasized that under the current system, payments made in November or December only apply to the remainder of that calendar year.

Ashley asked for confirmation of this, and Linda affirmed that late-year payments do not carry over.

Katrina pointed out that some individuals may intentionally wait until January to pay dues, temporarily choosing not to participate.

Linda confirmed this does occur and explained that many of the issues stem from scholarship eligibility requirements, which mandate that applicants be paid members. Some individuals have waited to pay dues until close to scholarship deadlines. She noted that this rule was implemented shortly before or after she joined the organization

g. Membership

Katrina reported that on August 22 she attended the Clerk's Institute to speak with clerks about DMCA and membership. During the visit, she distributed a survey to assess clerks' familiarity with DMCA, their expectations, and their interests. She noted that one or two clerks were unaware of DMCA, which she found surprising.

Katrina shared that most respondents indicated that their municipalities would support membership, and many expressed interests in serving on committees or potentially holding office, although several answered "maybe." The survey also gathered information on desired educational topics, with high interest in elections training, meeting minutes, FOIA, parliamentary procedures, meeting procedures, and updates on new legislation. One suggestion included forming a committee to keep the membership informed of legislative changes.

Additional educational interests included more local Athenian Dialogues, note-taking, AI, aging in communities, and general training on the role of the clerk, especially for newer clerks. Respondents also expressed interest in networking opportunities and social events, with the majority indicating they would participate in clerk social gatherings.

When asked about barriers to serving on committees, the primary challenge identified was time and availability. Katrina stated she would share the full survey results with the group. She added that several respondents were not currently DMCA members, and she and Tracy plan to reach out to those who indicated interest in joining.

Katrina asked Kim about the possibility of obtaining historical DMCA informational materials, as she had been told that Kim might have a box of such documents. Kim was unsure but stated she would check. Katrina and others joked about tracking it down before Kim's retirement.

h. Mentoring

President Coulbourne stated that although the Mentoring Committee has not yet met, she has a proposal for Tracy and Valerie. She explained that IIMC uses a formal mentor/mentee application process, pairing individuals based on submitted information. She asked whether DMCA should consider a similar structure or, given Delaware's small size, keep the program more personal and informal.

Tracy recommended a more personal approach, noting that interest may be limited and that a tailored, informal system would allow clerks to be paired based on comparable roles.

President Coulbourne agreed and emphasized the importance of regular check-ins between mentors and mentees. She proposed that once she returns in November, she and Katrina review the newer clerks identified during Katrina's outreach to determine possible pairings with more experienced clerks. She will contact Tracy and Valerie at that time to discuss next steps.

Tracy added that January may be an ideal time to launch the program, as new memberships typically begin then and additional clerks may join following the Institute classes.

President Coulbourn agreed and confirmed she will reconnect after returning.

Kim thanked Katrina and Stephanie for attending the Institute and collecting feedback. She shared that her clerk reported positively on the session. Kim emphasized that gathering this information helps strengthen DMCA through learning, networking, and supporting one another.

Andria offered assistance from clerks currently enrolled in CMC or MMC courses. She stated that she and others attending fall classes could help make announcements, gauge interest, ask questions, or share concerns they observe from newer clerks, especially those who might benefit from mentorship.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Fundraising

Members continued discussion on potential fundraising initiatives, including virtual 50/50 raffles, basket raffles, and exploring feasibility of larger events such as golf tournaments. Concerns were noted regarding charging dues based on population, and that option will not be pursued. Further research is needed for any larger scale events, and the Committee will revisit once additional details and approvals are received.

b. Membership Communication

Members discussed improving internal communication and ensuring the membership list remains accurate and up to date. The current list has been updated and shared with the membership. No additional concerns were raised.

c. Clerk Get-together

A recap of the August clerk gathering was provided. Members expressed interest in continuing informal gatherings and discussed rotating locations to encourage broader participation. Additional ideas included organizing a group service project, such as volunteering at the Food Bank or hosting a holiday cookie exchange. Further information will be brought back at a future meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

a. 2024 DMCA Audit

The 2024 audit report was presented earlier in the meeting and accepted by the membership.

b. Membership - Yearly Date

Clarification of the annual membership renewal date was discussed. The Committee agreed the date should be clearly stated on the membership application to prevent confusion going forward.

c. Region II Update

Katrina provided an update on IIMC Region II activities, including details on the upcoming conference hosted by New Jersey, scholarship deadlines, new IIMC members from Delaware, and available online educational opportunities.

d. Quarterly Newsletter

Members were invited to submit ideas for the clerk spotlight and other newsletter content. Positive feedback was received regarding the newsletter layout and features.

e. December Meeting & Holiday Party

The December meeting will be held in Delmar. Due to venue availability, the meeting time was proposed to be changed from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Tracy Torbert moved that the December meeting be changed to 12:00 pm. The motion was seconded by Ashley Walls and unanimously carried.

f. Scheduling of Upcoming Meetings

Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows:

- ❖ December 4, 2025 – Town of Delmar
- ❖ March 19, 2026 – Virtual
- ❖ June 18, 2026 – City of Milford
- ❖ September 17, 2026 – Virtual

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

Transcribed by:

Ashley Walls

DMCA Secretary