Delaware Municipal Clerks Association

DELAWARE MUNICIPAL CLERKS ASSOCIATION
QUARTERLY BUSINESS MEETING
THURSDAY MARCH 26, 2026
VIRTUAL

IN ATTENDANCE:

MEMBERS:

Stephanie Coulbourne, Town of Milton*
Katrina White, City of Milford*
Diana Reed, City of Newark *
Ashley Walls, City of Dover*
Linda Sommermann, Town of Elsmere*
Tracy Torbert, Sussex County
Tara Schiano, City of Newark
Valerie Heritage, of Milford
Kim Layton, Town of Delmar
Shelley Lambden, Town of Bridgeville
Scott Allen, Town of Elsmere
Marco Avila, Town of Rehoboth
Terri White, Town of Milton
Christine Letterman, Town of Clayton
Akira Grenardo, City of Wilmington
Milanie Velazquez, City of Milford
Donna Schwartz, Town of Ocean View
*Officer

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF THE TREASURER'S REPORT (February 28, 2026)

Tracy moved to approve the Treasurer's Report of February 28, 2026. The motion was seconded by Ashley and unanimously carried.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES (June 26, 2025 & December 4, 2025)

Christine moved to approve the Quarterly Business Meeting minutes of June 26, 2025, and December 4, 2025. The motion was seconded by Linda and unanimously carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Audit – Valerie Heritage
   Valerie stated that there was no report.

b. Clerk of the Year – Ashley Walls
   Ashley stated that Scott Allen from the Town of Elsmere was awarded the 2025 Clerk of the Year. She noted that his plaque is being made and he will be receiving it soon.

c. Education – Ashley Walls
   Ashley stated that there was no report.

d. Nominating – Kim Layton
   Kim stated that she will discuss the nominations under New Business.

e. Scholarship – Tracy Torbert
   Tracy stated that Donna from Ocean View was awarded the Scholarship for the Conference and she will be using that in May. Stephanie stated that she sent out the list for the Municipal Clerk Institute Classes

f. Web Development – Ashley Walls
Ashley noted that she is currently working on the redoing parts of the website and if anyone notices anything not working then let her know.

g. Membership – Katrina White
Katrina stated that she is currently working on the brochure and requested the history on the Delaware Municipal Clerk's Association. She would like to get a schedule together to so that they can attend different municipalities.

h. Mentoring – Stephanie Coulbourne
Stephanie stated that mentoring committee goes along with the new Clerk Empowerment and Education Advocacy Committee that she will be talking about under New Business.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Clerk Get-together –date/location
Diana stated that she will discuss this with Tara and they will be sending information to Stephanie. Stephanie noted that she would like to get it out to the membership before schedules get to crazy.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Nominations and Election of the Office of Vice President
Kim stated that only one (1) nomination was received before this meeting and that it was for Diana Reed. President Coulbourne opened the floor for nominations. There were no other nominations. President Coulbourne closed the floor for nominations. **Ashley moved to elect Diana Reed as Vice President for a term of two (2) years. The motion was seconded by Katrina and unanimously carried.**

b. Nominations and Election of the Office of Secretary
Kim stated that only one (1) nomination was received before this meeting and that it was for Ashley Walls. President Coulbourne opened the floor for nominations. There were no other nominations. President Coulbourne closed the floor for nominations. **Kim moved to elect Ashley Walls as Secretary for a term of two (2) years. The motion was seconded by Diana and unanimously carried.**

c. New Committee – Clerk Empowerment and Education Advocacy Committee
President Coulbourne reported that she and Katrina met virtually with Joy to discuss several key items. The discussion focused on promoting the Institute classes offered through the University of Delaware and ensuring broader awareness and participation. She also addressed ongoing challenges in securing support from municipalities and councils, particularly in encouraging recognition of the clerk's role.

The members emphasized the importance of educating elected officials about the essential functions clerks perform, including their institutional knowledge of ordinances, resolutions, and municipal operations. They discussed the need for greater support to enable clerks to attend educational sessions, networking opportunities, and conferences, as well as encouraging membership in professional organizations such as IIMC.

Additionally, there was discussion about forming a committee that would visit municipalities to advocate for clerks, provide training, and engage those not currently involved in the organization, with the goal of increasing participation and strengthening professional development opportunities.

President Coulbourne explained that this initiative would incorporate the mentoring component, effectively replacing the need for a separate mentoring committee. The proposed committee would consist of clerks willing to travel to municipalities, present at council meetings, and engage elected officials to build support for local clerks and their professional development.

Ashley moved to create the Clerk Empowerment and Education Advocacy Committee as a standing committee. The motion was seconded by Diana and unanimously carried.

Members of the Clerk Empowerment and Education Advocacy Committee are Kim Layton (Chair), Stephanie Coulbourne, Tara Schiano, Linda Sommermann, Ashley Walls and Katrina White.

d. Standing Committee Nominations

Audit
Valerie Heritage, Chair
Diana Reed
Kim Layton

Clerk of the Year
Tracy Torbert, Chair
Akira Grenardo
Terri Hudson
Linda Sommermann

Education
Akira Grenardo, Chair
Shelley Lambden
Mimi Velezquez
Linda Sommermann

Membership
Katrina White, Chair
Ashley Walls
Tracy Torbert
Kim Layton

Nominating
Kim Layton, Chair
Ashley Walls
Marco Avila
Donna Schwartz

Scholarship
Tracy Torbert, Chair
Katrina White
Linda Sommermann
Donna Schwartz
Christine Letterman

Website/Social Media
Ashley Walls, Chair
Stephanie Coulbourne
Tara Schiano
Marco Avila

Katrina moved to accept the members of the Audit Committee. The motion was seconded by Linda and unanimously carried.

Linda moved to accept the members of the Clerk of the Year Committee. The motion was seconded by Diana and unanimously carried.

Diana moved to accept the members of the Education Committee. The motion was seconded by Tracy and unanimously carried.

Diana moved to accept the members of Membership Committee. The motion was seconded by Christine and unanimously carried.

Tracy moved to add Terri Hudson to the Clerk of the Year Committee. The motion was seconded by Diana and unanimously carried.

Diana moved to dissolve the Mentoring Committee and change it to Clerk Empowerment and Education Advocacy Committee. The motion was seconded by Ashley and unanimously carried.

Diana moved to accept the members of Nomination Committee The motion was seconded by Valerie and unanimously carried.

Diana moved to accept the members of Scholarship Committee The motion was seconded by Ashley and unanimously carried.

Diana moved to accept the members of Website/Social Media Committee The motion was seconded by Ashley and unanimously carried.

e. By-Law Amendment Committee
President Coulbourne introduced the idea of forming a bylaw amendment committee, noting that the current bylaws contain outdated language, unclear provisions, and requirements that are no longer being followed within the specified timeframes. She emphasized that while some practices have evolved, the bylaws have not been updated to reflect those changes. Examples include timelines for posting meeting agendas and the nomination process, which is still listed as occurring in December. She also noted inconsistencies regarding membership classifications, as the 2024 bylaws no longer address associate members despite ongoing discussion about such roles. President Coulbourne recommended that the committee review and revise the bylaws to address these issues and present updates to the association at a future meeting.

Kim suggested that the committee be composed of current and past presidents, citing their experience and familiarity with organizational processes, past challenges, and involvement with IIMC. She expressed that this group would be well-suited to identify and address gaps in the bylaws based on their institutional knowledge.

Kim moved to create the By-law Amendment Committee as a standing committee. The motion was seconded by Katrina and unanimously carried.

The By-law Amendment Committee members are Diana (Chair), Tracy, Stephanie, Ashley, Terri H., and Katrina.

f. Annual Audit
Valerie reported that all necessary materials still need to be prepared and asked Linda to begin working on them as her schedule allows, offering to assist in compiling a list of required items or documents. Linda confirmed and added that bank statements and related materials will be needed, noting she has a list from the previous year.

g. Region II Update and IIMC Conference Update
President Coulbourne noted that her report aligns with the content she is preparing for the upcoming newsletter. She shared that the Region 2 Conference in Atlantic City was a positive experience overall, with strong efforts made by the host organizers to include

participants from multiple states in the training sessions. However, some portions of the training were specific to New Jersey practices, such as terminology differences, such as "OPRA" instead of FOIA, which initially caused some confusion but highlighted variations in processes across states. Despite this, the core concepts remained consistent nationwide.

Attendance included seven (7) clerks, which was considered a strong turnout given the winter weather challenges. While the conference was well received, some logistical concerns were noted, including distance between the accommodations and the conference center.

President Coulbourne emphasized the value of attending conferences, noting that even experienced and certified clerks continue to gain new knowledge. She also highlighted differences in certification requirements, explaining that New Jersey requires clerks to complete a rigorous certification process, including a comprehensive exam, rather than pursuing CMC or MMC designations as in Delaware.

Looking ahead, the next Region 2 Conference is anticipated to be held in West Virginia in 2027. There has been discussion about potentially moving future conferences out of winter months due to weather-related travel issues. A survey will be distributed to clerks and municipalities to assess interest in shifting conferences to the fall, though considerations such as venue availability and planning timelines will need to be evaluated.

Regarding the IIMC Conference, President Coulbourne reported that early bird registration closed on March 13, and registration is now at the standard rate. The conference hotel has sold out of its reserved room block, though additional rooms remain available. She encouraged members to register if they are planning to attend, noting the wide range of amenities and opportunities available. An airport shuttle service will be available for conference attendees, addressing a challenge experienced at a prior conference. Current registration numbers are approximately 630–640 attendees, with total participation expected to exceed 700 when including guests and exhibitors. The conference offers significant value through education, networking, and professional engagement opportunities.

President Coulbourne also shared that IIMC recently concluded its vice-presidential election, and for the first time, a vice president-elect will be from outside the United States. Additionally, a new "Clerks Without Borders" program has been launched, offering a flexible, low-commitment way for clerks to connect and share knowledge with peers, including internationally. The upcoming conference marks the 80th anniversary, resulting in an extended schedule with additional programming and celebrations. Special sessions, including an Athenian Dialogue, will be held.

Several members confirmed their plans to attend the conference.

President Coulbourne concluded by noting that IIMC is currently focused on conference planning, including site selection for future conferences. The selection process is conducted anonymously, with proposals evaluated based on logistics, cost, and overall feasibility before locations are revealed.

Ashley encouraged members to submit photos for inclusion in the newsletter.

h. Conference Pins – design, purchase and allotment

President Coulbourne introduced a discussion regarding conference pins, including design, ordering, and distribution. Due to production timelines, new pins were not ready for the February conference, so the existing design was reprinted. Clerks who requested pins are covering the cost themselves, with reimbursement being made to the association.

Looking ahead, President Coulbourne proposed determining a consistent approach for pin redesigns and reprints. Valerie has submitted potential design options, and it was suggested that new designs be created only in years when Delaware hosts a Region 2 conference, with reprints handled as needed in between.

Members discussed distribution practices, noting that historically pins were tied to conference hosting and not budgeted outside those years. There was general agreement that redesigns should coincide with hosting responsibilities, while reprints could be made available for purchase by interested clerks. Concerns were raised about equitable distribution, particularly if only a small number of members attend conferences. Past practices included making pins available to all members or distributing them upon request, rather than assigning fixed allotments.

It was ultimately suggested that the Region 2 Conference Committee take responsibility for pin design, ordering, and quantity decisions when appointed, including evaluating costs and needs. Following the conference, a system of accountability should be established for storage and distribution of remaining pins.

Tracy moved to adopt this approach. The motion was seconded by Kim and unanimously carried.

Members were reminded to submit newsletter content and photos to Ashley, who aims to distribute the next issue soon.

President Coulbourne shared that efforts are underway to develop a Region 2 newsletter, which will require coordination across all participating states.

Concerns raised at the Region 2 level included preferences for how member achievements are recognized on social media; flexibility will remain based on member participation and preferences.

An update was provided regarding Albright College in Pennsylvania, which is working to reestablish itself as a certified training institute after staffing changes and lapses in certification. Pennsylvania is addressing several challenges as it works to reengage fully in Region 2 activities.

i. Scheduling of Upcoming Meetings

Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows:

- June 18, 2026 – City of Milford
- September 17, 2026 – Virtual
- December 3, 2026 – TBD
- March 18, 2027 – Virtual

The in-person meeting hosted by the City of Milford on June 18, 2026, will begin at 11:00 AM instead of 9:00AM.

Elsmere offered to host the December 3, 2026, meeting and will confirm at the June 18, 2026, meeting.

ADJOURNMENT
The meeting was adjourned at 10:17 a.m.

Transcribed by:
Ashley Walls, CMC
Secretary, DMCA