

**Delaware Coalition for Open Government
Virtual Board Meeting by Zoom
Tuesday, October 15, 2024**

Meeting Minutes

Present: John Kowalko III, Al Jackson, Anita Rush, John Flaherty, Coralie Pryde, Nick Wasileski, Rep. John Kowalko, Katherine Ward

Absent: Sharon Kwiatkowski

DelCOG members: Dael Norwood, Cheryl Rider, Theresa Schaedel, Bill Shields

Call to Order: John Kowalko III called meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.

Order of Business

Welcome and introductions by John Kowalko III.

No minutes were approved because they had not been written yet.

Treasurer's report by Anita Rush.

Committee Reports

1. Inspector General Committee
 - a. Nick reported that Sen. Sturgeon would be sponsoring OIG in 2025 and that Sen. Sokola thought it would move forward.
 - b. John F will be interviewed by DIN Media during weekend about need for OIG.
 - c. OIG support letter: <https://www.delcog.org/oig/support-letter/>
2. Inspector General Book Chapter Committee
 - a. Katherine reported that she was planning on sending back the revised chapter to Robin the next day
3. FOIA Committee
 - a. No update
4. LLC Committee
 - a. Nick provided update on FinCEN disclosures
5. Bylaws and Procedures Committee
 - a. No update
6. Technology Committee
 - a. No update
7. Annual Meeting Committee
 - a. Katherine will reach out to Dan Bevarly to be guest for 30 minute speech about public trust followed by Q&A
 - b. Proposed dates of November 12-14
 - c. Next committee meeting on Thursday

8. Elected Officials Reception Committee
 - a. Katherine reported that she paid the Ed Oliver Golf Club deposit for December 9 event
 - b. Board voted unanimously to support motions by John Kowalko III to present three awards to four honorees:
 - i. **Government for the People Award to Representative Paul Baumbach**
 - ii. **Distinguished Journalism Award to Sarah Mueller, WHYY reporter**
 - iii. **Distinguished Service Award to Amy Roe and Sarah Bucie**
 - c. Board discussed a Courage and Integrity Award to be awarded in absentia to the anonymous whistleblower on the DOL embezzlement, but it was decided to wait until issue has been resolved further

Unfinished Business

1. Police Radio Encryption
2. General Assembly Renovation
3. DOL Embezzlement
 - a. Nick reported that PIC denied investigation requested by Civic League of New Castle County
 - b. Nick and John F met with 5 people from DOJ concerning FOIA request submitted by John F, where they asked for more specificity regarding the request
4. SB 13 (Hospital Assessment Commission)
5. HB 311 (School Safety Zones)
6. Christina School Board Meetings
7. Funding Sources
8. Sunset Committee Review of Lead Programs
9. 2023 Annual Report

New Business

1. Cell Phones in Delaware Courts
 - a. John F reported that Delaware courts are now allowing cell phones to be used in court, as long as not in prohibited areas such as courtrooms
 - b. <https://townsquaredelaware.com/delaware-courts-ijk-cell-phones-personal-devices/>
2. State Legislative Report
 - a. John F reported that over 500 bills have been passed and signed into law in past 2 years, nearly 50% of all bills introduced
 - b. Sent out summary of bills
3. Lobbying Report Card
 - a. Report by F Minus coming in October giving Delaware and 26 other states a failing grade for weak lobbyist disclosure systems
 - b. They would like to include quote from DelCOG in October 1 press release
 - c. 2015 Center for Public Integrity report: <https://publicintegrity.org/politics/state-politics/state-integrity-investigation/delaware-gets-f-grade-in-2015-state-integrity-investigation/>

4. Virtual and In-Person Meetings
 - a. Preference expressed to retain virtual meetings as more accessible, although would be nice to have some in-person meetings

Open Forum

Theresa Schaedel discussed her prior role working for DOL Unemployment Insurance and then overseeing the Delaware Lottery in 2010 as Revenue and Audit Compliance Manager from 2010-2019, where they audited each casino table game revenue and regulations. After table games were introduced, the office had 50 employees and inspectors trained for 2 years. She was the only person authorized to have unfettered access to all casinos. She was told to ignore findings that staff had found and to change the calculations of gross revenue despite Delaware Code provisions. Starting in 2012, what is reported as table game revenue is not correct according to state law because they were told to change method of calculating revenue. \$2.5 million in uncalculated gross table game revenue that does not match what is in the Delaware Code. Her office was working with Delaware State Gaming Police on the FinCEN finding to monitor potential money laundering. She reported this up the chain of command but was ignored and findings were buried. She reported to DOJ Civil Rights and Public Trust, and they told her to get an attorney and did nothing about the violations. Although she received “Exceeds expectations” on performance reviews for 9 years, she was asked to resign from her position and then offered \$100,000 to leave job and not come back. She filed employment claims against them but nothing was done.

Next Meeting

Next meeting will be Annual Meeting in November.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Submitted by John Kowalko III, President.