

**Delaware Coalition for Open Government
Virtual Board Meeting by Zoom
Tuesday, November 7, 2023**

CALL TO ORDER: John Kowalko III called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

Pre-board reports:

1. Minutes of October 3, 2023
2. Bank Statements of October 31, 2023,
3. Treasurer's Report of October 31, 2023
4. Annual Meeting Report
5. Nominating Committee Report

PRESENT: Letty Diswood, John Flaherty, John Kowalko III, Coralie Pryde, Anita Rush, Cynthia Smith, Nick Wasileski.

Absent: David Breen, Al Jackson.

DelCOG Members: Sharon Kwiatkowski, Connie Merlet, Rep. John Kowalko, Kathrine Ward.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. **Introduction:** John Kowalko III welcomed board members, DelCOG members and guests.
2. **Meeting Minutes:** A motion to approve the Board meeting minutes of October 3, 2023, with one correction, was seconded, and approved unanimously. The corrected minutes will be sent to the board again.

3. Treasurer Report: Anita Rush reported an anonymous donation of \$2,000 to DelCOG during October that was deposited into the savings account and reimbursement, and checks paid to J. Kowalko III for Zoom renewal and registrations fees for board members to attend the NFOIC Summit.

The current balances in the checking and savings accounts:

WSFS checking account balance as of October 31, 2023, was \$3,263.99.

WSFS savings account balance as of October 31, 2023, was \$7,785.17.

Total account balance as of September 30, 2023, was \$11,049.16.

The Treasurer's report was accepted and filed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. **Inspector General Chapter Committee:** Nick Waseleski assured board members that there definitely will be an IG bill and Kowalko Sr. will follow up with Sen. Sturgeon to have it prefilled in December.
Flaherty noted that the governor's budget hearings will commence shortly, and he will send out the calendar to board members. Wasileski will work on testimony for the hearing. DelCOG Legislative Committee will meet before the budget hearings.

2. **Inspector General Book Chapter Committee:** Katherine Ward and Wasilewski have gone through the footnotes again and still are doing small revisions towards the end of the chapter, then sent it to Kowalko III and then to Robin and the publisher. A huge thank you to Wasileski, Ward and Kowalko III from the Board.
3. **FOIA Committee:** John Kowalko. III announced the committee will meet in December to figure out what DelCOG's priorities can be for the coming year..
4. **LLC Committee Updates:** Nick Wasileski reported that in January 2024, the Federal Corporate Transparency Act will go into effect. This requires Beneficial Owners to report to the Federal Treasury if they own 20% of the corporation. Wasileski was thanked for his tremendous work for many years to get this accomplished.
5. **Annual Meeting Planning:** Cynthis Smith reported that the committee met and has everything ready to go out to the membership and the public as well as the flyer. Annual meeting details are listed at the end of these minutes. She asked that all of us post the event on social media and invite friends as well, so we get a good attendance.
6. **Bylaws and Procedures Committee:** John Kowalko III reported that the committee will meet to review the bylaws to clarify when the appointment of directors to the board should take place.
7. **Website Committee:** John Kowalko III and Katherine Ward now have access to the new website that is being updated. He noted that our domain still needs to be pointed to Dream Host. Our webmaster is our domain registrar (Katherine Ward).
8. **Nominating Committee:** John Flaherty has sent a request for nominations to the membership. (email and forms are listed at the end of these minutes). He has not received any nominations from the membership. The committee is putting the following nominations to the board:
President: John Kowalko III
Vice President: Al Jackson
Secretary: Letty Diswood
Treasurer: Anita Rush
A motion to accept the nomination was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. **Lead Free Delaware Update:** Wasileski reported that DelCOG had voted to sign onto the letter that was sent to the EPA with a copy to our congressional delegation who also signed onto this letter. The letter was part of the October minutes. It was noted that Amy Roe and Sarah Busic did some fine work on this issue.
2. **Police Radio Encryption – No report..**
3. **Organizational Development:** Kowalko III has collected nearly all the legal documents he needs.

4. **New Castle County Property Maps** – John Flaherty noted that he has no update on this issue, and this should be taken off the agenda because the issue has been taken care of.
5. **NFOIC Summit:** John Kowalko III noted that the videos of the summit are still available on the site, and some are posted on Facebook.
6. **Delaware Legislative Issues Report:** Flaherty noted that he has no additional information, but it is important to have meaningful interaction at the Governor’s Budget Hearings. Usually, organizations get five minutes for a statement and individuals get three minutes to testify at these hearings.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Sunset Committee Process Questions:** Cynthia Smith asked how the process works. Flaherty responded that this committee is meeting now and has sent out a list for 2024 of agencies they will review. They will review 5-6 agencies each legislative session and the public can lobby the committee to suggest agencies for review.

OPEN FORUM

Flaherty has received an email from Sam Waltz who would like to meet DelCOG board in person.

Coralie Pryde discussed the Delaware River Basin Commission and some proposed changes of some regulations that will affect the public to get access and comment on proposals. The staff will do more of its work in the shadows and the system will not be transparent to the public.

Nick Wasileski announces that the audit review of the DelCOG books will be done by J. Kowalko and N. Wasileski.

The next meeting will be the annual meeting on Wednesday, December 6 at 7 P.M. 20023. by zoom.

The meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m..

Submitted by Letty Diswood, Secretary

A. DelCOG Annual Meeting Planning Committee Report

Cynthis Smith, Chair –



The Most Important and Effective Public Official You Never Heard Of:

An Inspector General and Why Delaware Needs One

A Virtual DelCOG Annual Meeting via Zoom

Wednesday, December 6, 2023

7:00 PM – 8:30 PM EST

The Delaware Coalition for Open Government invites you to join us for a program featuring experts on transparency and accountability and why both principles should matter to Delaware citizens.

[Register here for the DelCOG Annual Meeting.](#)

Annual Meeting Agenda

- 7:00 p.m. Welcome and DELCOG Annual Report – President John Kowalko III
- 7:20 p.m. Claire Snyder-Hall on The Need for Greater Transparency in Delaware
- 7:40 p.m. Shannon Manigault on The Role of and Need for an Inspector General
- 8:00 p.m. Q & A / Comments from Audience – John Kowalko III, Moderator

Claire Snyder-Hall, Executive Director, Common Cause Delaware since 2021

Writer, speaker, activist, and advocate, Ms. Snyder-Hall has taught courses in American political thought, democratic theory and more at various universities, including George Mason, Illinois State, Rutgers, and Princeton.

She is experienced in community building and has worked as a lobbyist for democracy reform in the Delaware state legislature.

Some of her most recent research focused on ways to strengthen connections between state-level elected officials and public life.

Author of *Battling the Prince: A Woman Fights for Democracy*, she was co-editor of *New Political Science: A Journal of Politics and Culture* for several years.

She holds a B.A. from Smith College and a Ph.D. in political science from Rutgers.

Shannon Manigault, Inspector General, City of Atlanta, Georgia, since 2021

Ms. Manigault previously worked in the New York City Department of Investigation (DOI) as IG of 5 NYC agencies and led an investigative team probing criminal misconduct, ranging from bribery and insurance theft to narcotics sales and credit card fraud.

As legislative counsel for the New York City Council, she drafted and negotiated legislation regarding procurement of goods, services, and construction, and coordinated Council oversight of city agencies.

She also clerked for the Hon. John C. Lifland (ret.) in the U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey and later served as a litigation associate at Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP. She earned an A.B. from Harvard College and a JD from Harvard Law School.

B. Report of the Nominating Committee: John Flaherty

To: Delaware Coalition for Open Government (DelCOG) Members

**From: John Flaherty, Chairman
DelCOG Nominating Committee**

Re: Election of DelCOG Officers

DelCOG is working on your behalf to ensure open, transparent, and accessible government and will elect four officers -- President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer – in December for two-year terms beginning January 1, 2024.

If you would like to nominate someone for an officer position or suggest a name for a board position, you must have written permission from the person whose name you are submitting.

When permission has been granted in writing, please use the attached form to furnish:

the person's name.

address (Street name, City, State ZIP)

telephone number(s) (specify if number is for a cell phone)

email address

information about the nominee (job, interests, activities, etc. – whatever qualities you believe would make that person a good candidate for one of the officer positions.

Send it to me either.

by e-mail reply to this message at jdf0000@aol.com:

– attach completed nomination form (see below).

– attach a photocopy of written permission, **or**, if permission is granted by email, please forward the message to jdf0000@aol.com.

by USPS mail:

– mail completed nomination form with written permission enclosed to:

John Flaherty 712 W. 26th Street Wilmington, DE 19802

Note: Any nominations (you may nominate yourself) submitted by e-mail must come from the e-mail address registered with DelCOG (the address to which this message was sent). Please notify the nominating committee chairman if this is no longer your preferred e-mail address and provide a current valid address to be considered your registered e-mail address. All future correspondence, including the ballot for election of officers, will go to the new registered address.

Nominations for elected offices close Monday, October 30, 2023. All nominations for officer positions or suggestions for appointed board positions or for committee work (appointed board positions / committees include legislation, education/programs, events manager, membership, publicity) must be received by the nominating committee chairman on or before that date.

The nominating committee will prepare a slate of nominees for the election that will include the names and a brief description of all those whose names are submitted by Monday, October 30.

You will receive an electronic ballot by November 5, 2023.

To submit names for elected or appointed positions, please complete the attached form.

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This nomination form must be filled out and submitted no later than Monday, October 30, 2023.

I nominate _____ for the office of _____ (insert President, Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer) of the Delaware Coalition for Open Government I verify that I have sought _____ (his / her) permission to be nominated.

- _____ (Your name)
- _____ (Your mailing address)
- _____ (Your telephone number)
- _____ (Your preferred e-mail address)
- _____ (Nominee’s mailing address)
- _____ (Nominee’s Telephone number)
- _____ (Nominee’s email address)

Please provide a sentence or two that we can use when describing the candidate on the ballot.

_____.

Suggestions for appointed board positions or for committee work:

Please consider _____ for _____ (name the area of interest: legislation, education/programs, events manager, membership, publicity).

Please provide a sentence or two for use when considering the nominee for a board position or a committee assignment.

_____.

Thank you for your interest in and any contributions to the election process.

You may submit nominations and the requested information by e-mail (attach photocopy of written permission to place person’s name on a ballot for election of officers or to contact them for an appointed position, or forward permission sent to you by email to jdf0000@aol.com). Or you may submit a nomination through the U.S. Postal Service if you prefer (enclose completed nomination form and the written permission). If you have questions, please contact me at 302-319-1213 or jdf0000@aol.com.

Best regards,

John Flaherty

[DelCOG Parliamentarian 712 W. 26th Street Wilmington, DE 19802 302-319-1213](mailto:JDF0000@aol.com)
JDF0000@aol.com