

# Delaware Municipal Web Developers Group

## MEETING SUMMARY

**July 26, 2007**

Kent County Levy Court Building, Dover  
1:00 to 3:30 p.m.

### AGENDA

#### 1. Attendees/Absentees

Attendees:

**Win Abbott** (Clayton), **Susan Ambridge** (IPA – University of Delaware), **Lisa Boltz** (Camden), **Jennifer Brook** (Smyrna), **Mark Deshon** (IPA – University of Delaware), **Greg Hughes** (GIC), **Mark Kennedy** (Kent County), **Kristen Krenzer** (Middletown), **Patti Laurion** (Sussex County), **Mike Mahaffie** (OSPC), **Richard Maly** (Camden), **Jim McElhinney** (New Castle County), **Tracy Mulligan** (Bethany Beach), **Danny Schweers** (Arden, Ardencroft, Ardentown), **Pam Smith** (South Bethany), **Eddie Spargaglione** (Sussex Co.), **Dell Tush** (Dewey Beach), **Nelson Wiles** (Lewes);

plus guests **Greg Austin** (Delaware.net), **Henry Baynum** (Lewes), **Dick Cleaveland** (Dewey Beach), **Kim Crouch** (Kent County), **Andrew Homsey** (IPA – University of Delaware), **Mike McGarry** (New Castle County), **John McKown** (Delaware.net), **Nicole Minni** (IPA – University of Delaware), **Charles Ruggiero** (Delaware.net), **Tim Westbrook** (New Castle County), **Thomas Wontorek** (Lewes).

Absentees:

**Cathy Beaver** (Townsend), **Barbara Belli** (Wilmington), **Tricia Booth** (Seaford), **Mark Callan** (Dover), **Kathy Clifton** (Delaware City), **Marian Delaney** (City of New Castle), **Cindy Fisher** (Delmar), **John Giles** (Elsmere), **Rebecca Greene** (Felton), **Ev Hall** (Greenwood), **Lisa Kail** (Bethany Beach), **Tina Law** (Elsmere), **Paul Morrill** (Delaware City), **Donald Mulrine** (Camden), **Jessica Norton** (Odessa), **Marta Pacheco** (Newark), **David Potter** (Middletown), **Tom Roth** (Henlopen Acres), **Donna Schwartz** (Fenwick Island), **Rita Shade** (Newport), **Jamie Smith** (Laurel), **Pam Smith** (South Bethany), **Marie Thomas** (Ocean View), **Angela Townsend** (Georgetown), **Amy Walls** (Seaford), **Randy Westergren** (Milford), **Kristina Williams** (Townsend).

## 2. Member Website Status

- **The Ardens** (Arden, Ardentown, Ardencroft) – Ardentown and Ardencroft only have name and numbers on site for now
- **Bethany Beach** – in the process of redeveloping the existing site and have RFPs out, decision on contractor is forthcoming; defining content
- **Camden** – ready for a redesign and improvement of information; working with the historic society to place historical information and photos online
- **Clayton** – moving to develop a new site; working on content outline; new RFP upcoming
- **Dewey Beach** – redesigned site with help of Delaware.net; working on improving information
- **Lewes** – looking for more improvements and to expand homepage “real estate”
- **Middletown** – working to keep information current; ready to design for Police Department
  
- **New Castle County** – Redoing website with Microsoft Sharepoint and working with Diamond Technologies to complete the migration
- **Kent County** – no change since last meeting
- **Sussex County** – information on new 2007 tax bill now available
  
- **Delaware.gov** (Government Information Center) – redesigned homepage to use a “tabbed approach” (to tailor content to user); added a one-click search feature that combines a weighed list with “seeded” items; and continuing work on Adobe forms products

NOTE TO OTHER MUNICIPAL WEBMASTERS: Please help us add to this status list by sending Mark Deshon a brief status note (like the ones above). Thanks.

## 3. Guest Speakers: **Andrew Homsey** and **Nicole Minni**, Institute for Public Administration, University of Delaware

### **“An Overview of GIS” and “The Creation of a Natural-, Cultural-, and Historical-Resource Service for Delaware Towns”**

Andrew Homsey gave a general overview of GIS (Geographic Information Systems) for those who may have had limited knowledge about the program. GIS is spatial information technology and consists of layers. Scanning maps (i.e., digitizing them) allows for backups and cleaner storage. One big advantage to GIS is that its data is georeferenced, so it can be viewed, printed, manipulated, and linked. Another compelling advantage is being able to leverage other peoples’ work.

John McKown pointed out that by using GIS the user also has the benefit of seeing more data in a digital form. Danny Schweers also noted that the user could omit any information or data that may not be necessary to see for a specific project.

Dick Cleaveland brought up the question of terrorists possibly gaining access to information. Andrew Homsey said it was something to be concerned about; however, much of the information on the maps is public and it would be difficult to control that information. Extremely sensitive information, like water intake points, are typically not shown on GIS maps.

Eddie Sparpaglione mentioned that GIS is great because it can be used to present spreadsheet-type data in a visual format (e.g., tax maps and planning and zoning).

Kim Crouch asked if there were any policies on what information is okay to present. Mike Mahaffie answered her question by stating that the Department of Homeland Security and the federal government are currently working on relevant policies.

Mike McGarry made the suggestion that, because most Delaware towns' resources are limited and a lot of GIS work is done on the state and county levels, the University of Delaware ought to partner with the three counties and the state to share and provide data as a service to the towns.

Internet mapping has been around and is now just starting to mature (e.g., Google maps). IPA could offer 11 typical data layers for each town (framework data). This general information could be obtained from the state. This would provide and expose the data to the towns online. A variety of functions can be used. For example, if a person wanted to find a tax parcel, he/she could search by name. This service would also allow the user to create a natural-resource inventory or determine high priority areas in need of protection.

Each municipality could have their own login. For an example of a GIS map for a municipality see [brandywine.dgs.udel.edu/Milton](http://brandywine.dgs.udel.edu/Milton).

Mark Deshon opened up discussion on how local governments might be convinced that this type of resource is useful and beneficial. Andrew Homsey felt that it would have to be approached on a case-by-case basis. Win Abbott suggested using objective criteria (an economic argument) to justify GIS use for greater efficiency. Andrew Homsey mentioned that some benefits are not quantifiable and even if putting a price tag on something presents a strong argument there may still be roadblocks.

Mike Mahaffie mentioned that the data should be collected and managed by whoever is in charge of it. For example, the state would maintain information on state roads, while a municipality would be in charge of its own zoning data.

#### **4. Membership Survey and Announcements**

With the brief time remaining, Mark Deshon distributed a membership survey and spoke briefly about the process in which members would be engaged during the October meeting. During the upcoming meeting, the group will hear the summary of the survey results and begin a facilitated process of dialogue and discussion around mapping out a path forward.

A couple announcements of upcoming events were then made:

##### **National Association of Government Webmasters Annual Conference**

September 20–21, 2007

Valley Forge, Pa.

[www.nagw.org/conference/2007](http://www.nagw.org/conference/2007)

##### **Adobe Max**

September 30–October 3, 2007

Chicago, Ill. (among other locations worldwide)

[www.adobe.com/events/max](http://www.adobe.com/events/max)

##### **Delaware Technology Conference**

October 30, 2007

Dover, Del.

[deitconference.state.de.us/dtc/dtcregister.nsf?open](http://deitconference.state.de.us/dtc/dtcregister.nsf?open)