

Trustees 2023

Bob Duthaler Pres. – 2026
Doug Seidel VP – 2024
Linda Besink Treasurer– 2026
Stephanie Gibbons
Corresponding Sec. – 2025
Dave Garb – 2024
George Fairfield – 2026
Don Smith – 2025
Rick Gearhart – 2024
Mark Albala – 2025

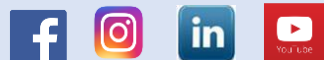
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General Meeting Schedule 2023-24

Jan. 31, 2024- ZOOM
Reorganization
Presentation- Cablecast
Feb. 28- LIVE-Bloomfield TV
Presentation- TelVue
Mar. 27- ZOOM
Presentation- TBA
Apr. 24- LIVE Piscataway TV
Presentation- DeSisti
May 16
JAG Conference
Crowne Plaza Hotel, Rt. 27, Edison
Jun. 26- ZOOM
No Presentation
Sept. 27- TBA
Presentation- TBA
Oct. 30- TBA
Presentation- TBA
Dec. 4- TBA
Presentation- TBA

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President's Message

Bob Duthaler

Another Year Is Over.....

But The Work Never Ends



Hard to believe that yet another year is coming to a close. It's been a busy year for JAG on both the legislative and operational ends. For me it also signifies the fact that my 15th year as JAG President is also coming to an end. However, I choose to look at all this as a new beginning. The beginning of a new year for JAG, the beginning of the twenty-fourth year of JAG's existence and the beginning of the reorganization of the JAG board at the upcoming Trustee Meeting in January.

JAG as an organization is in perpetual motion. This constant motion is the very strength of this organization. The ability to grow, adjust, re-evaluate and change are the core strengths of this organization. JAG is no different from any other organization that goes through ebbs and tides. Complacency at some point attacks all organizations. But it's our ability to get through these patches that makes JAG different from other organizations.

For some time, I have noticed that attendance at our monthly meetings has not increased. One of the things JAG does and does well is to host monthly membership meetings, typically on the last Wednesday of each month. These meetings are one way in which the Board reports back to the membership on the operation of the organization. These meetings also are a networking event in which members can see each other, discuss items of interest, and get to know each other on both a professional and personal level. Finally, these meetings also act as an ongoing educational event. JAG is in a unique position to bring in experts and vendors to introduce us to new technology and legislative updates. For these very reasons the JAG Board and External Relations Committee works hard to bring in a series of experts and information sessions during our meetings. To that end it is imperative that members support these initiatives and make every effort to attend the monthly meetings.

I believe that JAG is also turning the corner on membership participation in committees. Several new members and some of our regulars are now taking an interest in serving on committees. Their participation helps to breathe new life into the committees, which extends to the organization as a whole. I am happy to report that some of our committees now have both new and veteran members working together. The Membership Committee received a lot of

good leads from our time at the NJ League of Municipalities Conference. They will work to expand the organization and draw in new municipal members. Please consider joining this committee and helping to grow the organization.

The JAG Awards Committee has reorganized and formatted the JAG Awards. The committee will be working very hard to get the awards program up and going for the new year and to have an awards show at the upcoming conference in Edison in May 16, 2024. The committee is working on finding new and inventive ways to allow all members access to the JAG Awards and help level the playing field for operations of varied budgets, sizes, staff and volunteers. The awards will open on January 1, 2024. So, I urge you to start preparing your entries and look for new announcements in upcoming emails, newsletters and social media.

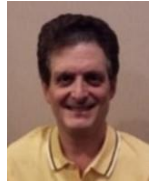
The Legislative Committee is one of the most fluid committees in JAG, and for a very good reason. The political landscape is always changing and with those changes there are always new policies, laws or FCC orders that effectively impact our very existence. The committee is always working very hard on keeping on top of these changes. They continue working closely with both NATOA and the ACM, two national organizations, in getting both information and direction. The committee is also taking that information and relaying it to both our membership and our legislators on the local, state, and federal level with their monthly legislative newsletter. The committee continues with their partnerships and commitment to work with the NJLM Organization as an affiliate member. This committee has also seen a revived interest from new members and is actively seeking others to join the committee as well.

The JAG Conference Committee is already full steam ahead and working on creating what we believe will be the best conference in a long time. It is through the evaluation of our successes and failures, and measuring these against the future, that the committee will present a refreshed conference, bring in new interest and present an exciting and informative event to our members. The committee has also welcomed new members and is already starting an active new social media campaign. I would urge you to follow their progress on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Come mid-January look for an updated conference website (www.jagconference.com) and be on the lookout for informational newsletters. It's not too early to mark your calendar for the 2024 JAG Conference, which will be held at the Crowne Plaza in Edison, May 16, 2024. Feel free to reach out to the committee to share your thoughts and ideas for the upcoming conference sessions.

Finally, I want to wrap up this month's update by telling you that the JAG Board of Trustees and Executive Board will be holding reorganization meetings in January 2024. During these meetings the board will look at the outcome of the JAG Executive Board Retreat back in August, look at the upcoming landscape for the industry and, just like franchise renewals, plan for the future of the organization. It is the board's commitment to this organization that helps mold the future of JAG. As the Chairman of the Board and current President it is very important to me that I am in tune with the pulse of the members. I would urge you during the next couple of weeks to reach out to me via email or phone and express your thoughts, interests and concerns about the organization. I will then take your thoughts and share them with the board so they may be discussed and acted upon. It is only through your participation that the future and success of JAG can be possible. I would like to wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year. And may the Jersey Access Group be equally as blessed and successful in the upcoming year.



Closed Captioning / ADA Requirements Where it Currently Stands for PEG



Recently, there has been concern regarding the Closed Captioning of PEG programming, and if the PEG community will be mandated to offer captioning.

Our partners at the Alliance for Community Media have some thoughts to ponder about where things currently stand on this issue.

From Mike Wassenaar, President, ACM:

Your cable channel is probably exempt from the FCC's Captioning Rules - if revenue for the channel is less than \$2M per year per the FCC's self-implementing exemptions go into effect. We expect the FCC will implement a registry of video channels and distributors to handle captioning complaints in the coming year. We'll keep our partners posted on when this is likely to happen, and what we'll be required to provide – which will most likely be a contact address and email for questions about captioning.

As a reminder, all local governments and non-profits are subject to the Americans with Disabilities Act, which requires that organizations use the effective communication standard with local residents

(<https://www.ada.gov/topics/effective-communication/>)

1. Are you a local government? You have an ADA requirement separate from the FCC requirement to implement effective communication – or have a publicly responsible official state that it isn't economically feasible. This means every local government should have a plan to know the cost of implementing and providing captions, even if they don't implement them.
2. Content that is exempt on cable is exempt online per implementation of the CVAA from 2011.

If video content is online only, there is no exemption (so I suggest online only content have a captioning solution) – This includes VOD delivered via Internet.

The DOJ will state new guidelines regarding accessibility and quality standards for all online content delivered by state and local governments in early 2024. Governments will have to meet WCAG2 standards

<https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/docs/> or

<https://www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG22/quickref/?versions=2.1>. This specifies online video needs for captions.

The DOJ proposal is for jurisdictions over 50K people. Jurisdictions would have two years to implement these standards, and those under 50K would have three years. Please note there is no change to the Effective Communication standards suggested.

This is not a final rule – So don't panic! It would probably take effect 60 days after publication in the Federal Register, so we don't have target dates at this time.

The key issue here is to plan when a timeline occurs, and work with vendors for best solutions (and budget accordingly in advance).

The ACM is monitoring this situation and will have materials to consider in 2024 – but talks with equipment vendors have already begun to ensure they meet WCAG2 standards in future products and upgrades.

So all... don't worry about it just yet. However, as Mike stated, start budgeting now. We are all doing VOD, it seems like this is something we will have to face head on whether we want to or not.



Happy "JAGmas" Season!

George Farfield, JAG Awards Committee Chair

JAG Awards Committee

Tis the season to begin getting your JAG Award entries ready for submission...even more so than in prior years, because there are several changes that will affect your registration and submission.



First, your registration: The registration will still open on January 1, 2024 but the deadline to have all your entries registered is January 31, 2024.

Second, your submissions: All entry submissions must be uploaded by February 15, 2024 and your video highlights will need to be uploaded by February 29, 2024.



Be sure to mark these dates on your calendar.

And speaking of your entry submissions, there are changes to what you will need to submit. After listening to our judges and members of JAG, it has been decided that each upload is not to be any longer than 10 minutes.

If the entry is 10 minutes or less, you will simply submit the entire video/program.

If the program is over 10 minutes, you will submit a video consisting of the opening of the program, a portion from the middle of the program, and the closing of the program, minus any credits unless they are part of the closing, with the entire run time not to exceed 10 minutes.

Each section of the "Over 10 Minute" entry must be clearly separated as follows:

1. begin with the Opening Section: at a time of your choosing, fade to black
2. followed by 10 seconds of black
3. then fade up into the middle section; at a time of your choosing, fade to black
4. followed by 10 seconds of black
5. then fade up into the ending section: at a time of your choosing, fade to black
6. the entire entry (all three sections) is not to exceed 10 minutes

How long each section will be is up to you but the committee suggests that you show your program in its best light possible.

The goal of this change is to help bridge the gap between the diverse programming produced by the member stations of JAG while leveling the judging plane plus help the judges have a better understanding of your entry.

You still must not re-edit the program sections themselves; the sections must appear as they were originally produced and cablecast.

The JAG Awards committee is excited about the coming season and look forward to seeing everyone's submissions. For a complete list of rules, please visit the JAG Website at jagonline.org. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to the JAG Awards Committee Chair at gfarfield@piscatawaynj.org.





Rising Above the Crowd in Edison

Michael D'Amato, Station Manager, Edison TV

Members Spotlight

It seems these days we need to set our cameras higher and higher just to achieve a clear shot over a sea of raised cell phones – camera operators cannot be afraid of heights! More on that later.

Edison TV, one of the founding stations in the Jersey Access Group, has had a clear mission since I became the station manager in 2006 – to present the officials, organizations and residents of the Township of Edison in the best possible light, both figuratively and literally.



Did the mayor stumble on a word? Fix it! The singer cracked on the national anthem? Edit it out!!



At Edison TV, we face the same challenges as other access stations – keeping up with ever changing technology. We moved from 4:3 to widescreen in 2012. A grant in 2013 resulted in studio LED lighting. We started shooting in high definition in 2014 and launched social media pages that same year. In 2015 we began broadcasting with Cablecast, which included videos on demand on the township website and live streaming of Channel 15. The year 2017 included our one viral social media video, a Toys for Tots PSA featuring the Grinch – 4.1 million views on YouTube and more than 800 subscribers added because of one silly video! A Grinch video produced the next year, which I feel was a superior effort,

has garnered a paltry 5,000+ views - go figure!

And then there was the Pandemic. I was at the station throughout the pandemic and had to find programming wherever possible, including every state COVID briefing, religious services and re-airing and re-packaging videos from our past. That first spring and summer no one was allowed in the studio – well, almost no one. I *did* give Ron MacCloskey permission to record a “Classic Movies with Ron MacCloskey” episode at the station as long as there were no guests. The result was he interviewed himself – strange days indeed.



Eventually meetings returned via zoom, closed captioning was added in September 2020, PTZ cameras were installed in the council chambers in 2021 and meetings were broadcast live on YouTube – all of this leading to a much deeper relationship with our IT Department, as you can imagine.



Social media reigns supreme, which leads me back to my earlier talk of cell phones and high camera placement – I’m pretty sure all of us are dealing with more and more members of the public recording events with their cell phones – they step in front of us and we have to ask them to move. We move from camera to camera afraid we’re interfering with *their* shots! In the photo, I’m standing atop a picnic table with 10-20,000 people around me – many of them recording with cell phones. How do we stay relevant?

Maybe we stay relevant by offering creative and professional video *and* sound recordings, we insert graphics and lower thirds that support the stories we are trying to tell (and what official doesn’t like to see his or her name and title flashed on the screen?) and we *involve the public*: I often like to have what I call an “audience cam” at the front of the room or stage; you’re having a good time dancing and waving your arms? You’re on television! (*and* the audience cam also keeps people in the audience on their toes – they tend to at least *look* more attentive if they think they are being recorded). Most importantly, we post content to social media and the township website – I steer viewers away from our SD cable channel to our HD content.



In conclusion, Edison TV has been producing hyper-local content since 1991. I’m in my 20th and final year at the station with no idea who the mantle will be passed on to. Hopefully it will be someone with fresh ideas and the same commitment to consistently producing professional content for an ever-evolving Edison community; hopefully someone who will *rise* to the occasion. Happy Holidays!



Events and Postings

Doug Seidel, Social Media Manager

Communications



JAG General Meeting

Jan. 31, 2024 @ 12:00pm (ZOOM only)

For more information and access to the meeting email JAGinfo@jagonline.org

JERSEY ACCESS GROUP

facebook.com/pegvtv linkedin.com/company/jersey-access-group
instagram.com/jersey_access_group

New Content on JAG YouTube Channel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OJ1Ovh2ATS8>

The Barron Arts Center Holiday Model Train Show, Woodbridge TV

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XLj4QFDz7_Y

Chestnut Hill Cemetery Tour 2023, East Brunswick TV

Do not forget to check out our YouTube channel. Have something you want on our YouTube channel?

Send a link to dseidel@piscatawaynj.org for review.

New Content on JAG Members Only Section

The JAG Job Board is currently being populated with opportunities.

New Password as of June 1- Contact Linda Besink lbесink@gmail.com for access

New Content on JAG Web Site

List of the 2022 JAG Award recipients. <https://jagonline.org/jag-award-winners/>

Share the value of Jag's newsletter with your elected officials, cable committee, station volunteers, associates, and friends. Send this invitation: <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/B7EMU1R/JAGnewsletter>

Event Schedule 2023

Dec. 21st at 2pm: Webinar– ADA Compliance and What does it Mean for your Station and Township.

We will discuss Department of Justice requirements on ADA compliancy for local governments, their websites, video streaming and even cable broadcasting. We have heard rumors of closed captioning for years, but this new push may require it sooner than later. Here what the experts are saying about it, what you can do now and how to prepare for the next 12 months or less. Guest: Brandon Dittman, Kissinger & Fellman, P.C.

Jan. 18th at 2pm: Managers Roundtable– Beyond the Cable Channel– the social media influence.

Jan. 31st at 12noon: JAG Meeting (Zoom) w/presentation by Cablecast

Feb. 15th at 2pm: Webinar– Broadband and Broadband Deployment

Feb. 28th at 12noon @ Bloomfield TV: JAG Meeting w/presentation by TelVue

Mar. 21st at 2pm: Managers Roundtable– Cable Committees – Value or a thing of the Past

Mar. 27th at 12pm: General Meeting (Zoom) w/presentation by TBA

Topic To Be Announced. Do you have a specific topic you would like to discuss? Please reach out to JAG President Bob Duthaler and discuss your ideas on topics you would like to discuss. Contact information: bduthaler@jagonline.org



HELMER, CONLEY & KASSELMAN, P.A.

ATTORNEYS AT LAW



Organizational Members

Jersey Access Group, PO Box 164, Metuchen, New Jersey 08840

www.jagonline.org JAGinfo@jagonline.org

New Jersey Chapter of NATOA, Organizational Member of the ACM, and New Jersey League of Municipalities Affiliate

Editor-in-Chief: Rich Desimone Social Media Manager Doug Seidel Feature Editor: Cindy Hahn

Staff: Bob Duthaler, Geoffery Belinfante, Dave Garb