

### Trustees 2023

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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



### New Year .... New JAG .... Let's Get Started!!!

I am happy to report that the JAG Board of Trustees had their annual meeting on Wednesday, January 9th, setting the course not only for this year but for the future of the organization. This is made possible by the great input we receive over the course of the year from our members. Some of these comments are brought up at monthly meetings, during our annual conference or in emails. It is only through input and feedback from our members that the board can fully understand what is on the minds of our members and help this organization move forward. I encourage all members to continue to be involved, provide feedback and support the organization.

One of the first things I would like to report out on is the JAG Elections:

Bob Duthaler - Three Year Term

Linda Besink - Three Year Term

George Fairfield - Three Year Term

Mark Albala - One Year Term

Board of Trustee Elections and Appointments at the annual Meeting:

### Executive Board

President	Bob Duthaler
Vice-President	Doug Seidel
Treasurer	Linda Besink
Recording Sec.	Rick Gearhart
Corresponding Sec.	Stephanie Gibbons
Production Chair	Rick Gearhart
External Relations	Geoffrey Belinfante

### Trustees

Don Smith  
 Dave Garb  
 Mark Albala

### Managing Director

Rich Desimone

During our Reorganization meeting, membership was our focus: Ways to engage our current members, get more members involved in JAG and locate new potential members. Our presence at the New Jersey League of Municipalities Conference, both through our booth and sessions we coordinated, produced several new leads. Our membership committee is currently reaching out to these potential members, alerting them to the benefits of JAG and meeting with them on an individual basis as needed.

JAG is also creating special incentives to bring in additional individual members. There are a lot of great content producers in the community and we are looking for ways to get them noticed, have their content available to our member stations and allow them to compete for recognition in the JAG Awards. COVID kept producers away from JAG and some of the stations they were involved with, so now is the time to get them back. I encourage you to reach out to any producers you know and let them see for themselves that now is a great time to join JAG and take advantage of the special offers we have for them in content sharing, JAG Awards and Conference Attendance.

Our board also explored ways to bring in more resources for our members as well. Currently most of our monthly meetings (the last Wednesday of the Month – see schedule in newsletter as well) will include vendor presentations to keep us updated on some of the latest gear, technology and operations techniques. JAG will also be hosting several online webinars and managers round table discussions on certain topics of interest and importance to our members. Look for upcoming information on these events in emails blasts. These events will be FREE to JAG members.

Lastly, the JAG Executive Board and Committees are working hard on bringing new life into some of our ongoing annual events, such as the JAG Awards and Conference. These committees are committed to breathing new life into these events and making them attractive to all members, as they are a staple of our organization. The JAG Awards committee has narrowed down the categories, created a way for all JAG members to get their first entry for free and arranged for the awards presentation at our annual banquet during the annual conference. Please look to this newsletter for more information and the JAG website as well for the rules and registration link. Good Luck to all those who enter!

The conference committee has already been working to plan what looks to be a great conference. We are back again at the Crowne Plaza in Edison, NJ. Plans are already under way to create great sessions of importance to our members, find ways to make the most out of these sessions for our members, and provide a unique opportunity to network with others. The conference will feature a tradeshow floor with vendors who understand how we operate and what our budget constraints are. In addition, the conference will be offering a Keynote lunch with guests who are there to entertain and inform, plus our banquet and JAG Awards Dinner. Mark your calendar for this year's event on Thursday, May 16th. You can also visit the conference website at [www.jagconference.com](http://www.jagconference.com) which will continue to be updated on a regular basis as more details are finalized.



# Enhancing Public Access to Government Meetings with SRT Streaming

**Dana Healy, Vice President, Sales, Cablecast**

Technology

In the dynamic sphere of local government, transparency and accessibility are paramount. Ensuring the public has real-time access to government meetings is a critical function of communication teams and video specialists. The challenges of network streaming video are magnified in this setting, where reliability and security are non-negotiable. This is where Secure Reliable Transport (SRT) streaming becomes an invaluable tool.



## **SRT Streaming: A Boon for Government Communications**

SRT, a cutting-edge video transport protocol developed by Haivision, is revolutionizing the way government entities stream and distribute video content. It is specifically designed to operate over less-than-ideal networks like the public internet, providing high-quality video and audio streaming, essential for broadcasting government meetings.

## **The Technical Edge of SRT in Government Use**

SRT stands out for its ability to deliver low-latency, high-quality video streams, even over congested networks. This ensures that live streams of council meetings, public hearings, and other government events are broadcasted smoothly, with minimal disruptions. The secure encryption of SRT also guarantees the confidentiality and integrity of the streamed content, a critical aspect for government communications.

## **Comparing Protocols: Why SRT for Government Streaming?**

Unlike traditional protocols such as RTMP or HLS, SRT is designed to thrive in unstable network environments, making it ideal for government entities that often rely on public internet connections for streaming. SRT's robustness against packet loss and its low-latency capabilities make it superior for live streaming important meetings, ensuring real-time public access and interaction.

## **Practical Applications in Local Government**

Many local governments have already adopted SRT for streaming council meetings and other events. This adoption has enabled uninterrupted, high-quality broadcasts to the public, ensuring transparency and fostering civic engagement. These successful implementations serve as a model for other government entities looking to improve their streaming capabilities.

## **SRT and Video Servers: A Synergistic Relationship**

For government communications teams, integrating SRT with their existing video servers enhances their ability to manage and distribute live and on-demand content efficiently. Video servers supporting SRT enable seamless delivery of meeting streams, both live and archived, to the public.

## **Accessibility for All: SRT in Low-Budget Government Setups**

SRT's compatibility with various broadcasting software like OBS Studio, vMix, and Wirecast makes it accessible even for government entities with limited budgets. This ensures that all levels of government can provide high-quality streaming of their meetings, promoting inclusivity and accessibility.

## **Looking Ahead: SRT in Government Video Streaming**

As we advance, SRT's role in government video streaming is poised to grow. Its adaptability to emerging technologies and evolving network conditions will continue to make it a staple in government communications strategies.

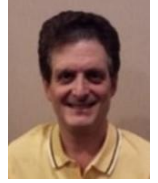
For local government communications teams and video specialists, SRT Streaming is not just a technology choice; it's a commitment to transparency and public engagement. By leveraging SRT, governments can ensure that their meetings are accessible, secure, and of high quality, regardless of the challenges posed by network streaming video. This commitment to accessible government is central to a thriving, engaged community.

For the many community media and city cable operations using Cablecast version 7.5, native support for live SRT stream playback and recording makes it easy (and affordable) for stations to send live meetings, events, and other programming back to master control using the public internet.

Cablecast VIO servers also support several network streaming protocols – including RTMP, HLS and NDI, among others – but SRT is a great option for cost-effective, reliable IP transport. Just pair your Cablecast VIO with an encoder on location and you can playout SRT streams, with no additional hardware needed. Want to learn more about how SRT streaming can improve your channel playback workflow? Get started with Cablecast.



## Closed Captioning and Web Accessibility Requirements for Local Governments Where it Currently Stands for PEG



The Americans with Disability Act has compliance obligations for local government accessibility for websites, video streaming, and even cable broadcasting.

While the FCC has long excluded community television from captioning requirements, the Department of Justice, state governments, and private citizens have renewed a push to require captioning for all types of video content, and particularly those found on the internet.

Last month, JAG held a special webinar that explored where the requirements currently stand for access television, along with thoughts on where it might be heading, when the DOJ might make a decision, and what should be done now to prepare for the immediate future.

Our guest speaker for this informative event was Brandon M. Dittman, a founder and partner of Wilson Williams Fellman and Dittman\*, an expert on the ADA and Rehabilitation Act Captioning Requirements and FCC Regulations for Closed Captioning, as well as the DOJ and their rule-makings.

Brandon relayed the following facts to the participants:

- Since 1998 the FCC has stated under its regulations that local government content is categorically exempted from captioning on television. Other government agencies such as the DOJ who are responsible for enforcing the Americans with Disabilities Act, will say otherwise. And even the FCC takes the position that video programming may be subject to captioning requirements even if they don't require it.
- The American with Disabilities Act - Title 2 regulates public entities and regulates governments. If you're a government entity of any kind, you fall under Title 2
- DOJ Requires Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 <https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/docs/> or <https://www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG22/quickref/?versions=2.1> for all web content, and captioning for video content, whether live or prerecorded is required.
- Different parts of the Rehabilitation Act which needs to also be considered include:
  - Section 504 states that "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States ... shall, solely by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance or under any program or activity conducted by any Executive agency".
  - Section 508 - "Electronic information and information technology must be accessible for people with disabilities".

*(You could potentially become subject to this if you receive federal funding. Such funding could come with a requirement that you comply with the Rehabilitation Act.)*

One of the most eye-opening moments of the webinar was when Brandon stated that "Any person can bring what's called a citizen suit where they can act as their own private attorney general. Especially on the website side. A private citizen can ask for an injunction and can demand that you change your practice or stop doing the discriminatory practice." They can recover all their attorney's fees, and in most cases, they can get monetary damages of some kind.

So what should a PEG Channel do to prepare when the DOJ comes down with more changes about Closed Captioning?

Brandon offers the following suggestions:

- Basically you should just start budgeting for it now. And I would start with the things that are used most by the public, whatever those may be. So your websites, your public meetings, those sorts of things.
- Most of you have Video-On-Demand Channels, so whatever goes on there should have the ability to be captioned somehow. If for whatever reason you have an exception or whatever else you still may be under, you actually are still under the ADA's broader requirement for effective communication. And just so you know, that's always kind of lurking in the background. There still is the effective communication piece to this.
- Look towards the future to ensure that your servers have the ability to create automatic closed captioning. It's a lot harder to prove the case that captioning is not good enough versus you didn't have anything. It is going to deter all but the most determined from filing a lawsuit against you because again, it's a lot easier to prove that you have nothing.

JAG works exclusively with vendors that can help you prepare for the possible future of adding closed captioning into your programs.

There have been no final rulings at this time by the DOJ. But what is being considered when the effective date is decided, is to implement a delayed implementation based on population size. For example, if you're a government below 50,000 people, you may get three years to comply, with larger municipalities having perhaps two years.

Don't panic about it just yet, but start to budget! We cannot ignore it forever! This seems like something we might have to face whether we want to or not.

If you would like to view this special webinar in its entirety with our guest Brandon M. Dittman. please go to:

[JAG: ADA and Closed Captioning Webinar 12-21-23](#)

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### **Still in Play: HR 3557**

#### **The American Broadband Deployment Act**

Reminder everyone: This bill imposes new restrictions on local authorities regarding their ability to regulate a variety of state and local land use and zoning issues that pertain to the deployment of telecommunications infrastructure, including wireless and wireline deployment, as well as new limits on requirements and renewals of cable franchise agreements.

Please watch our informative video on HR 3557 and hear what might happen if it is passed at:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fzP\\_t\\_SPzGk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fzP_t_SPzGk) . And please pass this link around to all of those who can stop this harmful bill.

JAG constantly advocates, analyzes and addresses emerging issues in areas such as: Local Government Communications and Internet Policy, New Technology Initiatives and Advancements, Cable Franchising and, the Operation of Public, Education and Government Media Facilities.



The JAG Conference Committee has begun meeting. We have elected the officers of the committee: Bob Duthaler, Chair, Rick Gearhart, Secretary and Linda Besink, Treasurer. The first items discussed were establishing the costs to attend, developing a schedule of events, and creating a list of potential sessions. Panelists will include representatives from NATOA, the ACM and JAG's Organizational Members.



**Registration Costs:**

Full Conference:

Members: \$225.00 and Non-members \$350.00

Conference Only:

Members: \$175.00 and Non-members \$300.00

Banquet Only:

Members: \$75.00 and Non-members \$110.00

Link to Register: <https://jagconference.com/shop/>

**Event Schedule**

8:00am- TelVue User Group Breakfast

9:00am- Exhibit Hall open

10:00am-11:30am- Sessions

11:30am- Keynote Lunch

1:30pm- 5:30pm- Sessions

6:00pm- Banquet

**Sessions** (Details to follow)

3 Legislative: Laws and Rules & Regulations that will affect delivery of video content.

2 Technology: New equipment that will enhance the quality of video production.

6 Management: Examine dealing with the hurdles facing the operation of a media facility.

**Call for Vendors**

Booth size and event sponsors

Link to Register: <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/889386h>

**Conference Sponsors**

Diamond (Conference Partner)- TelVue Corporation

**Hotel**

Discount rate for attendees \$119.00

Link to Crowne Plaza Room Reservation: TBA

Conference details will be posted as they are finalized to: <https://jagconference.com/>



Home to 68,000 residents, Middletown Township is one of the largest municipalities in New Jersey. Due to the size of our community and diverse age ranges, interests, and neighborhoods, it is important for the Township to offer various ways for residents to access information. One of those communications tools has been our municipal TV channel which has changed over the years, particularly with the addition of our brand new TV studio this year. We had the opportunity to work with experts in the industry who helped guide the project from beginning to end.



### **How It Started**

In November 2021, my colleague Tara Berson and I traveled to Atlantic City for the annual New Jersey League of Municipalities conference and attended the Jersey Access Group's (JAG) seminar about cable television consumption post-pandemic. Feeling inspired after the session ended, we introduced ourselves to some of the presenters: JAG President Bob Duthaler and External Relations Chair Geoff Belinfante. We exchanged contact information, expressed our interest in becoming JAG members, and discussed our plans for a TV studio in Middletown's new Town Hall that was being built.

In May 2022, we moved into our new Town Hall. With the new building came new opportunities so we used this transition to emphasize the importance of having an in-house TV studio to help promote key Township initiatives and programming, as well as provide a potential revenue stream through shared service agreements with other communities. We already had our mayor and administrator's approval and funds secured through a Comcast grant, so we were given a space to help fulfill our aspirations of airing interesting and informative content.

### **Bringing the TV Studio to Life**

We knew that creating a TV studio from scratch was a large task for us to take on in addition to our regular responsibilities. With that in mind, we reached out to Bob Duthaler to see if he (DNS Media) would be interested in supporting our Communications and IT Departments by joining our team as a consultant. Thankfully Bob was up for the challenge, so we hired him. Bob took the reins and introduced us to vendors, received quotes, and figured out next steps. With his help, we were able to determine the equipment specs for when this project went out to bid. By the end of 2022, we were feeling more organized and had finally become JAG members!

In February 2023, we joined our Purchasing Department at a pre-bid for our TV studio project, which was divided into two categories: lighting and control room equipment. We briefly met vendors and showed them the studio space and the office that was going to be utilized as a control room, as well as answered their questions. A month later, our Purchasing Director advised us that RDM Rigging would be handling lighting and G&G Technologies would be the equipment vendor. Both companies also offered training, which was much needed since we are not experts in TV production.

Our equipment arrived in April. Due to the studio's small size, we needed to use an empty office near the Communications Department for the control room. Our IT and Public Works & Engineering Departments ran cables and installed electrical outlets wherever needed to ensure that our TV studio and control room could work together efficiently since they are not in the same vicinity.

In May, Rich DiMinno of RDM Rigging and his crew installed the pipe grid in the studio over the course of several days. While our lighting infrastructure was being taken care of, Marvin Charyn of G&G Technologies assigned John Micewicz to set up the control room (see photo). John trekked to Middletown from Westchester County, New York over the course of a few months to help set up our control room, work with our IT Department to connect our new TriCaster system to TelVue, and trained us on how to properly use the equipment.



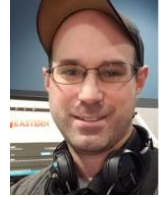
In July, the lights for our TV studio arrived and Rich DiMinno and RGM Rigging were back to install them, along with the help of Paul Distefano of DeSisti Lighting. In August, they returned to Town Hall to teach us how to use the lighting console, which is situated in our TV studio but can also be used from our control room. In between that time, we ordered a small table and two comfy chairs, making our TV studio finally complete in August 2023 (see photo).



### **Lights, Camera, Action!**

After almost 18 months full of vendors, doubts, training, and dedication, our TV studio was born! Building our TV studio wouldn't have been possible without the help of our colleagues, the expertise and knowledge of our amazing vendors, and advice from our JAG family. We are truly appreciative of everyone's part in making our TV studio become a reality.

Now that it's a new year, we're excited to focus on our TV studio and begin producing content. We'll check back in within a few months to keep you all posted on our progress!



JAG General Meeting  
Jan. 31, 2024 @ 12:00pm (ZOOM only)  
Presentation: Cablecast

For more information and access to the meeting email [JAGinfo@jagonline.org](mailto:JAGinfo@jagonline.org)

JERSEY ACCESS GROUP

[facebook.com/pegvtv](https://facebook.com/pegvtv) [linkedin.com/company/jersey-access-group](https://linkedin.com/company/jersey-access-group) [instagram.com/jersey\\_access\\_group](https://instagram.com/jersey_access_group)

New Content on JAG YouTube Channel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GXfqZPLyr-Q>

Wellness Woodbridge: Carrier Behavioral Health with Arunesh Mishra, M.D., Woodbridge TV

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

David Cedeno Orchestra, Edison 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](mailto:dseidel@piscatawaynj.org) for review.

Welcome New Members

Granicus- Organizational, Borough of Maywood- Municipal, New Providence- Board of Education,  
RWJ Barnabas Health- Non Profit, New Jersey YMCA State Alliance- Non Profit

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 [lbesink@gmail.com](mailto:lbesink@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 2024

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

Feb. 15<sup>th</sup> at 2pm: Webinar– Broadband and Broadband Deployment

Join us as we discussion Broadband and Broadband Deployment. Fresh off the heels of our presentation at the New Jersey League of Municipalities Conference Sessions, we will recap the session, update people on anything new or thing pending for the new year. Broadband deployment and speed impact our streaming reach, streaming options and much more. Our experts will share their experience and knowledge and help you plan. Panelists: TBA

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

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

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

Apr. 16<sup>th</sup> 8am-5pm: JAG Annual Conference, Crown Plaza Hotel, 2055 Lincoln Highway (Rt 27), Edison, NJ

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