

Meeting Minutes

Delaware Population Consortium

September 29, 2010

Room 133, Haslet Armory

Dover

Attendance:

Jim Galvin, Dover/Kent MPO
Ed Ratledge, UD CADSR
Janelle Cornwell, Dover
Marlena Gibson, DSHA
Barbara Gladders, Public Health
Megan Nehrbas, Sussex Co.
Kelly Crumpley, Kent Co.

Don Berry, DOE
Dan Blevins, WILMAPCO
Mike Duross, DelDOT
Derrick Lightfoot, Wilmington
Terry Pepper, DSHS
Mike Mahaffie, OSPC

The meeting was called to order by Jim Galvin at approximately 1:10 p.m.

Derrick Lightfoot made a motion to approve the minutes for the July 15, 2010 workshop. Dan Blevins seconded the motion and it passed, unanimously.

Mike Mahaffie handed out [a schedule of 2010 Census data releases](#) (PDF) and reviewed the differences between the American Community Survey data releases of this fall and winter and the 2010 Census data releases expected starting next spring. He recommended a brief video from Census Director Groves about the differences.

That video can be found at <http://blogs.census.gov/censusblog/2010/09/measuring-america.html>.

There was a general discussion of the latest ACS data and how it differs from past ACS data releases. Ed Ratledge noted that there are differences in how the survey questions were asked and that smaller sample sizes for some population groups in Delaware – Hispanics, for example – means that the margins of error in some tabulations can be quite wide. He also pointed out that the population totals in the ACS data now appear to be benchmarked to population estimates from the Federal-State Cooperative for Population Estimates (FSCPE).

Ed Ratledge led a discussion of the draft population projections. He noted that he had had few comments or corrections since the last meeting. The Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) had provided him with updated vital statistics for recent years, and he noted that the difference between the birth/death data from DHSS (state) and that from the FSCPE (federal) is shrinking. He credited his and Barbara Gladders' focus on the issue in recent years for starting to close that gap.

Ed reported that he made some minor changes to the city of Dover projections, based on new (2009) population estimates from the FSCPE. He noted that population growth for the city looks a bit larger than expected.

Ed noted that the projections for Newark show the city's population holding fairly steady. He added that there is not much room for new development within the City.

For Wilmington, Ed reported some differences between the draft projections and the federal estimates in the ratio of males to females among Wilmington's Black population. There was a general discussion of this issue and it was agreed that the group wants to stick with the ratio in the draft projections, which has a smaller difference between the sexes. The issue of small sample size in the ACS data, and the possibility that the federal estimate for 2009 contains a "one-off" anomaly led the group to want to stick with the projections series that has been developed over time. Though there was an interest in looking for further data and input on the issue. The 100% count data from the 2010 Census should help clarify the situation.

Ed reported that, as requested by the Consortium membership, he has investigated the best way to include a projection of the Hispanic Population in the annual population projection series. He noted that the issue of "multiple race" as a data category and the tendency of Hispanics to self-identify as "other" on racial questions make it hard to do projections of Hispanic population by race. He said it would be possible to include a separate Hispanic/non-Hispanic table for the state and each county, by single-year of age.

There was a general discussion of the challenges of projecting population for such a small component of the state's population.

Derrick Lightfoot made a motion to include Hispanic/Non-Hispanic projections in the annual population projections series. Kelly Crumpley seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Ed Ratledge will work with Don Berry to add a section about the Hispanic projections to the methodology section of the projections documentation.

Mike Mahaffie asked the group for input for an investigation of where the Delaware Population Consortium is in State code. He explained that there is a general perception that Consortium projections are required to be used, but that it is hard to find those requirements in code. There was a general discussion of the origins of that requirement. It was noted that there was language to that effect in the Quality of Life Act or in the Shaping Delaware's Future Act.¹

Mike explained that he is considering proposing, though his chain of command, adding more recognition of the Consortium to state code. He added that he is looking for examples of similar groups in Code; groups that produce data or use prescribed formulas, or similar situations. The Consortium was originally created by Executive order, but that was a long time ago.

¹ There is language in Title 9 of State Code requiring the counties, in their comprehensive plans, to keep their population projections (and other data) "consistent with projections officially adopted by the Delaware Population Consortium." See 9 Del Code, [§2656](#) (g) (1), [§4956](#) (g) (1), and [§6956](#) (g) (1). There does not appear to be a similar requirement for cities and towns or for state agencies.

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The Delaware Financial Advisory Council (DEFAC) was noted as an example, but that group is also established by Executive Order. The Data Services center, which provides data for several upstate school districts, was mentioned, but that body is not in the state code, according to Don Berry. The Department of Education does have some data-collection responsibilities which may be noted in the Code. Many, though, are federal requirements. The group also discussed the UD's Water Resources Agency, which started life as an independent agency, and requirements that local governments use state or federal traffic and commuting data.

Mike agreed to continue to investigate and to share his findings with the Consortium as appropriate.

There was a general discussion of potential dates for a next meeting. The next meeting will be the 2010 Annual DPC meeting and Mike and Jim Galvin will work with Ed on proposing a series of possible meeting dates – most likely in late October – to the group.

Janelle Cornwell made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Kelly Crumpley and passed unanimously.