

Upper Delaware Council
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
Jan. 22, 2008

Committee Members Present: Harold Roeder Jr., Larry Richardson, Charles Wieland,
Alan Bowers, Jack Niflot, Jay Shafer, George J. Fluhr
Committee Members Absent: Steve Barnes
Staff: Douglass, Soete, Coney, Ramie
Guests: K. Bodine, Sullivan West School Senior-Government Studies;
J. McKay

Election of 2008 Committee Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson: The committee meeting was called to order by 2007 vice-chairperson Roeder. The floor was opened for nominations for election of committee chairperson and vice-chairperson. Wieland nominated Alan Bowers for chairperson. No further nominations. Alan Bowers was elected as 2008 committee chairperson and conducted the remainder of the meeting. He thanked 2007 committee chairperson Gerry Mackin for his dedicated service. Gerry has now retired from public service and has moved from the area. Bowers also thanked Roeder for his services last year as well. He introduced and welcomed the new Representative from the Town of Lumberland Jay Shafer.

Richardson nominated Roeder for vice-chairperson. No further nominations. Harold Roeder Jr. was elected as 2008 committee vice-chairperson.

Minutes: A motion by Fluhr seconded by Wieland to approve the Dec. 18, 2007 meeting minutes was carried.

Public Comment on the Agenda: None

PR/Fund Raising Specialist's Report: Ramie reviewed her written report that was handed out. The winter newsletter was delivered Dec. 14. The new folded format will save \$5,000 annually in postage fees.

Updating of the business listings is being done for the map and guide brochure update. The voluntary donations received toward the production costs total \$150 so far. Soete will provide a new cover photo for the brochure.

She has booked the LaSalette Restaurant in Hancock, NY for the Council's annual awards ceremony. NYS Assemblyman Clifford Crouch will be the keynote speaker.

Douglass has completed the figures for the NYS grant relative to the NYRI expenses. The paperwork will now be submitted to Albany with a voucher. She can now proceed with the Bonacic grant for \$75,000.

The Upper Delaware Scenic Byway group met Jan. 7 but a quorum was not present. The next meeting is Jan. 28.

She attended a reception at NPS-Upper Delaware for newly appointed Superintendent Vidal Martinez. UDC orientation packets have been issued to the Council's new town representatives and letters have been issued to meet with the newly-elected Supervisors of the towns of Deepark and Highland. She also covered the UDC booth at the Narrowsburg EagleFest on Jan. 19. It was a successful event and some people did sign up for the UDC newsletter.

Executive Director's Report: Douglass referenced his written report handed out. He has not finished the functional budgets for the fiscal year 2008 work plans and these still need to be sent to the NPS for the cooperative agreement funds for this fiscal. The chairperson will review the status of this task in one week.

Douglass noted the UDC will participate in the "anniversaries" project/programs for 2008 with the NPS-Upper Delaware staff. The UDC will be celebrating its 20th anniversary as well. The first Council meeting was held Feb. 22, 1988. It's the 30th anniversary of the Upper Delaware designation Nov. 10, 1978 and the 40th anniversary of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act Oct. 2, 1968.

A media report has indicated that a New York Regional Interconnect representative has said that NYRI should be filing a completed Article VII application for its power line project with the NYS PSC sometime in February this year. Douglass mentioned that NYRI has said this before but nothing has materialized. NYRI's original application was filed with the PSC in May of 2006 but was rejected by the

PSC as “incomplete” with requests for additional information. Richardson asked when the one year time frame clock started. Douglass noted the PSC has no time frame. The one year mentioned is at the federal level when an application can be filed with FERC after state denial or inaction. Richardson wondered if this application process could drag over into when a new administration takes office in Washington. Douglass responded it could, but we’re assuming NYRI wants PSC to do the application process within the year’s time under the current administration. NYRI also believes it has eminent domain powers even though NYS has passed a law against such use of these powers by electric transportation companies.

Douglass added there is a fight over power lines in the state of Virginia and their PSC has come out against approving the power line. UDC staff has been tracking this situation too.

Douglass announced that the DRBC has extended the comment deadline on the FFMP to March 3. Wieland wanted this issue on the Water Use/Resource Management Committee meeting agenda and Douglass said it would be even though the committee consensus was not to change the UDC comment letter as issued.

Old Business

UDC subcommittees: Wieland and Niflot brought up the need for more volunteers for the Building and Personnel Subcommittees since there’s been a change in Council members. Niflot wanted an uneven number on Personnel. He asked Bowers as the new UDC chairperson if he was going to sit on this committee and Bowers said he would. No other volunteers were seated. Ramie noted the computer subcommittee of Roeder and Bowers would meet Thursday, Feb. 7 at 6:30 p.m. prior to the Council meeting to start discussing the Council’s web site project.

CARI Cooperation Agreement: Douglass reviewed the CARI Cooperation Agreement status with the committee and the signatories to the Agreement. Herkimer County has withdrawn as a member since none of the NYRI proposed power line crosses the county. However, they still support CARI’s work. There are five NGOs as CARI members including the UDC as well as the counties of Broome-Chenango-Delaware-Madison-Oneida-Orange-Sullivan. The other NGOs are Upstate New York Citizens Alliance-STOP NYRI-Upper Delaware Preservation Coalition-SayNo2NYRI. The NYS Comptroller is looking at how many CARI members have signed the Cooperation Agreement since state funds are being issued to CARI. The committee discussed the requirements of the UDC’s Cooperative Agreement with NPS since federal monies are provided to the Council. They had concerns about signing the CARI Cooperation Agreement and felt the document should be reviewed by the NPS Solicitor. A motion by Fluhr to have the UDC attorney review the Agreement and offer an opinion was seconded by Richardson. Richardson noted there should be a response regarding this within a month. Schultz offered at first reading of the Agreement there might be a conflict with the UDC Cooperative Agreement. Fluhr withdrew his motion. A motion by Roeder to first have the NPS Solicitor review the CARI Agreement and offer his opinion relative to the UDC Cooperative Agreement was seconded by Richardson and carried.

New Business

Summary of pending bills / financial statements: The committee reviewed the handed out summary of pending bills dated Jan. 22. A motion by Wieland seconded by Fluhr to approve the bills for payment was carried. The financial statements for period ended 12-31-2007 were handed out for review.

IRS standard mileage rate increased: The committee was informed that the IRS had issued the 2008 optional standard mileage rates used to calculate costs of operating an automobile for business, charitable, medical or moving purposes. Beginning Jan. 1, 2008 the rate for business miles driven is 50.5 cents. The Council has opted to follow the IRS rates and will increase its mileage rate from 48.5 to 50.5.

A message from 2007 Chairperson Gerry Mackin: The committee was provided with a letter received from 2007 UDC chairperson Gerry Mackin who has retired and moved out West. Mackin offered thanks to all for assisting him during his tenure, wished the new officers the best of luck in achieving the best interests of the Council and the River in the coming year, and hoped the Council would be able to prevail in its efforts to protect our great River Corridor resource from those who would defile it for their own personal economic greed and those who would torture its River flow formulas for their own purposes to the

detriment of the good of all who live in the vicinity of or benefit from this great resource. He ended the letter with “my thoughts and best wishes will be with you always”.

Public Comment None

Adjourn A motion by Roeder seconded by Fluhr to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m. was carried.

Carol Coney, Office Manager