

Upper Delaware Council
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
October 24, 2017

Committee Present: Jim Greier, Alan Henry, Jeff Dexter, Aaron Robinson, Harold Roeder, Jr., Larry Richardson, Fred Peckham
Committee Absent: Dave Dean
NPS Partner: Carla Hahn
Staff: Laurie Ramie, Cindy Odell, Pete Golod
Guests: None

The UDC's Operations Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, October 24, 2017 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Greier called the meeting to order at 7:23 p.m.

Approval of September 26 Meeting Minutes: A motion by Henry seconded by Roeder to approve the September 26 meeting minutes was carried. There was no public comment on the agenda.

Executive Director's Report and Monthly Calendar: Ramie reported that we do not have any operational funding right now so we are relying on unrestricted funds and will be until such time as the Cooperative Agreement is executed for FY 2018. We have been assured that the UDC's request for its funding will not be delayed by the investigation into our unrestricted funds.

Regarding FY 2017, Ramie noted that the 4th quarter and the FY 2017 (Oct. 2016-Sept.2017) reports with documentation were submitted to the National Park Service on October 18th. She continues to work on our traditional format of an Annual Report for the public and our membership. This report also creates a historic record for the organization.

Ramie stated she had received confirmation for UDC auditor Dick Eckersley and herself to participate in a October 19 conference call with NPS officials from the Upper Delaware unit, Northeast Region, and Washington to discuss the use of UDC "contingency" funds and determine the path forward for awarding federal funds. On October 16, she was notified that this call was cancelled and Ramie said she was advised that the NPS will instead submit a written request for information. She noted she has not received that request to date.

Ramie said at Sue Sullivan's suggestion, she drafted a sample letter and sent a memo to the NYS members towns on October 10 to request consideration of supporting the UDC's \$50,000 project request submitted on September 7 to the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to supplement the Technical Assistance Grant program and to retain planning consultants to perform substantial conformance review updates for New York towns. She noted we received one letter so far from the Town of Delaware. That letter was received on October 16 and forwarded on to DEC Commissioner Seggos, NYS Senator John J. Bonacic, and NYS Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther. A copy of an acknowledgement letter received from Senator Bonacic on October 18 was provided in members' packets.

Ramie said that as a result of interest expressed in making the rounds to our state and federal elected officials to remind them who the UDC is, what we do, and what our mission is, she contacted Legislative Aide Tom Cahill at Congressman Tom Marino's office on October 19 to request scheduling a constituent meeting at the Hamlin office and made a request to Senator Toomey's aide this morning. She noted that primary agenda topics would include: explain UDC's mission and operational structure; discuss Delaware River Basin Commission development of natural gas regulations; inform about UDC's campaign for improving emergency communications (public early warning system for reservoir mishaps and address cell signal dead zones along the river) in hopes they may know of available funding or interested agencies. She also advised them that we are prohibited from any lobbying activities. She awaits response from these offices, Ramie added. Peckham asked what the UDC would discuss with them about the proposed DRBC natural gas regulations. Ramie said she would like get a feel for what their position is on this issue.

Ramie noted that comments from attorney Jeffrey Clemente were incorporated into a third draft of bylaws amendments on October 10. This third draft with an explanatory memo and revised Conflict of Interest Policy language were sent out to all UDC representatives and alternates on October 13 for the required, minimum 30-day advance notice. A resolution will be prepared for the December 7 UDC meeting to approve the amended bylaws and revised Conflict of Interest statement.

Ramie referred to the copy provided in members' packets of the end-of-the-year comparison of actual vs. projected spending for FY 2017 for their information. This document was submitted to the Park Service along with the year-end report, she added.

Ramie referred to the November calendar of UDC Meetings, Activities, and Deadlines included in members' packets and covered highlights. She said it also contains a preview of December happenings.

Henry suggested that Ramie contact Senator Casey for a visit as well. He said he will provide her with some contact information.

New Business

Summary of Pending Bills/Financial Statement 10-31-17: Ramie referred members to the copy of the October 24th abstract provided in their packets and explained the new format instituted by bookkeeper Mike Poska. A motion by Peckham, seconded by Henry to pay the bills listed on the abstract was carried unanimously. Financial Statements as of October 31, 2017 were provided for individual review.

Other: Richardson asked that a copy of the sample letter and memo sent to the NYS members towns on October 10 to request consideration of supporting the UDC's \$50,000 project request be forwarded to him. Staff they would send that to him.

Henry questioned if any notification has been given to the three TAG applicants of the current situation. Ramie said only Tusten as they were contacted to request supplemental information. Richardson suggested that a letter be sent to the Town of Tusten and Damascus and Berlin Townships explaining the delay in the UDC issuing contracts for the Technical Assistance Grant projects pending National Park Service review. Ramie agreed and said that staff would take care of that.

Peckham shared his interpretation of the National Park Service presentation given at the October 11 "Water, Water Everywhere" conference. Ramie said she regarded the presentation as the NPS is advocating for a certain level of flow to protect the Dwarf Wedge Mussel population. A brief discussion about this subject took place.

Old Business: Greier shared a photo of Ramie in the October 24 edition of the *Sullivan County Democrat*.

Greier noted that there are "conflicting personalities" around the table and he feels the issue needs to be addressed. He suggested that there be a meeting scheduled with Superintendent Heister set aside from any full Council or committee meetings. After a very lengthy discussion, a motion to invite Superintendent Heister to participate in an informal workshop to discuss the relationship between the UDC and NPS, with a mediator present if she wishes, potentially on a Saturday morning in early December, was made by Henry, seconded by Robinson and carried. Ramie suggested that discussion topics be submitted to her in advance.

Public Comment: None

Adjournment: A motion by Roeder, seconded by Robinson to adjourn the meeting at 8:14 p.m. was carried unanimously.

Minutes submitted by Cindy Odell, 11/1/17