

Upper Delaware Council  
**OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**  
**September 26, 2017**

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

The UDC's Operations Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, September 26, 2017 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Greier called the meeting to order at 8:39 p.m.

**Approval of August 22 Meeting Minutes:** A motion by Richardson seconded by Roeder to approve the August 22 meeting minutes was carried. There was no public comment on the agenda.

**Executive Director's Report and Monthly Calendar:** Ramie referred members to her written report provided in their packets. She reported that on September 18 she applied to draw down the remaining funds in the FY 2017 ASAP account, leaving a zero balance. Ramie said she will present a spending plan proposal under New Business for the projected FY 2017 surplus. She will work to prepare and submit to the NPS in early October the SF-425 quarterly financial and progress reports as well as the SF-425 FY 2017 year-end financial report, narrative, and budget comparison.

Ramie said she has met with NPS Superintendent Heister several times regarding FY 2018 federal funding. She added that she has worked on gathering budget figures, compiling the narrative report of spending justifications, and updating the FY 2017 annual work plan which combines tasks from the three committees. She referred to copies of the revised FY 2018 UDC Budget and Work Plan provided in members' packets and explained the changes that were made. She noted that the new Work Plan ties all the tasks that we have underway through the three committees to our Cooperative Agreement and now contains page references to where these items appear in the River Management Plan. Ramie said that since 1986 she would like to think that the UDC has evolved. The organization has taken over a lot of responsibilities that the Citizens Advisory Council once had and the committees have expanded their roles to meet needs and issues that have arisen since the Council was established. She does not feel that the UDC can be looked at through the narrow prism of "if it's not in this 1986 document, we shouldn't be doing it." Ramie reported that she sent the scanned financial package for FY 2018 with a cover letter to NPS UPDE just this morning. We now await the NPS Northeast Region Contracting Office's processing of the UDC's package necessary to execute a new Cooperative Agreement and allocate operational funding.

Ramie spoke of the letter approved at the September 7 meeting to NYS DEC regarding funding for the UDC. The letter proposed a \$50,000 project to supplement the Technical Assistance Grant program and to retain planning consultants to perform substantial conformance review updates for New York river towns. She noted that New York State's fiscal year is April. We will await a response to this request, Ramie added.

Henry referred to the NPS September 14 letter in response to our questions regarding the Upper Delaware Scenic & Recreational River's \$30,000 surplus in FY 2017 where it states, "Additional project funding would be considered only after the UDC has expended the funds described in the November 22, 2016 Operations Committee minutes as 'unrestricted.'" He stated that is Council money. Heister stated that Karen S. Henry, the Upper Delaware Scenic & Recreational River Administrative Officer, will be in attendance at the October 5 full Council meeting and the question of whose money that is can be posed then. She added that she will explain her September 14 letter when it's addressed under New Business. A brief discussion regarding the use of the UDC's unrestricted funding took place. Robinson stated that it has been his understanding that the unrestricted funds are assets of the UDC, not of the federal government. He spoke of the schedule of annual depreciation. Ramie spoke of how the UDC had received its funding in the past.

Ramie reported that as of October 1, the Council will implement our new Member Reimbursement system of the UDC paying members per meeting plus travel reimbursement. She reminded members to return their W-9 forms to the office in order to prepare for the new system.

Ramie said we received notice from our snow plowing contractor that he will no longer be providing that service. We are in the process of soliciting estimates from other contractors for possible action at the October 5 full Council meeting, she added.

Ramie reported that the Fall/Winter 2017 edition of The Upper Delaware newsletter is currently at the printer. She noted she logged 47 hours primarily between September 6 and 15 outlining contents, doing research, conducting interviews, selecting and readying photos, doing layout, composing, and proofreading. She said delivery is expected October 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Ramie stated that we received delivery of 35,000 copies of the updated Map & Guide on August 29<sup>th</sup>. She said we welcome suggestions for distribution. A copy of the "UDC 2017 Map & Guide Brochure Revision Report" was included in members' packets for their information. It contains a brochure history and cost statistics of previous years.

Regarding publicity, two news releases were issued this past month: "Shohola, Highland, Tusten Wrap Up 2017 Technical Assistance Grants" on August 23; and "Upper Delaware Council Updates Visitor Information Map and Guide Brochure" on August 29. Ramie submitted an abbreviated version of the UDC's September 7 letter to the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court Decree Parties re: Suspension of Voluntary Releases from the Delaware System Reservoirs on September 8 as a Letter to the Editor to multiple newspapers. Ramie said she also fulfilled a request on September 15 from Herb Clark of the Sullivan County Visitors Association to provide the "Wear It!" life jacket promotional logo for advertising purposes.

Ramie stated that the FY 2018 budget allocates \$12,290 in an Outside Consulting Services line for a project described as: "It was envisioned that the River Management Plan would 'undergo a thorough evaluation after twenty years...to allow the plan to adapt to changing conditions and community needs (page 26)', but this action has not occurred." In Fiscal Year 2018, the UDC will follow up on a Nov. 2014 Technical Review Report of the 1986 River Management Plan. The idea is that all of the changes that have been made in various manners to the Plan over the years should be documented. Ramie listed the recommendations that came out of the 2014 Technical Review Report done by Environmental Planning & Design. Analyzing the appropriate methodology for implementing the recommended changes will be outlined in a scope of work and subject to the issuance of a Request for Proposals through sealed bids in mid-October. The project will need to be completed by September 30, 2018, Ramie noted.

Ramie said that she, Superintendent Heister, and Rick Lander were invited by the Leadership Sullivan class to make a presentation to them on September 19 at Bethel Woods about the river valley. She said that Lander started off by asking for a show of hands of how many have visited the Delaware River. She said maybe one-third of the audience indicated any knowledge of the river. Ramie found it very discouraging that people from Sullivan County are so unfamiliar with the river.

Ramie told committee members that a copy of the 2017 UDC River Clean-up Grants Final Report was included in their packets for their information.

Dean reported that the graffiti along the Hawks Nest section of NYS Route 97 was recently sandblasted off by New York State. He encouraged people to go and look at it before it is defaced again. He noted that next year they are supposed to remove some trees. Ramie said that the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway had received a letter that there is a landscape contract for the Hawks Nest for 2018.

Ramie referred to the October calendar of UDC Meetings, Activities and Deadlines in members' packets for their information.

### New Business

**UDC 2<sup>nd</sup> Draft Bylaws Amendments: Attorney Comments:** Ramie said that this letter was sent out in advance to members and is included in the packets along with the UDC's original August 25 letter requesting the attorney's review of the proposed changes. Ramie did not cover those issues that the attorney deemed "acceptable as proposed", but did review those few issues on which he offered comment. Ramie said what will happen next is that the full Council has to receive 30-days notification of Bylaws changes before a Resolution can be presented. A brief discussion about the cost of the attorney's review took place.

**FY 2017 Projected Expenses Analysis:** Ramie referred members to the Profit & Loss report provided in members' packets and stated the projected FY 2017 surplus to spend by September 30. She proposed

specific dollar amounts to pre-pay for fuel oil, add postage to the UDC meter, and purchase needed office supplies. A motion to accept the Executive Director's proposal was made by Henry, seconded by Roeder and carried.

Robinson requested that the water cooler which NPS has indicated is not a legitimate federal expense unless the tap water is contaminated be left at the UDC office and be funded with unrestricted funds. The cost is approximately \$300 per year. A motion to fund the water with unrestricted funds was made by Robinson, seconded by Henry and carried.

**NPS Response to UDC Inquiry re: UPDE End of Year Funds:** Ramie referred to the copy of this letter provided in members' packets, noting that it was circulated via e-mail in advance. Henry suggested that the \$30,000 in end of year funds that were returned to the General Fund could have been earmarked for such programs as law enforcement and trash removal in the river corridor. Heister said she appreciates the comment and her letter provides an explanation about what happened. She added that the balance of that surplus represented less than 1% of the total budget at UPDE. She said the expenditure of year-end funds is constrained by established deadlines for contracts and agreements, and the availability of regional staff to process these types of requests. On July 28, 2017, the funds were transferred to the NPS Northeast Regional Budget office for use within the region to provide support for other parks' needs.

Heister stated that the letter provides a number of options for the UDC to request additional funds for specific projects. She explained that at the beginning of a fiscal year, her money is budgeted out. She asked the members, "Where is your list of projects?" She suggested an effort be made to identify the projects that need to be accomplished. She said it is not likely that the Council or the Upper Delaware NPS is going to obligate a \$50,000 or \$60,000 project at the beginning of any fiscal year. She said that if there is a very expensive project that will never be in the Council budget, or the Upper Delaware NPS budget, and is above the unrestricted funds, she suggested writing a project statement that the Park Service can submit for competition. This is an option that we have. She referred to Item C of her letter which talks about coming up with a list of smaller projects. It states, "NPS recommends a joint effort with UDC to develop needed projects of differing funding sizes (e.g. \$3,000, \$5,000, \$10,000) such that we have available fully scoped and developed projects with accurate cost estimates that are ready to go if, and when, end of year funding becomes available. Depending on time of year and project cost, these funds may or may not need to be committed and managed by NPS." Henry asked if there had been a list of projects, would the NPS have contemplated funding any. Heister said, "I think what this letter says is absolutely, of course." A brief discussion about the different funding deadlines took place. She reiterated that there are a number of funding options; as with money, it is always about being prepared. She suggested developing a "wish list" of projects with budgets of various amounts to be ready to submit in the event UPDE has surplus funding in the future. Robinson asked if the call boxes would be an appropriate project. Heister said the NPS and UDC would sit down together and decide if it were appropriate. She added that it has to be linked to the River Management Plan clearly. Richardson agreed with the idea of developing a list.

Ramie said that the letter implies that the UDC's unrestricted account would have to be eliminated before we could apply for funding above that. Heister explained that would hold true for the category of projects that are at the beginning of the Fiscal Year that the UDC would find very important and the NPS could not commit to at the beginning of the Fiscal Year; she would not consider it until the UDC considered spending down those funds. Henry stated those funds are how we operate on a reimbursement basis. He asked if the funds are spent down, how will the Council operate? Heister suggested the Council take a really hard look at what can be done to generate additional revenue.

**Summary of Pending Bills/Financial Statement 9-30-17:** The committee was provided with the abstract of bills dated September 26 to review. A motion by Peckham, seconded by Henry to pay the bills listed on the abstract was carried unanimously. Financial Statements as of September 30, 2017 were provided for individual review.

**Other:** Henry reported that Ramie signed her personnel agreement and he needs Greier to sign it in order to make it official.

Heister, referring back to the NPS funding issue, said that these funding options have been discussed. She suggested that the Council not consider taking the funding option A, which would be applying for a large special project at the beginning of a Fiscal Year. She said that she presented three

options in her letter and Council members are focusing on the option which requires using the unrestricted money. She provided details on the other two options.

**Old Business:** None

**Public Comment:** None

**Adjournment:** A motion by Roeder, seconded by Dean to adjourn the meeting at 9:42 p.m. was carried unanimously.

*Minutes submitted by Cindy Odell, 10/5/17*