

**Upper Delaware Council**  
**OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**  
**February 26, 2019**

Committee Members Present: Harold Roeder Jr., Aaron Robinson, Fred Peckham, Larry Richardson, Jim Greier, David Dean, Al Henry, Jeff Dexter

Committee Members Absent: None

Staff : Laurie Ramie, Pete Golod, Ashley Hall-Bagdonas

NPS Partner: None

Guests: Roger Saumure (Shohola alternate)

The UDC's Operations Committee held its regularly scheduled monthly meeting on Tuesday, February 26, 2019 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Roeder called the meeting to order at 8:27 p.m.

**Approval of January 22<sup>nd</sup> Meeting Minutes:** A motion by Henry seconded by Dexter to approve the January 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting minutes was carried. There was no public comment on the agenda.

**Executive Director's Report and Monthly Calendar:**

**Financial Status:**

**FY 2018 Federal Funding:** Ramie updated with the federal government shutdown beginning on 12/22/18 and ending on 2/15/19 the UDC will need to submit an Application for Federal Assistance package for the balance of Fiscal Year 2019 funding: \$244,110.00, representing the \$300,000 allocation minus \$55,890 received on 12/18/18 under the 10/1-12/7/18 Continuing Resolution period. There was a second FY 19 Continuing Resolution from 12/7-12/21/18 with no assigned funding before the shutdown occurred. A new draft budget is under review to lead to preparation of the narrative report, SF-424 forms, and work plan. As per NPS, the funding has to go from the U.S. Treasury to the Department of the Interior to the National Park Service to the Northeast Region to the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River before any can be released to UDC. The UDC's ASAP account balance has \$1,203.37 remaining from the \$55,890 reimbursement. Ramie has asked for a timetable for when this funding will be available. Patrick Reidy, UDC's contracting officer at the Northeast Region was unable to give Ramie an answer. Heister said she believes it will be one to two weeks away. Mike Poska, the bookkeeper for UDC has started to work on it. One item that Reidy did share today is that some SF-424 forms have gone obsolete as of January 31st, 2019 but the Office of Management and Budget has yet to produce new forms. So we're grandfathered in to use the old forms until such time as they have the new forms. Heister recommended to get these forms in early before they change, that way you're protected from having to redo it. The UDC is currently owed \$19,918.07 for January and \$19,239.37 for February expenditures, for a total of \$39,157.44. When UDC does have funding available, that is how much Ramie will withdraw from the online account. Henry asked if that covers the period during the shutdown. Ramie said yes, it overlapped.

**Bank Balance:** As of 2/26, the UDC has \$112,301.90 in its Jeff Bank accounts.

**Grant Funding:** Tusten Representative Susan Sullivan's 2/20 reaction to news of the \$6 million approved to fund the Delaware River Basin Restoration Program: "I don't see why the UDC would not be eligible for a grant from this program. We could ask for \$35,000 to be disbursed to Towns for River clean up, technical assistance, and the broader projects that benefit the River Corridor, with less restrictions than NPS is now enforcing. The disbursement mechanism is already in place." Ramie's insight is this grant is for restoration projects like stream restoration and not really meant to fund operations for an organization. UDC can try but she would need to review the grant guidelines when this round opens.

**Administration:**

**Government Officials:** Ramie has sent invitations to all board members as meetings with state legislators to discuss operational support for the UDC were arranged. That involves putting an agenda together, compiling an attendance list, doing literature packets, and sending a thank you letter afterwards. UDC did have an offer from Congressman

Delgado's staff to come to Narrowsburg as their Liberty office is not set up yet, on a March date TBD to get an update on issues the UDC was pursuing with Congressman Faso. Henry recommends that UDC talks to Congressman Delgado about a UDC base increase to our Federal Funding. Also, let him know how difficult it is for this organization to get money that's in an account across the river. There has to be a shortcut.

**Software Purchase:** Bookkeeper Poska advised that the Quickbooks program he was using at UDC was outdated and no longer supported. Ramie ordered Intuit Desktop Premium 2019 Quickbooks software on 2/25 from Tech Soup non-profit discount program for \$50. The retail cost would be approximately \$349.95. She noted this is a great source for 501(c)(3) organizations.

**SAM Registration:** The UDC's registration in the U.S. Government's System for Award Management (SAM) which must be currently active to receive federal government awards, grants, and payments must be renewed prior to its 6/15/19 expiration.

#### **Public Relations:**

**"The Upper Delaware":** Ramie wrote the copy for a Request for Proposals legal ad for 2019 newsletter printing and mailing services, and submitted it to four newspapers on 2/13 for one insertion each (*Wayne Independent, Sullivan County Democrat, River Reporter, and Hancock Herald*). She prepared a 2019 Bid Specifications Packet on 2/14 (provided in meeting packet). Ramie has developed a list of contents for the Spring 2019 issue on 2/21. Ramie began requesting needed information and identifying photos. Sealed bids are due by 3/1 at 5p.m. There will be a draft resolution for the 3/7 UDC meeting. Ramie will interview Kaitlin Haas for the representative profile on 3/7. Three issues are planned as follows: Spring '19 Vol. 32 No. 1 Due to Printer 3/13/19, publication date 4/1/19; Summer '19 Vol. 32 No. 2 Due to Printer 7/17.19, publication date 8/5/19; Fall/Winter '19 Vol. 32 No. 3, Due to Printer 11/20/19, publication date 12/2/19.

**4/28 Awards Banquet:** Ramie provided a timeline of activities in the meeting packet. She provided buffet menu selections to Central House Family Resort, prepared the awards nomination form, and issued a news release on 2/13 soliciting nominations by 3/15. Ramie has posted the release form, and list of past recipients on our website.

**Publicity:** UDC released two news releases in this past period: "Upper Delaware Council Elects 2019 Officers", 2/8 (with photo); and "Upper Delaware Council Seeks Nominations for 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Awards by March 15", 2/13. Ramie has a list of next topics coming up. She parcels out UDC's press releases to keep UDC in the news. Moving on to the March calendar, we have an opportunity that has just come up of a presentation at our 3/7 UDC meeting. WU/RM Committee directed questions to the Delaware River Master and they politely answered on Monday saying they will come and make a presentation and 3/7/19 is a possible date. Ramie believes it would be the Deputy River Master based in Milford, Kendra Russell.

#### **Old Business**

**2019 UDC Awards Banquet Timeline:** Ramie said this list is provided which outlines all the activities from now until April 28<sup>th</sup> to make the banquet happen.

#### **New Business**

**Summary of Meetings with NY and PA State Legislators:** Ramie compiled a summary provided in the meeting packets. UDC has now met with every one of our state representatives in New York and PA. UDC did not meet directly with Senator Lisa Baker, but we met with her Chief of Staff. Senator Baker had the flu that day, unfortunately. Ramie said overall that we've received very positive receptions and pledges of support from one and all, Democrats and Republicans. Ramie provided the dates of the meetings, a synopsis on what was learned and any interesting quotes as well as their advice because that's what we essentially were seeking for how to make this operational funding happen for the UDC. For example, Assemblyman Crouch, on Feb. 7<sup>th</sup> in Binghamton suggested tapping into the Environmental Protection Fund, which is at \$3.2 billion. Why would they miss \$100,000 out of that? He was realistic enough to realize that he is a Republican in a Democratic Administration, so he knew that the lead would have to be taken by Senator Metzger and Assemblywoman Gunther. He told us he will lead right behind them in a bipartisan support to advocate for our cause.

Ramie said then we met with Pennsylvania elected officials on Feb. 8<sup>th</sup> and they very graciously all got together in one room in Honesdale. Representative Fritz serves on the Appropriations Committee, so he has particular insights to offer into different funding streams. They asked some very precise and pointed questions about how we operate such as, "Where does the funding come from? What about the DRBC? Why aren't they contributing to our organization?" It does indeed, as Greier has pointed out, say in the River Management Plan that the DRBC would make a direct contribution. They asked for a certain references and documents to be sent to them so that they can come up with a plan. They not only were considering funding through the DCNR, which is another great thing that Tim Dugan came with us to that meeting and as our state representative, carries a lot of weight and expressed to them what channels he has taken through his agency. All recommendations were that we need this to be a legislative approach not through the agency but DCNR is perfectly willing to support us in any pathway there. They asked Dugan if DCNR has any property within the designated boundaries of the corridor? He said yes. They asked him how much, and he didn't want to give an answer off the top of his head, but he went back and researched it and found 1,500 acres of Pennsylvania State Forest Land are within the corridor. Ramie could see the wheels were turning likely with them thinking "If we prorated..." perhaps DCNR could be contributing in that direct way. They talked about Act 13 Funds being a possible source for the impact fees for natural gas drilling. They said they've always had a great relationship with us, particularly through the Townships and that they would go to bat for us.

On 2/15 the UDC delegation met with Senator Metzger in Middletown. The issue there was that she's brand new to office. There was only a half hour allocated and we had to spend 15 minutes of that time answering her question about who we are and what we do but she was very interested. She has been an environmental activist. Ramie quoted her saying "You make a strong case." Richardson said that he was able to speak with her at another function and she expressed that she would get together with Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther to see if she could push something.

Yesterday our delegation met with Assemblywoman Gunther in Monticello. Ramie said that had the most concrete steps taken during the short meeting there because she got a staffer from the Assembly Ways and Means Committee on the phone to listen to the conversation. She said to him, "Is this something we could put in an appropriation?" and he said, "Yes." She did say that they would work directly with Senator Metzger's office to approach this jointly. They also provided us with a contact through the Governor's office separate from the DEC. The Governor has a Secretary for the Environment and it already turned out that the person they gave us appears to no longer be there. There was a staff transition very recently and it looks like those positions changed on 1/30. Right now we're trying to track down who is the proper contact. The thought is that we will go to Albany and Harrisburg and try to get as close to the Governor's Administrations to get to the decision makers because these budgets always start with a governor's proposal and then the legislature weighs in with their own. Then they hash it out until they come up with something acceptable.

At the end of this report, Ramie included some of the Federal responses that we've received. It's kind of scattered because when we sent out letters out with that funding briefing report, we only asked for meetings with the state lawmakers at this point because we needed to focus our efforts on those was who could make it happen. We will certainly take the support from Senators and Congress people. Gunther requested a talking-points fact sheet which has been provided. There was a copy with the report. What Ramie is looking for now is recommendations on what we do next. Ramie said one thing UDC promised was to let all of these legislators know once we completed our meetings what the outcome was with the others. Henry's recommendation is to reach out to Rep. Matt Cartwright and ask him to put pressure on the PA Governor. Robinson's suggestion is UDC targets the Executive Branch of both states immediately because it's a triangulation and since the Executive Branch does prepare the budgets we should try to make it to them right away. Roeder wanted to thank everyone who has been traveling to these meeting and especially thank Ramie for her efforts.

**"The Upper Delaware" 2019 Newsletter Contract Bids due by 3/1/19:** Ramie included a copy of the bid specs and explained the contracting process. The interesting thing about this contract is we need printing and the mail distribution services. It requires printing out the labels, putting them on the pages, and sorting to post office standards. It's for 10,000 copies each time and now we are going to three issues per year. This went out and Ramie also as a courtesy sent it to some local printers who might be interested in bidding. March 1<sup>st</sup> is the date that they need to submit their sealed bids. We have one so far and Ramie expects another one at the very least. Then a draft Resolution will be prepared for action at the 3/7 meeting.

**Summary of Pending Bills 2-25-19:** A motion by Henry, seconded by Robinson to approve the bills was carried.

**Financial Statement 2-28-19:** Roeder said the financial statement is offered for individual review.

**Other:** None

**Public Comment:** None

**Adjournment:** A motion by Henry seconded by Greier to adjourn the meeting at 8:59 p.m. was carried.

*Minutes prepared by Ashley Hall-Bagdonas, 2/7/19*