

**Upper Delaware Council
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
September 22, 2020**

Committee Members Present: Larry Richardson, Aaron Robinson, Al Henry, Fred Peckham (via phone), Jeff Dexter, Jim Greier, David Dean.
Committee Members Absent: None
Staff : Laurie Ramie, Shannon Cilento, Ashley Hall-Bagdonas
NPS Partner: None.
Guests: Roger Saumure- Shohola Township Alternate

The UDC's Operations Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, September 22, 2020. Chairperson Richardson called the meeting to order at 7:50 p.m.

Approval of August 25 Meeting Minutes: A motion by Robinson seconded Henry to approve the August 25, 2020 Meeting Minutes was carried.

Executive Director's Report and Monthly Calendar:

Financial Status:

FY 2020 Federal Funding: On 9/21, Ramie applied to withdraw \$64,217.80 from the ASAP account, which zeroes out the FY20 federal funding account. The 9/22 abstract is \$62,712.50, with several bills pending by 9/30, following careful daily management of the surplus funding balance. Ramie will submit UDC's Fiscal Year 2020 4th Quarter and Final Financial and Progress SF-425 Reports for July-August-September to NPS by 10/30.

FY 2021 Federal Funding: Ramie said a Continuing Resolution deal is anticipated to keep the government operating beyond 10/1/20. The Department of the Interior is transitioning to a new financial management software platform called GrantSolutions on 10/13. This affects all National Park Service funding award recipients. Training through a two-part live webinar series has been set for 10/7 and 10/8. A recorded version will be available online. She will be on vacation at the time of the webinar; she will have to pick up the training on her own. She hopes by that time Michelle Blockberger, NPS Administrative Officer, will have taken the training as well and can provide some guidance. Ramie will review the website also in order to learn how future transactions and reports will be handled. Ramie did suggest to UDC Bookkeeper Mike Poska that he could attend the webinar. Richardson asked if it would make sense for Cilento or Hall-Bagdonas to sit-in on the training. He said it may help if Ramie has questions in the training. Ramie said finances are the worst part of the job and it's tedious. She said maybe the new software platform will be easier She would hate to subject anyone else to it. The UDC's 1st quarter FY21 budget of \$75,000 for 10/1-12/30/20) was previously approved by NPS.

UDC Auditors: An 8/4 letter from Eckersley and Ostrowski, LLC advises the UDC of a succession plan for the firm in anticipation of Dick Eckersley and Tom Ostrowski "reducing our overall efforts gradually" over the next 10-12 years. Effective after the 2019 filing season, they are creating two offices and bringing on new staff. Richard Eckersley, Diana Davis, and Tristan Eckersley-Bistran will remain at the current location in Scranton; while a new firm called Ostrowski, Beckley and Thorpe will operate out of an office at 933 Northern Blvd. in Clarks Summit. "Our goal and hope is that as we ease our way out the door, the next generation will continue the tradition of service and integrity built over the past 100 years. As with any succession plan, there will be flexibility built-in to see to it that our clients receive exemplary service which remains our primary goal," Dick Eckersley writes.

Administration:

Building and Grounds: As a follow-up to questions about the status of a request by the Narrowsburg Volunteer Fire Dept. to extend onto the UDC's property to cut trees, Art Hawker reported to Ramie on 8/29, "Yes, the trees were removed last year. Thank you and the UDC for your cooperation!" Hall-Bagdonas found out from Frontier Communications that the pile of cable and other debris on the median between our properties is intended for

removal by Tom Coacci. A Kristt-Kelley Office Systems technician was in on 9/2 to service the UDC's Kyocera color copier/scanner and check the condition of the drum, at no charge since the UDC has a maintenance contract. They changed the settings to give it better performance and save power and now it is a slower copy speed. Ramie said it's kind of like the days of dial-up modem when you would dial it up and walk around the block. She said even though he meant well it's not very productive for the office. Pat Carullo, digital media coordinator at the Narrowsburg Union, installed the UDC's new projection screen on 9/9 after constructing a custom frame for it to extend from the wall, free of charge in appreciation for the UDC's work. Carulla said he's deeply appreciative of the conservation work UDC does. Ramie said we have a step-stool to use to pull down the screen. Hall-Bagdonas said staff can also extend the pull-down string. Star Hesse from the Narrowsburg Beautification Group recently tended to the flower plots out front to ready the plants for fall. David Blethen from Rapid Electric of Glen Spey came in on 9/18 to inspect a non-functioning ceiling fan. He found a defective part within the fan unit, will purchase one, and return to install it.

Public Relations:

32nd Annual Awards: Ramie obtained cost quotes from J&C Awards for 27 plaques on 9/16 and from Spencer Printing on 9/21 for 100 copies of a 16-page full-color, duplex stapled booklet. She did additional research on our 2020 honorees through interviews as needed, requested quotes and photos, searched files for images, and assigned eight awards to her and five to Cilento. Ramie wrote inscriptions for the plaques that were submitted on 9/16 and delivered on 9/22. Ramie oversaw the layout, design, composition, and editing of the Quark Xpress document, which was converted into a PDF for printing purposes and submitted on 9/21. Staff will distribute the souvenir program that is expected to be received by 9/30 to honorees and post it on the UDC's website. Ramie will issue a news release to advise the public of its availability. She said we will have to decide whether to hold the bestowing of plaques until the 4/25/2021 awards banquet which will hopefully be in person at Central House Family Resort. Cilento said she feels the program came out nicely.

Publicity: Two news release were issued: "Town of Delaware Uses UDC Grant for 'Guide to Permits' Brochure", 8/28; and "UDC Issues Strategic Plan Survey", 9/17.

FY 2019 and 2020 Annual Reports: Ramie will compose the UDC's Fiscal Year 2019 and 2020 Annual Reports for on-line posting and availability of hard copies upon request.

"The Upper Delaware": After 10/1, Ramie will request bid for newsletter printing and mailing services for Fiscal Year 2021. The Fall/Winter issue deadline is 11/25 for a 12/7 release.

Consulting Projects:

Project Review Workbook Update: Cilento's filming segment for the instructional video took place on 8/26. Final production and editing is underway. A status update was requested from Quiet Light Films on 9/21. UDC's order of 100 additional print copies of the Workbook at \$1,290 were picked up from Spring Hill Laser Printing by Hall-Bagdonas on 9/18.

Engineering Report for Ten Mile River Access Options: UDC signed a contract with JHA Companies on 8/28 and arranged for the retainer payment. A status update was provided at the 9/15 Water Use/Resource Management Committee. We await submission of the report assessing the feasibility of improving the site for trailered boat access.

Ramie said our October calendar is provided for review and is a busy month with various activities. At the 10/1 full Council meeting we will have our Japanese Knotweed presentation by Friends of the Upper Delaware River (FUDR).

Old Business

Status of Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Finalization by 9-30-20: A copy of the worksheet by Poska was provided in the meeting packet. Ramie said the bottom line is that UDC is \$373 away from having spent every penny of the \$300,000. Some of that money is spoken for with a website hosting fee and a postage meter fee. This worksheet shows where the variances were. With the salary for the Resource Specialist we ended up being almost \$13,000 ahead of the game because of the vacancy lasting for six months. Ramie said she thinks NPS can certainly understand with COVID and that, it was circumstances not in our control for the most part.

UDC Strategic Plan Retreat Update: The Strategic Plan Committee of seven has met by phone on 8/27, 9/10, and 9/17 to date, with additional calls between Ramie and facilitator Buck Moorhead for pre-planning, survey development, and debriefings. Ramie and Hall-Bagdonas worked with the Narrowsburg Union on locally-sourced catering options at \$12 per person. An advance survey was issued on 9/15 with a request for responses by 9/21 at 5 p.m. A total of 45 surveys were returned out of the 129 people on Ramie's distribution list. That's a 34.9% response rate which is pretty good. Hall-Bagdonas is handling reservations. The committee will meet again on 9/24 to start analyzing survey results and hone in on a final workshop itinerary. The Committee will review Delaware Hall set-up requests with Union staff by 9/28. Hall-Bagdonas will accept reservations and menu selections by 9/29. As of now only 15 people have signed up. Ramie said we have a limit of 50 because it's an inside event. Ramie encourages members to let those in their Town/ships know that they are welcome to join. If it is just part of the day that is also feasible. All that have signed up will participate in the Retreat on 10/3 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Narrowsburg Union. The Five-Year Plan has been requested for presentation of drafts to the UDC and final approval by 12/30/20.

Other: None.

New Business

Town of Tusten Technical Assistance Grant 2020-04: \$906.50 payment approval: Richardson said we heard the approval at the Project Review Committee and agreed that the project was completed. A Motion by Henry seconded by Greier for approval of payment for Town of Tusten Technical Assistance Grant 2020-04: \$906.50 carried unanimously.

River Cleanup Grant Approval: Town of Lumberland, \$1,100.00: Ramie said Lumberland contracts with one provider, Ann Steimle, to patrol every other week along the riverbank. Steimle does that May-September. A Motion by Henry seconded by Robinson to approve payment for Fiscal Year 2020 Town of Lumberland River Cleanup Grant, \$1,100 carried unanimously.

River Cleanup Grant Approval: Town of Deerpark, \$3,898.47 (added \$612.76): Ramie said we had approved \$3,898.47 but she is recommending UDC pay the full amount. They completed three cleanups along the Hawk's Nest area after Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day. They cleaned 2.9 miles from the Town of Lumberland border to the end of the Hawk's Nest. A Motion by Henry seconded by Robinson to approve payment for Fiscal Year 2020 Town of Deerpark River Cleanup Grant, \$3,898.47 carried unanimously.

Website Update for ADA Compliance by W Design: Ramie said after last month when Operations Committee approved the proposal W Design submitted for updating the UDC website we had also informed Warner that we want to be ADA compliant. Ramie provided Warner's write-up about that in the meeting packet. The cost for that is \$650. There was further discussion with her about plug-ins/add-ons that would be helpful with the work that she outlined. The new UDC site is moving to a new host server so we will have an annual fee of \$144 for that service. Warner said they are making every effort to make the new site go live before 9/30, which is the date originally requested. After the ADA request was added she said they may not be able to go live by 9/30. Warner will be training UDC staff on how to maintain the ADA compliance. She looked into specific programs they have for ADA compliance on websites that is an administrative tool to make sure it stays up to date and provides a button on the front end of the website if you need any of the accommodations for disabilities. She said once this is installed, we would never have to go through ADA compliance again because the software checks for updates and makes them. Whereas, with the less expensive toolbar option the UDC staff would be responsible to make any changes regularly. Warner's recommendation is to go with Max Access (\$37 per month / \$444 annually). Henry asked if you can apply the \$375 from this Fiscal Year towards this website update? Ramie said we need to pay \$144 first for the annual hosting fee. Ramie said she's talking about the Federal Funding but the UDC also has funds. Henry said his Motion would be to use Federal money. Richardson said this is being paid to a second party. A Motion by Henry seconded by Robinson to approve the website update for ADA compliance carried.

Draft UDC Social Media Policy: Richardson said the Social Media Policy went out for advance review. Cilento said on paragraph one "the primary objective of the UDC utilizing social media is to promote our events, educate the public on our mission, and stimulate public interest and stewardship for the river's resources." She said they are not "live" but accounts have been created for Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. The next step is to develop content. Hall-Bagdonas said she looked over various templates and this one seemed to fit best for the UDC. She

noted paragraph three reading “UDC reserves the right to direct its employees to avoid certain subjects and remove inappropriate comments and posts.”, which was a concern brought up at the last Operations meeting. Henry noted the last bullet should read “Questions shall be directed to the Executive Director for guidance.” Hall-Bagdonas said she would change it to Executive Director. A Motion by Henry seconded by Greier to approve the amended UDC Social Media Policy carried unanimously. Richardson said this should be provided to the full Council.

Summary of Pending Bills 9-21-2020: A Motion by Henry seconded by Greier to approve bills was carried.

Financial Statement 9-30-2020: Richardson said the financial statement is offered for individual review.

Other: Richardson said we probably need a Resolution to revise the TAG budget line. Ramie said right now we only have a budget that pertains to the first quarter because NPS can’t approve anything beyond what they have funding for. Ramie said we don’t have a TAG line yet because the payments don’t come due until the end of the fiscal year. She said our budget right now is only through 12/30. A Motion by Dean seconded by Henry to revise the Technical Assistance Grant (TAG) budget line carried unanimously.

Richardson requested it would be beneficial to get the Chairpersons of each committee to provide their signature’s for e-signature. Cilento said she would look into the best way to do that for digital signatures.

Henry said if you look under 61 Federal Register 35136 July 6, 1986, that has most of the language in there and it talks about the updated language. He believes that is the last time that section was updated. Henry asked the committee and Ramie if they ever remember NPS notifying them about that change? They said not that they could recall. He said add to that, Ten Mile River Access, and drones not being allowed to fly over the river to the list of things NPS has not followed through on. Cilento will be forwarding that information out to the committee.

Public Comment: None.

Adjournment: A motion by Greier seconded by Henry to adjourn the meeting at 8:47 p.m. was carried.