

Upper Delaware Council
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
December 18, 2013 (Re-scheduled from Dec. 17)

Committee Present: Jeffrey Dexter, Harold Roeder, Jr., Pat Jeffer, Fred Peckham, Debra Conway,
Larry Richardson, Nadia Rajsz
Committee Absent: George Fluhr
NPS Partner: Sean McGuinness
Staff: Laurie Ramie, Travis O'Dell, Cindy Odell
Guests: Andy Boyar, Al Henry

The UDC's Operations Committee held its monthly meeting on Wednesday, December 18, 2013 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Dexter called the meeting to order at 7:14 p.m.

Approval of October 22 Meeting Minutes: A motion by Rajsz, seconded by Peckham to approve the October 22 meeting minutes was carried with Richardson abstaining as he was not present at that meeting. The November meeting was cancelled due to a winter weather advisory. There was no public comment on the agenda.

Executive Director's Report: Ramie said *The River Reporter* found in their office a binder of all the public comments that were submitted on the River Management Plan in 1986 and offered it to the Council. The binder is a compilation that was done by Barbara Yeaman. Ramie shared some of the comments with members and told them it was available for their viewing. Henry suggested making another copy of the book or preserving it some other way.

Ramie asked members their feelings on closing the office early on Christmas Eve. A motion to allow staff to close the office at noon on December 24 was made by Roeder, seconded by Rajsz and carried.

Ramie referred to her written report and spoke of funding issues. She said it appears to be good news on the federal funding front. A discussion about the federal budget took place.

Ramie reported that effective January 1, 2014, the Internal Revenue Service has established \$.56 as the standard business mileage reimbursement rate, down from \$.565 in 2013.

Ramie noted her written report contained more information that members could review and contact her if they had any questions. She referred to the UDC January calendar of meetings, activities and deadlines which includes a preview of February as well.

New Business

TAG 2014-08 Berlin Township, Request for Payment, \$683.99: A motion to approve payment for TAG 2014-08, Berlin Township, in the amount of \$683.99 was made by Richardson, seconded by Rajsz and carried.

IRS Form 990 Review and FY 2014 Audit Engagement Approval: Ramie said that Dick Eckersley has advised us that the IRS Form 990 needs to be reviewed before it is finalized and submitted by the deadline of February 15, 2014. She spoke of a small employer health insurance credit that bookkeeper Mike Poska advised her that the Council is eligible to receive. She will ask Eckersley and Ostrowski to file the necessary paperwork for this. Ramie offered a list of proposed changes and said she will draft a letter to Eckersley and Ostrowski advising them of those changes. These changes were discussed among the members and suggestions were offered. She said she will ask Eckersley to share with us the amended document before it is filed. The completed IRS Form 990 will need to be signed by the Chairperson. Richardson asked that the corrected version be sent out to members upon receipt.

Ramie referenced the Management Representation letter in members' packets which outlines what services Eckersley and Ostrowski propose to perform for FY 2014. She noted the rate has not changed. A motion to recommend to the full Council that the UDC enter into a contract with Eckersley and Ostrowski for the FY audit and tax filings was made by Richardson, seconded by Roeder and carried. Richardson

commented that nobody knows this Council better. Ramie said she will prepare a Resolution for the January full Council meeting.

Ramie referred to a bill from Eckersley and Ostrowski for the additional work that Dick Eckersley performed during the year. She noted that he is charging the Council half his normal rate. Richardson asked that in the future, an itemized bill be requested. A motion to pay the additional bill of Eckersley and Ostrowski was made by Roeder, seconded by Rajszyk and carried.

Summary of Pending Bills 12-17-13/Financial Statements: The committee was provided with an abstract of bills dated December 17 to review. Richardson questioned if the Committee had reached a decision about continuing to pay Westfall Township's monthly member fee in light of the fact that they have not had a representative on the Council for more than a year. Ramie said she is hopeful that a representative may be appointed at their January reorganizational meeting. Rajszyk questioned if there should be a policy in place that if there is no representation from a town/township, then the fee will be suspended. It was suggested that another letter be sent to Westfall Township. Boyar commented that if there is no representative, how can we possibly pay the stipend. Henry questioned if the fee is paid because the town/township is participating on the Council, or is it because they are sending a representative. He feels that should be looked into. Ramie referenced page 21 of the River Management Plan where it states, "Where permitted by law, local governments shall be reimbursed by the Council for the expenses incurred in their participation on the Council." Members commented that the word "participation" is a key word. After a brief discussion, it was decided that a letter be sent out as soon as possible to Westfall to see if finding a representative can be put on their January reorganizational agenda. They will be advised that discussion is taking place about putting a policy in place regarding discontinuing the stipend if there is no participation on the Council. McGuinness suggested defining participation. Richardson noted a line could be put in the letter stating that participation will include regular attendance at Council meetings. A motion by Rajszyk, seconded by Conway to pay the bills listed on the abstract was carried unanimously. Financial Statements as of November 30, 2013 were provided for individual review.

Other: None

Old Business

2nd Draft Conflict of Interest and Code of Conduct Policies: Ramie said both of the policies and a copy of attorney Jeff Clemente's opinion were provided in members' packets. She suggested reviewing each policy individually and page by page. The Conflict of Interest Policy was reviewed first. A number of changes were addressed and agreed upon. A lengthy discussion took place regarding appropriate disciplinary and corrective action language. It was decided that for the purpose of moving the document forward, the language was fine as is. Boyar said that he will, on behalf of the Council, reach out to the New York State Association of Towns for further clarification of the language. A motion to move the Conflict of Interest with the agreed upon changes to the full Council for final approval was made by Rajszyk, seconded by Richardson and carried with Peckham abstaining.

The Employment Practices and Staff Code of Conduct Policy was reviewed. A very lengthy discussion took place regarding the anti-nepotism policy, in particular the vagueness of the term "romantic relationship". Richardson feels that an effort should be made to better define what a romantic relationship is. He said he will look into it. The rest of the document was reviewed and other changes discussed. A motion to move the Employment Practices and Staff Code of Conduct Policy with agreed upon changes to the full Council for approval was made by Rajszyk, seconded by Peckham and carried.

Other: None

Public Comment: None

Adjournment: A motion by Roeder, seconded by Rajszyk to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m. was carried unanimously.