

## **UPPER DELAWARE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

### **May 5, 2016**

The Upper Delaware Council held its monthly meeting on Thursday, May 5, 2016 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Fred Peckham called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance and roll call followed.

In attendance: Town of Hancock-Fred Peckham, Town of Delaware-Harold Roeder, Jr., Town of Cochection-Larry Richardson, Town of Tusten- Susan Sullivan, Town of Highland-Jeff Haas, Town of Lumberland-Leigh Sherman, Town of Deerpark-David Dean, Damascus Township-Jeffrey Dexter, Berlin Township-Alan Henry, Shohola Township-Aaron Robinson, National Park Service-Kris Heister. Staff in attendance: Resource Specialist-Pete Golod, Secretary-Cindy Odell. Also in attendance: Ginny Dudko, Deerpark alternate. Absent: Town of Fremont, Lackawaxen Township, Westfall Township, State of New York, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Delaware River Basin Commission. Media: Dave Hulse, Peter Becker, Autumn Schanil. Guests: Allan Schadt.

**Approval of April 7 Meeting Minutes:** A motion by Richardson seconded by Haas to approve the April 7 meeting minutes was carried unanimously.

**Public Comment on the Agenda:** None

**Committee Reports:** Peckham recommended that the committee reports not be given at this meeting. He noted that the minutes are available on the Council's website. Richardson asked that the minutes reflect that he was not in favor of foregoing the reports.

### **Status Reports**

**Delaware River Basin Commission:** The DRBC was absent, however, the hydrologic report was provided. The NYC Delaware River Basin Storage as of April 29, 2016 was at a combined capacity of 98.2% with Cannonsville at 97.2%. Odell noted that Steve Tambini answered Roeder's inquiry of why the period of record represented by the long-term median on the New York City Delaware River Basin Storage chart goes only through May 2013. His April 12 e-mail reply states, "The Long Term Median in the data set ended in May of 2013 (started in June 1967). The median is the "mid-point" of the data (not the average). Effectively the "middle number" or "mid-point" in the data range for a long data period does not vary or will not vary much year to year and as such it is not updated every year. The median data line does not impact a declaration of a drought stage. We expect to make this statistical calculation about once every five years."

**NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation:** No report in the absence of Representative Bill Rudge. A press release dated April 27, 2016 and titled "DEC to Host Public Meetings on Deer Management" was provided in members' packets at Rudge's request. Additional information is available on the DEC website, Odell noted.

**PA Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources:** No report in the absence of Representative Tim Dugan.

**National Park Service-Upper Delaware:** Heister reported that Larry Neal has been hired as the Upper Delaware Scenic & Recreational River Chief of Law Enforcement. She said that Neal has been with the Upper Delaware for 25 years and referred to him as a “rock solid guy” who is familiar with the NPS partners, the region, and jurisdictional issues. His former position and a seasonal law enforcement position are both currently vacant. Heister hopes to have both of those positions filled as soon as possible.

Heister said she attended the “Scenic Wild Delaware River” Geotourism project MapGuide rollout event held at the Narrowsburg Union earlier in the day. She reported that approximately 77 people were in attendance including four Sullivan County Legislators, local business owners, and historical societies. She encouraged members to view the website if they have not already.

Heister said she attended the Buckingham Township meeting regarding the Linden Energy Services proposed pipeline. She referred to the meeting as an “exciting one” with some of the township residents clearly against the proposal. Ultimately, the township supervisors unanimously adopted an ordinance authorizing a four-year option agreement to lay natural gas and source-water lines to connect the Tennessee pipeline in Pennsylvania to the Millennium pipeline in New York.

Heister referred to the May 5 letter in members’ packets responding to Henry’s request that the National Park Service look into removing the pile of debris that had collected in the river below the Narrowsburg Bridge. The letter explains her reasoning behind the decision that no action be taken. Heister reported that UPDE Chief of Law Enforcement Larry Neal evaluated the debris pile and does not feel that it is acting as a “strainer”. She noted that the pile is resting on top of a sand/gravel bar. The pile is full of trash and the NPS will address the trash issue, she added. Henry said he hopes that no one gets stuck in the pile of debris. Peckham referred to the pile as a “natural occurrence”.

Peckham pointed out to Heister a discrepancy in the NPS 2016 Calendar of Events. He noted that on page 1 it states that the 100 Mile Paddle Kick Off will kick off at Fireman’s Beach in Hancock, NY and travel 5 miles to the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission’s Buckingham Access, whereas on page 2 it says the event will go from Hancock to Lordville. Heister said the calendar is currently in draft form and she will make note of that difference in information.

Richardson noted that at the March 22<sup>nd</sup> Project Review Committee meeting, Heister said she would direct NPS rangers to document any problems with the bridge detour signs currently in place and call DOT with that information. He asked for an update. Heister said that law enforcement and Carla Hahn have done this and have been in direct communication with the Departments of Transportation. She stated that proper signage is going to be really important when there is more than one bridge closed. Hahn is working closely with DOT regarding the coordination of bridge closures and signage. Sullivan suggested that if detours are incorrect, perhaps the Park Service could enlist the help of local police departments to put pressure on the DOTs to ensure proper signage. Heister said that their permits will contain conditions regarding detour signage.

**UDC Executive Director’s Report:** In Ramie’s absence, Odell provided explanations for the additional handouts in members’ packets. The first was an April 21 letter from Susan Hazelton, P.E. of Pennsylvania Department of Transportation which provides information regarding the Skinners Falls Bridge Repair Project. The project is to begin on May 16 and be completed in August. Odell noted that Ramie will be attending the May 18<sup>th</sup> NY-PA Joint Interstate Bridge Commission Annual Meeting in Binghamton at which she will bring Damascus Township’s inquiry of rehabbing the bridge to a weight limit high enough to support an ambulance.

Odell reported that we received a response to the March 15<sup>th</sup> letter to Keith Goertz, Regional Director for NYS DEC Region 4, recommending that adequate signage be placed in Lordville that clearly directs the public to the Bouchouxville trail head. A copy of the letter was provided in members’ packets. The letter reads, “We have incorporated this request in our current order of signs as part of the Catskill Park Wayfinding Sign Project.” The letter also says that their Lands and Forests staff will work with NYSDOT and others as needed to place the signs in the appropriate locations to direct the public and avoid confusion. Peckham suggested that the National Park Service try to encourage NYS to have the proper signage installed in advance of their scheduled June 10<sup>th</sup> Bouchoux Trail hike.

Odell referred to the May calendar of UDC Meetings, Activities, and Deadlines provided in the packets and told members to call the office if they have any questions.

**Old Business:** Roeder spoke of the Down the Decades column in the May 3, 2016 *Sullivan County Democrat*. He said it reads that 50 years ago in 1966, "The Delaware River has come in for its share of publicity in the past, but this spring it seems to have gotten more than its share. The Sullivan County Board of Supervisors at the bidding of many of the Delaware Valley residents and sportsmen from all over the area have petitioned the powers that be to keep the stream flow higher by releasing more water from the big dams on the East and West branches of the river." He noted he found it interesting that the issue of residents wanting more releases dates back that far.

Heister reported that Saturday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, the NPS will be sponsoring a road clean-up from the Lackawaxen Access to the Roebing Bridge as a Centennial activity and part of the Great American Clean-up of PA.

**New Business:**

**Draft Resolution 2016-05: Approving 2016 River Clean-up Grant Applications:** Odell noted that the applications were vetted through the Operations Committee which recommended fully funding all of them. A motion to approve the resolution was made by Henry, seconded by Roeder and carried unanimously. Hulse questioned the total being awarded. Henry told him \$5,707.49.

**Draft Resolution 2016-06: Adopting the FY 2017 Budget:** A motion to approve the resolution was made by Roeder, seconded by Dean and carried unanimously.

**Draft Resolution 2016-07: Adopting the FY 2017 Work Plan for the Water Use/Resource Management Committee:** A motion to approve the resolution was made by Robinson, seconded by Henry and carried unanimously.

**Draft Resolution 2016-08: Adopting the FY 2017 Work Plan for the Project Review Committee:** A motion to approve the resolution was made by Robinson, seconded by Henry and carried unanimously.

**Draft Resolution 2016-09: Adopting the FY 2017 Work Plan for the Operations Committee:** A motion to approve the resolution was made by Robinson, seconded by Henry and carried unanimously.

**Draft Letter to FERC: Millennium Pipeline Company, LLC:** Peckham noted that the proposed letter is modeled after an April 2013 letter to FERC regarding the Hancock Compressor station. He said the letter points out that the project's proximity to the federally designated river corridor should be considered in the Commission's review. It also urges them to consult the River Management Plan to assure that all potential direct and indirect impacts from the proposed projects have been satisfactorily addressed to protect the special rural character of the Upper Delaware region. A motion to approve the letter was made by Haas, seconded by Dean and carried unanimously.

**Other:** Henry acknowledged that tonight was Golod's first full Council meeting as Resource Specialist. Henry asked Haas if additional signage directing visitors to the Barryville Access has been installed. Haas said there is no signage directing people to the actual cul-de-sac. Haas spoke of his frustration getting the signage issue resolved at the access.

**Public Comment:** None

**Adjournment:** A motion by Roeder, seconded by Dean, to adjourn the meeting at 7:26 p.m. was carried unanimously.

*Minutes prepared by Cindy Odell 5/12/16*