

WATER USE/RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMM. MEETING MINUTES
December 18, 2018

Committee Members Present: Fred Peckham, Al Henry, Jim Greier, Pat Jeffer, Evan Padua
Committee Members Absent: Doug Case, Debra Conway
Staff: Laurie Ramie, Pete Golod, Ashley Hall-Bagdonas
NPS Partner: Absent
Guests: Harold G. Roeder, Jr., Cheryl Korotky

The UDC's Water Use/Resource Management Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, December 18th, 2018 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Peckham called the meeting to order at 8:13 p.m. A motion by Henry, seconded by Padua, to approve the Nov. 20th meeting minutes was carried. There was no public comment on the agenda.

Old Business

11/26 Upper Delaware Scenic Byway Report: Ramie reported that UDSB has been talking about requesting a Historic Marker for the highest point on the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway which is 1,840 feet. If you have been on I-84 you may have seen a brown sign outside Port Jervis which speaks to the elevation at that spot. UDSB is now looking for a similar large sign that can be easily read by the traveling public. The sign would be across from the French Woods Golf Club and five miles north of Long Eddy on Rt. 97. The idea is if the sign is there, motorists may slow down and appreciate the scenic vista to Pennsylvania. DOT representative Kris Gilbert agreed to do some research to verify the elevation as well as safety features. Gilbert will report back on her findings at the next UDSB meeting. UDSB was asked to put together a Facility Requirements list for the Visitor Center at the Callicoon Train Station. They expressed wanting six items: wall mounted or floor mounted literature display rack; space for seating, preferably an old-style railroad bench; space for an office to accommodate a desk, a few chairs, filing cabinet and limited shelving; provide access to public bathroom facility; provide easy and appropriate access by the traveling public; and allow for a flex-space arrangement for the rest of the square footage that would not be involved with the Visitor's Center as long as it doesn't infringe on their operations. They added one additional point: provide space for a permanent or rotating exhibit in addition to the display case. UDSB went line-by-line over a Memorandum of Understanding with the Callicoon Business Association (CBA) for the Visitor's Center and ultimately agreed to have Ramie consolidate the points that have been raised and present those back to the CBA for ratification. Henry asked if they are going to staff the Visitor's Center. Ramie said there many models being looked at. The Delaware Valley Job Corps in Callicoon could provide student volunteers. There is also a senior citizen program called Delaware Young at Heart that operates out of the Youth Center. They are talking about an inter-generational mix. Staffing is part of a business plan being developed which would include commitments from partners who would like to be involved in the programming. UDSB website updates were reviewed and various members of the committee took it upon themselves to provide content that was missing for the listings. That will include a new Business Membership page when an online sign-up option is available. In terms of the Visitor's Center, there was a second report that attorney Richard Stoloff is actively negotiating the draft lease from Central New York Railroad; until they have site control nothing will happen. CBA has been registered to administer these federal and state grants. Ramie learned today that they were successful in qualifying for a \$100,000 equipment grant through the USDA from a rural business program they offer. They are working on the renderings of the plans so that people have visuals to look at. On Dec. 19th architect Buck Moorhead will give a preliminary presentation to the Town of Delaware Planning Board. UDSB received a complaint from Mark Tuf, who lives near the Hawks Nest, and was a former Town of Deerpark Police Officer from 1991-1995. Tuf was inquiring about the status of signs that said "No Standing or Parking After 9 p.m." which were taken down when the roadway was refurbished and never put back up. Tuf said that section is becoming "a hangout for speed demons and vandals". Ramie forwarded his message to the Town of Deerpark, NPS, NYS DOT Region 8 and wrote back to Tuf. Ramie is not aware of any responses back. UDSB will ask Deerpark's UDSB Representative, Ginny Dudko, for her recommendations. She was currently out of town. UDSB has decided to invite the incoming State officials to a future meeting as well as to give them a tour of

the Scenic Byway so they know what they should be promoting and what is in this area. They decided to not hold a meeting in December. The next meeting is January 28, 2019.

12/14 Hydroelectric Plant at Cannonsville Reservoir Meeting Report: Golod noted that Peckham, Henry, Padua and Ramie attended the meeting as well. Essentially the DEP announced plans to build a \$34 million 6-megawatt hydroelectric plant on the Cannonsville Reservoir. The plant is to consist of two 3-megawatt generators inside a 4,400 square foot area or “power house”. With two turbo hydroelectric turbines. They plan to utilize existing pipe infrastructure within the release chambers. They estimate a shutdown of West Delaware Releases for approximately a month. During that time DEP is going to be utilizing both the Neversink and Pepacton to pump water into the river in order to meet flow targets as designated by the FFMP. However, Paul Rush did mention that it is approximately 1/3 of what Cannonsville itself releases. Henry said they will pump from Cannonsville as well through the spillway. Golod said meaning the minimum targets. Peckham said they can’t supplement the flows. Golod felt one of the concerns that this committee should be aware of is specifically during construction phase. With construction of this type there is going to be a lot of soil disturbance, sediment and storm runoff. Rush talked about using storm water mitigation practices; however this is something UDC should stay on top of because this could cause a lot of issues with turbidity and the addition of more sediment to the upper Delaware River. The lack of the water releases is the issue. To meet the minimum flow regime, specifically the lack coming from Cannonsville, there is the expectation to create lower than normal releases which will impact the macro and micro invertebrates as well as flora and fauna and threaten dwarf wedge mussels as well as other species. Design work is planned to begin in 2020, with the plant construction to begin in 2023 and a projected completion date of 2025-2026. Henry urges UDC to get with FUDR and similar entities to discuss what they think would be an appropriate release coming out of Cannonsville. They never talked about that. They merely said it would be minimal. UDC needs to hold NYC DEP to some minimum. Henry mentioned the issue about the sirens. NYC DEP said briefly some of the emergency management experts didn’t think it was a great idea. Adam Bosch said he had information from the engineering firm Schnabel that is studying improvements to the notification system. Their report was due at the end of the calendar year 2018. Henry suggested sending a letter to remind them that we would like to have an update. UDC never said the solution for their emergency alerts was sirens only. There are certain places where there is no cell phone service. If there is no early warning and the experts are saying sirens won’t work we need to ask them what will work. When Golod contacted the Schoharie Valley Emergency Center they had said the DEP paid for everything. Their maintenance fees were around \$20.00 a month. He believes there were about 20 sirens DEP put up and were able to utilize preexisting poles or removed old poles and put in new poles so they would be above a certain height. The sirens oscillate and in campground areas they have verbal commands like “run” or “seek high ground”.

12/18 DRBC RFAC’s Subcommittee on Ecological Flows Meeting Report: Golod reported this was the third meeting held at the Lake Wallenpaupack Environmental Learning Center. Subcommittee on Ecological Flows (SEF) has been tasked with reviewing the Regulated Flow Advisory Committee’s (RFAC) thermal mitigation bank guidelines and evaluating the efficiency of a 2,500 CFS bank to mitigate periods of elevated water temperature in the upper basin. SEF’s objectives are to provide scientific-based information and recommendations to RFAC regarding flows for the maintenance of healthy aquatic ecosystems including the consideration of water quality impacts over a range of regulating flows, sensitive species that could be impacted by regulating flows, flow regimes, thermal mitigation and flow change mitigation. The effects of existing flows on habitat and ecological health and other related matters are a factor they deem necessary. The review will consist of a collection and synthesis of information related to habitat flow in temperature needs of fish and other species of concern in the tailwaters of Cannonsville, Pepacton, Neversink and the Delaware River above Lordville. There will be documentation of known species between flow characteristics such as temperatures, seasonality, velocity and depth, ground surface water interaction, channel morphology, shade-tree cover and other factors that may influence the health of the species and also if RFAC deems necessary, expiration of alternate approaches for supporting ecological needs within the framework of the rapid flow change of thermal mitigation programs. Their target task is to determine how well does the existing thermal bank of water, which is 2,500 CFS a day, meet the defined criteria and how best to utilize this “pot of water”. There was discussion at the meeting do they utilize the water to have a balance of zero at the end of the year or do they try to conserve the water so they have more at the end of the year to utilize. They are trying to complete this task by May 31st. Another goal is to see how well the existing bank of 2,500 CFS a day meets the defined criteria if it was implemented differently than directed. They are also trying to complete this task by May 31st. The whole charge for SEF is related to past thermal stress history. Thermal stress is when water reaches a

temperature of 75° or higher affecting both the aquatic flora and fauna. Over the past 11 years there have been 78 days recorded which the Upper Delaware experienced severe thermal stress for a minimum of two days or more in a row. In 2008 there were 18 recorded events, 2010 there were 24 days. 2011 had three. 2012 had 14. 2013 had two. 2015 had two. 2016 had nine and this year had six recorded events. Dr. Peter Kolesar did this study. This was brought up not just for the cold-water fisheries up north but this is now affecting the micro and macro invertebrate species. Follow-up work that was tasked to the subcommittee includes peer reviewing Dr. Kolesar's thermal regression model, and scope and analysis for USGS. The Upper Delaware Park Service has to research temperature data for past thermal regression. They scheduled their next meeting for January, date to be determined. This meeting will focus on thermal mitigation. Golod said not being intimately familiar with these technical issues, it is a lot to try to digest. He suggested having Jeff Skelding of FUDR or Dr. Kolesar come in to continue this dialogue. Henry said all streams and tributaries should be thought of, not just focusing on one. Henry suggested seeing what the CFS was at Lake Wallenpaupack when they are making power at Kimbles. Padua said you can look that information up on the USGS website. Henry said if you know what CFS is being released at Wallenpaupack you know that water is not being released from up north because it is compensating the Montague flow. Henry doesn't think you should have to look it up; it would be better to enlighten everybody and they should let us know. Padua said the release regime there is the typical yo-yo release. Henry said Carla Hahn from NPS asked Paul Rush about Section 7 review and Kris Heister was talking about going 26 miles out of the jurisdiction of the Park Service because of flow issues. They are going up there to think about flow issues yet they aren't addressing Wallenpaupack. Padua said the maximum release at Cannonsville is 1,500 CFS.

Other: Golod was asked to follow-up on a question the committee asked him regarding the criteria used in selecting the geographic area for the Pocono-Kittatinny Cluster (PKC). PKC Coordinator Steven Schwartz said the William Penn Foundation with the help of the Open Space Institute (OSI) had defined the area of the PKC in 2013. They were given that area. It was Schwartz's impression that the OSI wanted by-and-large mostly forested land with little urbanization for the PKC. Schwartz said if UDC wanted a more definitive answer he could direct UDC to an OSI individual who could potentially answer the question.

New Business

Delaware River Flow and Storage Report: A copy of the December 17th NYC Current Reservoir Levels was provided in members' packets. Total combined storage was at 95.4%. Normal storage for the same date is 81.7%.

Public Comment: None

Adjournment: A motion by Henry, seconded by Jeffer, to adjourn the meeting at 9:02 p.m. was carried.

Minutes prepared by Ashley Hall-Bagdonas, 1/2/19