

Upper Delaware Council
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
July 23, 2013

Committee Present: Harold Roeder, Jr., Larry Richardson, Nadia Rajs, George Fluhr, Fred Peckham
Committee Absent: Jeffrey Dexter, Debra Conway
NPS Partner: Sean McGuinness
Staff: Laurie Ramie, Travis O'Dell, Cindy Odell
Guests: Gerald Euker, Alfred Steppich, Steve Lundgren

The UDC's Operations Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, July 23, 2013 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Vice-chairperson Roeder called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

Approval of June 25 Meeting Minutes: A motion by Rajs seconded by Richardson to approve the June 25 meeting minutes was carried. There was no public comment on the agenda.

Executive Director's Report: Ramie reported she has requested the UDC's July drawdown, noted that the balance in the federal funds account is just under \$89,000 and said she is awaiting confirmation from NPS Agreements Liaison Jennifer Fleming on the balance of our ASAP account after observing a discrepancy with a potential overpayment credited in October 2012 during the switchover of the new financial system. Ramie said she received word that no payments may be requested through the ASAP system from Sept. 25 through October 1. The guidance memo from the NPS Agreements Team dated July 17 states, "Please inform cooperators of this limitation and encourage them to draw down needed funds to get them through this period and perhaps somewhat beyond." Ramie referenced the current bank account balance provided in her written report. Ramie stated that she prepared a revised draft budget reflecting the expected 8% funding cut as specified by NPS Upper Delaware that was approved by the full Council on July 11. Bookkeeper Mike Poska revised the FY 2014 "Application for Federal Assistance" package on July 15 and prepared outstanding SF-425 annual and quarterly report forms requested by Administrative Office Karen Henry (further revised and delivered on 7/18). The FY 2014 work plans were also revised with new functional allocation figures to correspond with the 8% funding cut. Ramie added that the NPS Agreements Team memo also states that there will be an anticipated blackout on FY 2014 Financial Assistance until October 22, 2013. Ramie reported that following the UDC's action on July 11 to approve the quote from Just-In-Time Contractors of Callicoon for the work to be completed in the UDC office, as well as accounting for previously approved expenditures, the projected remaining balance of the FY 2013 surplus is approximately \$5,500. Ramie said the work by Just-In-Time contractors is scheduled for the week of August 12 and Justin McElroy estimates it will take one week to complete. She said that bids for the replacement of the current electric service are provided for review and action under New Business and offered recommendations for the balance after that proposed expenditure such as pre-paying for oil, purchasing an additional UDC only parking sign for the lot and purchasing paper or other needed office supplies. Discussion about the proposed projects needing to be completed and paid for by September 30th took place.

Ramie provided the presentation schedule for upcoming UDC meetings. At the August 1 full Council meeting, Jerre Mohler, coordinator of the Delaware River Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will speak about the "Health of the Delaware River Fisheries." At the August 20th Water Use/Resource Management Committee, Andrew Strauss, consultant to the William Penn Foundation, will provide information of the "Delaware River Basin Regional Trail Study." The William Penn Foundation has a lot of grant funding available and they are expanding their region to the Upper Delaware portion and trails are what they have in mind for funding. Ramie said we will reach out to trail proponents and others who we know are interested in this subject. Both meetings will be publicized for the general public as all our meetings are.

On July 11th, the Nominating Committee put forth Berlin Township Representative Al Henry as the candidate for the office of UDC secretary/treasurer. A vote will take place at the August 1 meeting. Nominations may be made from the floor at that time as well, Ramie added.

Ramie provided members with a list of current vacancies on the board. They are: Westfall Township representative and alternate; Town of Fremont representative; Town of Lumberland alternate, and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania alternate.

Ramie said that on July 11, Resolution 2013-08 was approved adding two new sections to the prior January 3, 2013 version of the bylaws. The bylaws have been revised accordingly, made part of the Council's official records, and distributed to all members as of July 19th.

Ramie noted that upcoming 25th Anniversary activities include staffing booths at the July 28 Narrowsburg RiverFest and the August 4 Civilian Conservation Corps Day at Ten Mile River Scout Camp; promote an alumni/reunion theme for the 25th Annual Raft Trip on August 4th; and continue logistical preparations for "Strides Across the Delaware" on September 28 in Lordville-Equinunk. Ramie said staff is considering selling UDC t-shirts on July 28th outside the office. If that happens, bathrooms could be available to the public that day as well. Peckham asked how many people have signed up for the raft trip. C. Odell told him that as of today, 36 people are signed up. Ramie said that the 5K sponsorship deadline has been extended until September 1st. A copy of the press release was included in members' packets. We will continue to distribute the commemorative flashlights, perhaps including them in the 5K goodie bags.

Ramie commented that conversation within the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway is very fluid right now about where the visitor's center stands based on one week ago versus today. They were aware that the federal funding was no longer available due to the change in location, but the state funding that Senator Bonacic secured in 2007 was still in debate as to whether it was still a viable source or not. Confirmation was received this morning from the NYS Dormitory Authority that \$250,000 of capital construction funding has been authorized for this project. This money is not tied to any specific location unlike the federal funds that Congressman Hinchey had secured. This grant funding does not require any match either, Ramie added. Rajszyk provided the history of the visitor center project from the initial site in Cochection to the proposed site at Fort Delaware in Narrowsburg. A lengthy discussion about the need for a visitor's center along the Byway took place. Rajszyk commented that in addition to being a visitor's center, the building would serve as a home to the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway organization. Ramie said that she reports on the Scenic Byway to the WU/RM Committee and that committee seems interested in taking some action to advocate for a visitor's center to accommodate the quarter of a million visitors that come to the Upper Delaware each year. She told members that they may be hearing about it again if that committee does make a recommendation to the full Council. She is trying to provide this committee with some of the background. Ramie reported that the Byway did hire a secretary at their July 22 meeting. She also reported that the Town of Cochection's UDSB interpretive panel at its Rt. 97 pull-off was vandalized with black spray paint. The vandalism was noticed on July 14th and reported to the Town's supervisor and Ramie contacted the sign manufacturer to inquire about cleaning methods. Town of Cochection Supervisor Gary Maas purchased a product and was able to successfully clean the sign. He has reported the incident to the Sullivan County Sheriff's Department.

Ramie referenced the August calendar of UDC meetings, activities and deadlines. She noted that August 1st is the next meeting of the Upper Delaware River Roundtable and it is going to be a river trip from Narrowsburg to Ten Mile River. Once at TMR they will do a program on meeting the Park Service's needs post sequester. Ramie reminded members that applications for the FY 2014 TAG program are due by August 30th.

Richardson noted he appreciated Town of Fremont 2nd alternate Jim Greier attending the July 11th full Council meeting and suggested contacting the town to see if they intend to make him their permanent representative.

Draft Letter of Support for DRBC Federal Funding: Ramie noted that at the July 11 full Council meeting, Town of Tusten UDC representative Susan Sullivan raised the issue that for 16 of the last 17 years the federal government has failed to fund its apportionment of the DRBC's annual budget. The U.S. Senate's passage of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2013 (S.601) on May 15, 2013 by a vote of 83-14 now presents an opportunity for the U.S. House of Representatives to take similar legislative action. The letter is addressed to our Congressional representatives and is being presented for the committee's recommendation to the full Council. A motion to send the letter to the full Council for consideration was made by Richardson and seconded by Rajszyk. Roeder said he has angst over the letter and it is not because he is against the DRBC. He feels the DRBC dropped the ball because in four years they have not been able to install regulations to protect the Delaware River. Rajszyk said in their defense, they have lost many positions through attrition; they are working with minimal staff in some cases. Richardson

noted that Carol Collier has stated the proposed regulations have been before the Commissioners for a long time. It is not that the DRBC staff has not done their work, it is that the Commissioners have not made the decision and they are the ultimate deciding body. Richardson does not fault the DRBC for regulations not being in place. Richardson asked Roeder if he would want to penalize a partner in this organization for his feelings on gas drilling. Roeder said it does not have anything to do with gas drilling. Richardson asked him if the DRBC does anything worthwhile. Roeder said that is not the point, that they had four years to install regulations and they failed to do it and their mandate is to protect this river. Peckham said it is his opinion that the DRBC is also challenging the sovereignty of the states with land use regulations that they are trying to get involved with; that is not their mission, he added. Roeder questioned if the regulations are waiting for action by the Commissioners, why didn't the DRBC ask the UDC to write letters asking they be acted upon. Roeder said that if the regulations are drafted, the DRBC should have made it known to people that was the case and that the Commissioners are holding it up. Richardson said that Collier has reported at meetings in the past that this was the case. McGuinness said the regulations were written three times. Peckham said the regulations should be acted upon one way or another as people as "just hanging". Rajsz asked if that is reason enough to penalize them, to withhold funding from them. Richardson covered many of the issues looked at by the DRBC, noting it can't be said that their main mission is to come up with regulations concerning gas drilling. Roeder said "not for gas drilling, to protect the river from anything that could happen". Fluhr asked if the DRBC requested this letter of the Council. McGuinness said the issue was raised by Town of Tusten UDC representative Susan Sullivan. Fluhr asked if the DRBC has ever sent any letters regarding our funding. Ramie said we have never asked them to do so. Ramie noted that letters have been sent in the past to both New York and Pennsylvania concerning DRBC funding. The federal government's "fair share" of the DRBC's budget amounts to 20%. In consulting with DRBC staff so that the letter contained accurate numbers, Ramie said they were very grateful at the thought that the UDC would send a letter. Ramie said the letter simply alerts our Congressional representatives to the situation that the DRBC has not received their fair share of federal funding. Rajsz said that two of the three Congressional representatives to whom this letter is addressed are new to the area. The letter is not harmful and introduces them to an issue that has been ongoing for a while. Discussion about New York and Pennsylvania's lack of funding to the UDC took place. After more discussion, the motion to recommend the letter to the full Council carried with a vote of 3-2, with Roeder and Peckham voting no.

Summary of Pending Bills 7-23-13/Financial Statements: The committee was provided with an abstract of bills dated July 23 to review. A motion by Rajsz, seconded by Richardson to pay the bills listed on the abstract was carried unanimously. Financial Statements as of June 30, 2013 were provided for individual review.

Other: None

Old Business

"Strides Across the Delaware" 5K Run/Walk Update: T. O'Dell reported he had submitted all the paperwork for the Penn DOT permit, but recently found out that as of July 4, support letters are required from the townships that the event is taking place in. He is working on acquiring those. Another press release was issued seeking additional sponsors by September 1st. We are still in need of portable toilets, snack items, raffle items, and a portable PA system, O'Dell said. C. Odell picked up 100 water bottles that were donated by Wayne Bank of Honesdale, PA for the gift bags for participants. Sneaker King has committed to donating the bags along with coupons worth \$10 off of a \$50 purchase at their store. O'Dell had our registration flyers put in the gift bags of runners who participated in the Callicoon's River Run race. Registration is open and O'Dell encouraged members to recruit runners and donors. Our event will take place on Saturday, September 28th. Richardson suggested reaching out to local running clubs or like organizations to spread the word of our 5K event. O'Dell said our event is currently listed on some of those groups' calendars.

Fiscal Year 2013 Proposed Expenditures: Ramie said two bids were provided in members' packets which offer quotes for replacing the UDC office's existing three phase service. The bids were compared and the differences discussed. Peckham pointed out that one of the bids did not include the fees required by

NYSE&G. After a brief discussion, a motion to proceed with American Electric's bid was made by Richardson, seconded by Rajsz and carried.

Other: None

Public Comment: None

Adjournment: A motion by Rajsz, seconded by Peckham to adjourn the meeting at 7:41 p.m. was carried unanimously.

Minutes submitted by Cindy Odell, 7/26/13