

Upper Delaware Council
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
March 25, 2014

Committee Present: Andy Boyar, Jeffrey Dexter, Harold Roeder, Jr., Larry Richardson, Nadia Rajsz, Fred Peckham, David Dean
Committee Absent: George Fluhr
NPS Partner: Malcolm Wilbur, Carla Hahn
Staff: Laurie Ramie, Travis O'Dell, Cindy Odell
Guests: None

The UDC's Operations Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, April 22, 2014 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Boyar called the meeting to order at 7:52 p.m.

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

Boyar stated he had a very hard time following the conversation during the Project Review Committee as there were many people speaking at the same time. He thanked Dean for raising his hand before speaking and said he hopes that in the future, members will be as considerate and speak one at a time. He noted that would make for better orderliness.

Executive Director's Report: Ramie reported there have been two Modifications to our Cooperative Agreement in the past month. The second, modification #18, will provide the balance of the UDC's FY 2014 funding through September 30, 2014 and was signed on April 17th. The figure includes the additional restored funding from the sequester cut and \$3,000 authorized on April 17 by Acting NPS Superintendent Malcolm Wilbur for a river litter cleanup program by member municipalities. A copy of the revised FY 2014 budget with cover letter was provided in members' packets. Boyar questioned if there was any indication how many towns or townships would participate in the river cleanup program and spoke of the program that the Town of Highland currently has in place. Ramie said the guidelines for this program still need to be established. Dexter said that Damascus Township would be interested in participating in the program. He said the township currently works with interested youth organizations who clean from Callicoon to Narrowsburg on both sides of the river. Ramie noted that is exactly the spirit of the intent that Wilbur had in providing the funding; that local people would get involved. Boyar said this topic will be addressed under New Business.

Ramie said that regarding FY 2014 expenditures, the UDC's energy audit by NYSEERDA was conducted on April 16th with a request made for an expedited report that should be received within a month. Bids have been received for interior office painting and conversion of our air conditioning unit to a heat and air pump to date. Dean commented that he had his energy audit report within three days and feels we should be able to have ours much sooner than a month. Ramie said that once we receive the recommendations from the audit, bids for suggested projects will be sought and a proposal for members' review will be put together so that a decision on expenditures can be made. Ramie said that some of the restored funding was allocated for Outside Consulting Services and it will have to be decided how to expend that money. She reminded members the money has to be expended by September 30 and asked them to think about how to make good use of it.

Ramie reported that on April 3, the UDC received two checks from the U.S. Treasury from its filing with the IRS of a Credit for Small Employer Health Insurance Premiums for the last two fiscal years. This unexpected revenue has been deposited into the General Fund, Ramie added.

Ramie noted that the Park Service needs the Federal Assistance for FY 2015 package by June 6. This schedule will necessitate preparing a draft budget and work plans for review during the May committee meetings and approval of resolutions at the June 5th full Council meeting.

Ramie said the National Park Service Archives Survey Team completed their inventory of records and files at the UDC office on April 2nd. The report is pending.

Ramie said we are in the process of finalizing all the tasks that need to be accomplished for the April 27th UDC Awards Banquet. A souvenir booklet is being composed this year so that the verbal

presentations will be abbreviated, allowing the recipients more time for their remarks. She noted that Congressman Gibson is due to arrive at Henning's around 5:30 as he will be traveling from a previous engagement in New Paltz.

Ramie said five news releases have been issued in the past month. She also contributed a quote for Delaware County Economic Development's news release on completion of the Coldwater Fishing and Boating Economic Study upon request.

Ramie stated that the Zane Grey Fishing Derby is underway and there will be a meeting of the Planning Committee on April 29 to discuss the status of rulers, ongoing publicity, prizes and judging procedures.

The "Upper Delaware" Spring/Summer 2014 newsletter was delivered on April 2nd, one day past the printer's deadline. Ramie said that the newsletter being past due has happened now on several occasions. She feels that some sort of penalty may need to be worked into the specs the next time the contract is to be negotiated. Dean agreed that some sort of penalty should be applied when this happens.

Ramie referred members to the May calendar of UDC Meetings, Deadlines and Activities. She said that O'Dell is to attend the NPS Viewshed Analysis Training in Bushkill, PA is May 19 – 20. She does not know if travels costs will apply as we tend to carpool with the Park Service when possible. A motion to allow O'Dell to attend the Viewshed Analysis Training and approve related expenses was made by Richardson, seconded by Rajszyk and carried. Ramie suggested that the Personnel Subcommittee may want to meet to conduct staff evaluations as salary recommendations are part of the new budget. Ramie noted that the NY-PA Joint Interstate Bridge Commission typically holds its annual meeting in May. She awaits the announcement of that date.

New Business

NPS Funding for Municipal River Cleanups: Boyar suggested that it may be best to conduct a survey to determine which municipalities would be interested in participating in this program. He said that once that is determined, the committee can decide how to go about dispersing the money. Boyar said he is very grateful to Wilbur for securing this funding as this is a good program. He said that if the youth can be encouraged to be involved, it may impress upon them the importance of caring for the river. Ramie noted that Wilbur did specify that the criteria be the funding goes towards river and shoreline cleanup. Wilbur hopes the program will involve the youth and develop a sense of stewardship. He said he does not know what the budget will be like in the coming years and hopes that any programs developed may become self-sustaining. Peckham suggested the cleanup could be performed by volunteers and the funding used for disposal. Boyar shared the details of the Town of Highland's river cleanup program. He said an individual is contracted to perform a weekly cleanup of the river and dispose of anything found in the town's transfer station. Boyar reiterated the concept of involving the youth, like is done in Damascus Township, is really important. Ramie said a survey will be sent out. Details will be worked out once participation is determined. Wilbur suggested that it may be possible to have youth that are on the river performing the cleanup, signed up as sponsored volunteers which would address some of the liability issues.

Summary of Pending Bills 4-22-14/Financial Statements: The committee was provided with an abstract of bills dated April 22 to review. A motion by Rajszyk, seconded by Roeder to pay the bills listed on the abstract, was carried unanimously. Financial Statements as of March 31, 2014 were provided for individual review.

Other: Boyar said one of the UDC employees has expressed interest in pursuing a part-time job in real estate. The question was posed whether it would be a conflict per our existing policy. It was determined that generally, there is no problem with an employee being involved in real estate. Discussion took place that there may be certain occasion when disclosure may be necessary. Boyar stated he would like the minutes to reflect that the question was posed, it was discussed, and the Operations Committee does not see a conflict with the personnel rules. O'Dell asked for clarification if this determination is also that of the Personnel Committee. Rajszyk said it was.

Old Business:

Member Participation Policy: Ramie noted that this was tabled from last month as members wanted more time to review the preliminary draft language for this policy. She said it needs to be determined how many absences are permissible before stipend payments would be suspended. Once determined, a resolution will be drafted and presented to the full Council for adoption. Rajszyk stated that if a member is not present for three consecutive meetings, there is a problem. An adopted resolution would be attached to the Bylaws, Ramie stated. Peckham said each municipality has an alternate as well and agreed that three was a fair number. Ramie clarified that “member” refers to the participating town or township. After a brief discussion, a motion by Rajszyk that the Participation Policy language read, “In the event of a member’s absence at three consecutive, regular meetings of the Upper Delaware Council, stipend payments will be suspended until active participation resumes. Suspension of stipend payments would require advance written notice to the member (addressed to the Town Board or Township Board of Supervisors) and a majority vote at a regular meeting to take effect.” The motion was seconded by Dean. Peckham questioned what if the absence was a case of extenuating circumstances. Ramie said that is why the board gets to vote on it before it would take place. The motion was carried unanimously.

Green Tourism 4/7-8 Conference Report: Ramie said that a written report was provided in members packets for review at their convenience. She did state she felt the conference was more geared towards commercial businesses. The conference is to be an annual event and is scheduled to take place next year on April 14 and 15 at Woodloch Resort in Hawley, PA. Ramie said that Carla Hahn of the NPS was one of the presenters. Hahn noted that the group she was involved with spoke about “Tapping the Region’s Activities to Build Packages for Guests.” Hahn said she attended the “Exploring Collaboration” and felt that was an excellent one. She added that the focus of the team that she has been working on is to figure out how to bring more visitors to our area. Rajszyk questioned how Peter Fairweather’s presentation was. Ramie said he gave a description of the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway Visitation Study and he did very well. She added she felt people seemed impressed by how those visitation numbers translate into economic benefits for the communities. Boyar stated that when people come, they spend. He said it is important to track the number of visitors. A lengthy discussion took place regarding river traffic. Wilbur said it is a big, long river and there is room for a lot of different visitor experiences. The challenge is how to manage and segregate to prevent user conflicts. He said that maybe the UDC and Park Service can help to figure that out. Dean spoke of his river experiences. Wilbur wonders if certain visitors are less sensitive to the presence of cell towers. A brief discussion took place about the Lordville access.

Other: None

Public Comment: None

Adjournment: A motion by Roeder, seconded by Rajszyk to adjourn the meeting at 8:48 p.m. was carried unanimously.

Minutes submitted by Cindy Odell, 4/28/14