

Upper Delaware Council
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
May 23, 2017

Committee Present: Alan Henry, Jeff Dexter, Aaron Robinson, David Dean, Harold Roeder, Jr.,
Larry Richardson, Jim Greier
Committee Absent: Fred Peckham
NPS Partner: Carla Hahn
Staff: Laurie Ramie, Cindy Odell, Pete Golod
Guests: None

The UDC's Operations Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, May 23, 2017 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Greier called the meeting to order at 7:54 p.m.

Approval of April 25 Meeting Minutes: A motion by Dean seconded by Roeder to approve the May 23 meeting minutes was carried. There was no public comment on the agenda.

Executive Director's Report: Ramie referred members to her written report provided in their packets. She reported that she made a funding drawdown request on May 22nd leaving a balance of \$0 in the federal account pending execution of a budget modification under the latest Continuing Resolution. The funding drawdown was not enough to cover the bills so the balance of the expenditures will be covered by UDC funds and paid back when the federal account is replenished, she reported. NPS Administrative Officer Karen Henry has submitted the paperwork, but advised on May 22, "I would not anticipate additional funding for a month. Agreements hasn't started processing it yet." Henry suggested writing a letter to the U.S. Secretary of the Interior and the National Park Service Regional Director about the UDC's funding issues. Roeder stated there were fewer issues with funding when the UDC received the entire federal allocation in one lump sum. After brief discussion, a motion to draft a letter to the U.S. Secretary of the Interior and the National Park Service Regional Director expressing the UDC's concerns over its funding, emphasizing the impacts of no adjustment to the \$300,000 allocation for inflation and increased operating expenses since 1988 with no carryovers allowed, the procedure requiring drawdown requests to cover monthly expenditures on a reimbursement basis, and the current delay in processing a Cooperative Agreement modification to enable the UDC to access its approved FY 2017 federal funds which are now at a zero balance was made by Henry, seconded by Robinson and carried.

Ramie reported that the Secretary of the Interior has established a new process as of April 10, 2017 that all Cooperative Agreements of \$100,000 or more must be reviewed by the Department. This will include the UDC's Fiscal Year 2017 Cooperative Agreement. A copy of Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke's April 12 memorandum on the subject was included in members' packets.

Ramie noted that Congressman John Faso's office is pursuing the invitation for Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke to visit the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River, which he had mentioned at the UDC's April 23 Awards Ceremony. Henry suggested copying Congressman Faso on the letter regarding funding. Richardson suggested a visit by the Secretary Zinke this summer could be a good opportunity to demonstrate the Council's successes and challenges.

Ramie reported that Don Bellotti of Riverside Mechanical in Callicoon, NY was in on May 16 and tended to a repair in the restroom and readied the air conditioning system for summer. He advised staff that the Council's oil tanks will likely need to be replaced in the next 2-3 years and provided a ballpark estimate, Ramie said.

Ramie stated that the FY 2016 Annual Report is complete and was issued electronically to UDC members and NPS staff and has been posted to the UDC's website.

Ramie said two press releases were issued this past month. "UDC Awards River Clean-up Grants" was issued on May 8th and "UDC Issues FY 2016 Annual Report" on May 10th.

Ramie noted that preliminary work has begun on the 2013 Map and Guide brochure update to be complete by September 30th.

Ramie referred to the copy of the UDC's letter to Pennsylvania State Police Captain Paris expressing appreciation to the Pennsylvania State Police for the professional and proactive response to the UDC's 29th Annual Awards Ceremony at the Central House on Sunday, April 23rd.

Ramie suggested members look over the remainder of her written report at their leisure and referred to the June 2017 calendar of UDC Meetings, Activities and Deadlines. She noted that the FY 2018 Request for Federal Assistance package has to be submitted to the NPS on June 2nd. She reminded members that Paul Rush from New York City Department of Environmental Protection will give a presentation about emergency communications systems below the New York City reservoirs at the June 1 full Council meeting. She reported that the Delaware River Sojourn is this month and the two days of paddling in the Upper Delaware will take place on June 17 and 18. Hahn added that a river cleanup sponsored by the Delaware River Sojourn and the National Park Service will take place on June 16. Ramie reported that the NYS DEC Region 4 Fisheries Manager Chris VanMaaren will give a presentation on Trout Fishing Regulations for the Delaware River Tailwaters at the July 6 full Council meeting.

New Business

FY 2017 Budget Analysis: Ramie referred to the Profit and Loss report provided in members' packets. She noted the report shows what the UDC had budgeted and where we stand with our projected expenditures. She reported, in summary, at the projected rate of spending, there will not be any surplus this year. She added that staff will put a freeze on any non-essential spending for the last four months of FY 2017 and seek savings where possible to keep the expenses as close to the \$300,000 federal allocation as possible. Ramie explained each expense that was over by more than \$500. Ramie noted that Golod has begun the GIS certification course through Penn State On-line. The training line, which is over budget by \$4,303, includes the tuition for the course that he completed and for the course that begins in the fall of this year for which he is requesting approval. Ramie said that \$4,000 is allocated in the publications line for the updated Map and Guide brochure. She suggested that some savings could be realized there by ordering a lesser number of copies. Robinson questioned if the \$300,000 federal allocation the UDC receives has changed over the years. Ramie told him that amount has not changed since 1988. Dean asked Carla Hahn of the NPS if she knows how much the Park Service budget has gone up over the same period of time. Hahn told him that Upper Delaware usually receives most of the pay increases that Congress mandates, but has remained the same otherwise. Hahn said that UPDE has had requests in for increases for the UDC funding. Ramie requested action for approval of the GIS course for Golod. She said the draft FY 2018 budget does include funding for the remaining two courses for him toward certification level. Dean expressed his frustration with the UDC not being able to carry over surplus funding into the next fiscal year. After a brief discussion, a motion to approve Golod taking the next on-line GIS course in his certification program was made by Richardson, seconded by Henry and carried.

Review of Draft FY 2018 Budget: Ramie referred members to the copy of the draft FY 2018 budget provided in their packets. She referred to the explanatory notes emailed out to members on May 19 and provided in their packets for reference. Regarding income, Ramie stated that we are optimistically predicting that we'll receive \$300,000 from our NPS Cooperative Agreement. If so, the "income" section of the budget will remain the same. She explained some of the changes in the budget lines. Ramie reviewed that the proposed budget anticipates a 6% increase for the current health insurance plan, but it was learned earlier in the day that the actual increase is projected to be closer to 10%. She referred to the handout containing information on the current MVP Health Care plan. After a lengthy discussion about health insurance, members asked staff to provide alternate MVP Health Care plans and discuss the health insurance topic further at the June 27 Operations Committee meeting as the current plan is in effect until December 1st. Ramie referred members to the Technical Assistance Grants line in the proposed budget and reminded members that we overspent the budgeted amount this fiscal year by \$4,255. She reminded members that this line includes the River Clean-up grants also. After much discussion, it was decided to reduce the Technical Assistance Grants line to \$15,100 to balance the budget. A motion to forward the draft FY 2018 Budget with the agreed upon reduction to the Technical Assistance Grants line to the full Council at its June 1 meeting for approval was made by Roeder, seconded by Henry and carried.

Review of Draft FY 2018 Work Plan: A motion to forward the Draft FY 2018 Work Plan to the full Council at its June 1 meeting for approval was made by Henry, seconded by Richardson and carried.

Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed: FFMP Sign-on Letter Opportunity: Ramie referred to the copy of the letter provided in members' packets. The letter, circulated by the Coalition for the Delaware

River Watershed, urges the Governors of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and the Mayor of New York City to reach agreement by May 31 on a management plan for the NYC Delaware River Basin reservoirs that protects the Upper Delaware River cold water fishery, the Upper Delaware River economy, and the entire Delaware River Basin. Ramie said the letter echoes what we've been saying in our correspondence as well. A motion for the UDC to sign on to the Flexible Flow Management Program renewal support letter was made by Robinson, seconded by Henry and carried.

TAG 2017-01 Town of Lumberland Request for Payment, \$3,105.00: A motion to approve payment for TAG 2017-01, Town of Lumberland, in the amount of \$3,105.00 was made by Henry, seconded by Robinson and carried.

Summary of Pending Bills 5-23-17/Financial Statements: The committee was provided with the abstract of bills dated May 23 to review. A motion by Robinson, seconded by Henry to pay the bills listed on the abstract was carried unanimously. Financial Statements as of May 31, 2017 were provided for individual review.

Other: Dexter said he received the monthly newsletter from Delaware Currents and shared his opinion of an article. Ramie stated that it is an opinion piece and was sent out without any endorsement.

Old Business: None

Public Comment: None

Adjournment: A motion by Roeder, seconded by Henry to adjourn the meeting at 9:18 p.m. was carried unanimously.

Minutes submitted by Cindy Odell, 5/31/17