

Upper Delaware Council
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
January 25, 2022

Committee Members Present: Jeff Dexter, Larry Richardson, Fred Peckham, Jim Greier, Harold Roeder, Al Henry, Ginny Dudko, Aaron Robinson.

Committee Members Absent:

Staff: Laurie Ramie, Kerry Engelhardt, Ashley Hall-Bagdonas

NPS Partner: Cody Hendrix- Community & Land Use Planner

Guests:

The UDC's Operations Committee held its monthly meeting via Zoom on Tuesday, January 25, 2022. Chairperson Dexter called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Ramie said in the interim, she just quickly emailed Andy Boyar to see if he was attending Operations and hasn't heard back from him. Typically, the chair of the full Council leads Operations also. She suggests continuing the meeting. A motion by Dudko seconded by Henry to keep the same Chairperson and Vice-Chair until next month carried. Election of 2022 Committee Chair and Vice-Chair deferred to the February meeting.

Executive Director's Report and Monthly Calendar: Ramie offered a summary of her written report.

Financial Status:

FY 2022 Federal Funding: Ramie said the UDC's SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance for a Fiscal Year 2022 2nd Quarter allocation of \$75,000 was prepared over the course of 12/17, 12/20 and 12/21 (new budget, narrative report, work plan, and form attachments), resubmitted through Grant Solutions after multiple attempts on 12/22, 1/10 and finally success through a "Manage Amendment" tab on 1/12, and it was approved by the NPS Regional Office on 1/18, at which time a new ASAP account was created. She withdrew \$20,038.15 from ASAP on 1/24 to cover the January abstract of bills, leaving a balance of \$64,480.38 (from the \$9,518.53 remaining from the 1st Quarter federal allocation and partially tapping the new \$75,000.) The federal government's FY 22 2nd Continuing Resolution will expire on 2/18/22. Ramie will prepare another modification request to continue past the 3/31/22 expiration of the 2nd quarter funding.

FY 2021 Federal Funding: Ramie prepared a 24-page Performance Progress Report (PPR) for Fiscal Year 2021 using the work plan goals assessment format that was uploaded to Grant Solutions at 11 p.m. on 12/28. She notified Eckersley & Davis on 12/21 of an inaccurate journal adjustment entry they had made regarding River Clean-up Grants. She awaits the receipt of the final Fiscal Year 2021 Financial Review report, IRS 990 forms and NYS Charities Bureau filing from Eckersley & Davis to arrange for signatures and distribution. She will convert the PPR into a more publicly accessible FY 21 Annual Report to post online and distribute. Ramie will file FY 2021 budget and NPS administrative documents for placement in records storage.

State Funding: Ramie drafted a letter to NYS Governor Hochul on 1/24 for consideration of a 30-day Executive Budget amendment to include a UDC \$100,000 operational line item in the next New York State budget and to support the Alliance for the Upper Delaware River Watershed's \$1 million request in the NYS Environmental Protection Fund based on a 1/20 request. This is under New Business. Efforts will continue to meet with NYS Governor Hochul's regional representative and follow up with Tom Caffrey from PA Governor Wolf's administration. Ramie will prepare a "blue skies" budget and UDC accomplishments list to assist with NPCA's advocacy efforts.

Administration/Buildings & Grounds:

Heat problems: Contractor Tom Coacci repaired the inoperable faucet in the utility room sink on 12/23 for \$50. Bill's Heating & Air Conditioning LLC of Narrowsburg was contacted to service the UDC boiler and found the system unable to pull oil after repeated checks, tests, furnace restarts, and bleeding of the fuel lines following their

first appointment on 1/7. We were advised on 1/19 to contact Bluestone Environmental who had installed the new 500-gallon, heating oil tank with plumbing and all connections tested on 12/3 for \$6,350.00 to advise them of an apparent fuel line issue. They purchased and installed a tiger loop supply and return line to compensate for the configuration and distance of the pipe for the fuel tank's top opening on 1/20 which has resolved the issue. No invoice has yet been received from Bluestone Environmental; the invoice received on 1/21 from Bill's HVAC was \$367.55. Bill's HVAC will return to replace a leaking reserve tank and check the conference room heat pump for optimal operation.

2022 Updates: Delaware – Alternate Harold G. Roeder, Jr. will fill in temporarily as the town board searches for a representative to replace Tom Dent (Dec. 2021 departure). Highland – Andy Boyar and Jim Gutekunst switched roles to representative and alternate, respectively. Deerpark – Following Dave Dean's retirement, Ginny Dudko is the representative and Bill Dudko is the alternate. Lackawaxen – Alternate Judy Kuhn Conklin was removed and that position is vacant. State of New York – Representative Bill Rudge will retire from the DEC on 2/28 and has said he will assist with a transition to a new appointee. Bookkeeper Mike Poska sent 1099-MISC forms to board members as applicable and provided W-2 statements to staff on 1/18 for 2021 tax purposes. Laurie updated directories, plotted 2022 dates on multiple calendars, and watched numerous anti-sexual harassment videos to find one suitable for UDC training purposes. The 2/3 UDC meeting presentation will be a 15-minute anti-sexual harassment video to comply with New York State Department of Labor training requirements. Completed Conflict of Interest annual disclosure forms are due back from all representatives and alternates by 2/3. She will schedule a swearing-in ceremony, 2022 board photo, and reception for new officers when the Council is able to meet in person.

Records Management: NPS Upper Delaware has requested a meeting "to review the UDC records plan and come up with a plan for obtaining the needed UDC records and implementing the transfer of records on a yearly basis...in preparation for UPDE transitioning to electric records this year," as per Administrative Officer Michelle Blockberger. NPS has UDC permanent records needed up to 2013. UPDE Records Management Coordinator Debby Seboldt and IT Specialist Brendan Dohn will participate in the meeting. The meeting is arranged for 2/3 at 2 p.m. at the UDC office with Hall-Bagdonas and Ramie.

Public Relations:

News Releases: Three news releases were issued: "UDC PA Grant Helps with Expanded Damascus Township Park Playground", 12/17 with photos; "Upper Delaware Council Elects 2022 Officers", 1/7 with photo; and "Volunteers Needed for April 22-30 Upper Delaware Litter Sweep", 1/19 with logo. Ramie was interviewed by Michael Sparks from National Parks Traveler on 1/11 for "a story about expanding existing national parks in the east without an act of Congress, and understanding how that would benefit biodiversity, resilience to climate change, etc. Because the river has unique management and land ownership structures, I'd love to speak with someone and learn more about its land holdings, how they have changed over time and might change in the future, and how that might impact the local ecology." Ramie submitted a guest editorial to the River Reporter on 1/14 for publication on 1/20 regarding Skinners Falls-Milanville Bridge Purpose & Need Document. Ongoing publicity occurs through Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube and Vimeo outlets. UDC also posts all NPS UPDE news releases at upperdelawarecouncil.org.

"The Upper Delaware": The Spring 2022 issue will be due to Courier Printing by 3/23 for a 4/3 release.

Grants/Fundraising:

UDC PA Grant: Ramie revised Consultant Michael Crane's contract on 12/16 (handout provided) for the Fiscal Plan finalization. She processed the \$15,000 project submission received on 12/14 from Damascus Township and issued a news release on 12/17 after soliciting photos from the playground equipment manufacturer. Ramie applied a \$158.82 under-spent amount from one project to offset the UDC's purchase of a 360-degree videoconference camera on 12/23. Ramie contacted the Narrowsburg Union on 1/14 and surveyed the UDC membership on 1/19 for available dates to hold a special workshop to discuss the recommendations in the Long-Term Fiscal Sustainability report and charted the responses. She researched PA DCED final reporting requirements online. She assembled documentation for the project audit by Eckersley and Davis for pickup on 1/24. Ramie also updated the dedicated bank account balance sheet for 1/25 Operations. She will finalize the date, arrangements, and prepare advance documents for the Fiscal Plan workshop. She will work with the auditors to prepare and submit the electronic Grant Close-out Report to PA DCED within 120 days of the contract's 12/31/21 end.

Upper Delaware Litter Sweep: The WU/RM Committee has opted to proceed with UDC sponsorship of a 2nd Annual Litter Sweep on April 22-30. Ramie will develop a fundraising strategy and set up donation categories to support the event. All donations will be deposited into the dedicated Jeff Bank account.

Donations: Ramie sent thank you letters for three individual UDC donations received of \$50, \$100, and \$25 at the end of 2021. Ramie said whatever their motivation was for donating to the UDC, we are grateful and did acknowledge it. Details were provided in her correspondence list.

Non-UDC meetings or events as well as the latest documents are listed on the Executive Director's Report that is included in the meeting packet, along with January's monthly calendar, which Ramie said she appreciates that Hall-Bagdonas has taken over preparing.

Old Business

Workshop Arrangements for UDC Long-term Fiscal Sustainability Plan: Ramie sent out a survey with dates and heard back from 14 people regarding workshop arrangements for the UDC Long-term Fiscal Sustainability Plan. Discussion continued. She will book the selected Saturday, 2/5 date (9 a.m. to noon) at the Narrowsburg Union for the special workshop; make continental breakfast catering arrangements, prepare an agenda and advance plan summary materials, and send invitations with a registration deadline noted to all UDC representatives, alternates, and the NPS as federal partner.

Henry said if there needs to be further discussion it could be added to a full Council meeting with a lighter agenda. Richardson suggests that everybody rereads the Crane Report again, and make notes.

Status of PA DCED Grant Audit: The grant contract ended on 12/31 and we did spend down all \$100,000. Ramie said, in fact we earned money because of the interest that accrued, about \$105, of which we can keep \$50, and have to pay the rest back to the Commonwealth. Eckersley & Davis is now in charge of doing the project audit which is required, and they have 120 days to complete it from that contract termination date. Ramie was in touch with them last week, and they asked her to assemble a box for them of all the documents which meant copies of every single invoice, application, canceled check, press release, anything to do with the program. It took her hours to put that together. Ramie asked them for help on the complicated one-page document of calculations on the final close out report. Diane Davis said, "Absolutely". Ramie provided in the meeting packet the final balance sheet. There will be one more bank statement after this because the \$7,000 for the project audit is still in the account awaiting that final payment.

UDC Social Media Analytics: Hall-Bagdonas said our #MarkerMonday post highlighting the Town of Deerpark's project to refurbish its historical markers has reached over 7,700 people. Our social media posts about 2022 Litter Sweep volunteers reached almost 4,000 people. UDC's post sharing its comments on PennDOT's Skinners Falls, NY-Milanville, PA Bridge Draft Purpose and Need Document reached over 6,430 people, Ramie's knowledge of this bridge benefits not only the UDC but the community.

Also, touching on something Greier mentioned in Project Review, Jake Bransky provided a lot of great one-liner facts at his 1/6 DRBC presentation on microplastics. We can use those for future social media posts, especially during the month of April and the week of Earth Day. We can also include NPS's Microplastics Report facts information as well. When the DRBC's study is finalized they will likely be sharing their own social media, and we can continue to be a good partner and share their posts and continue to put on these education programs. Now on to updates from our Twitter Manager, Engelhardt. Engelhardt said Twitter is just getting going. So far, we have had 524 tweet impressions, which means people saw the tweets. Also for Twitter, the presentation on microplastics study was the most popular tweet. We're still getting an audience there because it's mostly other organizations for now, but the more we're on there and the more we are retweeted by the DRBC and other groups it will grow. Dexter said those are very impressive numbers and to keep up the good work.

Other: None.

New Business

Draft Letter to NYS Governor Hochul for Upper Delaware River Watershed line item request in the 2022 Environmental Protection Fund: A Motion by Richardson seconded by Dudko to approve the letter to NYS Governor Hochul for Upper Delaware River Watershed line item request in the 2022 Environmental Protection Fund carried.

Draft Commendation for Bill Rudge, NYS DEC: A Motion by Henry seconded by Roeder to approve the draft Commendation for Bill Rudge, NYS DEC, for action at the 2/3 UDC meeting carried unanimously.

Summary of Pending Bills 1/24/2022: A Motion by Henry seconded by Peckham to approve bills carried.

Financial Statement 1/31/2022: Dexter said the financial statement is offered for individual review.

Other: Roeder said he was driving on Rt. 652 today, coming in towards the Narrowsburg bridge from Pennsylvania, and he got to the Darbytown fishing access where there was one vehicle there with one man. He had on black swimming trunks and a black cap on his head and was splashing around in the water by the ice and walked out into the river. Roeder kept driving but said he doesn't know whether this winter swimming activity is sanctioned or not, but there was no one else around if that person needed help.

Public Comment: None.

Adjournment: A motion by Peckham seconded by Robinson to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 p.m. carried.