

Upper Delaware Council
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
October 27, 2020

Committee Members Present: Larry Richardson, Aaron Robinson, Al Henry, Fred Peckham, Jeff Dexter, Jim Greier, David Dean (via phone).
Committee Members Absent: None.
Staff : Laurie Ramie, Shannon Cilento, Ashley Hall-Bagdonas
NPS Partner: Ingrid Peterec (via phone)
Guests: Roger Saumure- Shohola Township Alternate

The UDC's Operations Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, September 22, 2020. Chairperson Richardson called the meeting to order at 7:50 p.m.

Approval of September 22 Meeting Minutes: A motion by Peckham seconded Henry to approve the September 22, 2020 Meeting Minutes was carried.

Executive Director's Report and Monthly Calendar:

Financial Status:

FY 2020 Federal Funding: Ramie worked on final expenditures through 9/30, arranged for check-signing and revision of the abstract. She will submit UDC's Fiscal Year 2020 4th Quarter and Final Financial and Progress SF-425 Reports for July-August-September to NPS by 10/30.

GrantSolutions Training: Ramie completed and submitted Grant Recipient User Account Request and Rules of Behavior forms on 10/1. She received account log-in username and temporary password on 10/13. She reviewed Notice of Grant Award and filings to date for the UDC Cooperative Agreement P20AC00940 account marked 8/25/20 to 9/30/2024 with a federal budget of \$75,000 and watched training videos on 10/13 and 10/15. Ramie contacted Helpdesk on 10/16 after finding an incorrect Employer Identification Number (EIN) for the UDC in locked data of the SF-424 report form. That remains unresolved. She submitted a request form to add Bookkeeper Mike Poska to the UDC's account in a Financial Support Officer data-entry role on 10/20. She received a notice from the Helpdesk on 10/21 that they are unable to process the request due to being unable to find an account for the requested grantee. She responded with copy of the UDC's original 10/1 application and found the mailbox full and unable to take messages. This issue remains unresolved.

FY 2021 Federal Funding: A Continuing Resolution is in effect through 12/11/2020. New semi-annual dates for filing of the UDC's Federal Financial Report through GrantSolutions will be Oct. 1-Mar. 31 (due by 4/30/21) and Apr. 1-Sept. 30 (due by 10/30/21). Ramie withdrew \$19,919.48 to cover October expenditures, leaving a 1st quarter balance of \$55,080.52.

NYS Funding for Upper Delaware: The Alliance for the Upper Delaware River Watershed held Zoom meetings with the NYS Governor's office, Senator Jen Metzger, Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther, NYS DEC officials, and the chairs or aides of the NYS Senate and Assembly environmental committees on 10/21 and 10/22, with pre-meeting and post-meeting strategy calls on 10/19 and 10/26, to discuss opportunities to invest in the upper watershed through the addition of a line item in the NYS Environmental Protection Fund (EPF). In her meeting with Assemblywoman Gunther, Ramie shared with her a priority need for UDC was cellular service and broadband gaps for the river valley. Gunther embraced that idea which has been a pet project for both her and Senator Metzger. Ramie was asked to put together information statistically and so they can be anecdotally of assistance.

Before this meeting Ramie was compiling some of our past correspondence about it. She spoke about the study that the UDC has proposed to look for those gaps and hire a consultant that can offer recommendations on what to do about it. She explained that our limited federal funding does not allow us to pursue that nor do we have enough

funding to put toward a project like that so that would be an excellent way for our elected officials to contribute. Also, of concern is broadband, which are as Cilento reported at the Project Review Committee meeting are starting to be addressed by Sullivan and Wayne counties and others, but still it's a need that's out there. Now we have their interest. Regarding compiling a list of conservation projects, one idea Ramie is going to put forward is funding the boat launch at Ten Mile River Access. That would work for the parameters that they're talking about. We can show them the structural design that's been developed if it's acceptable to the property owner but of course, we have no implementation funds. There is also the issue with the Mongaup Access parking area, even though that is a state property. Ramie also considered the Hawk's Nest issues and whether we could think of something that could be helpful there, UDC's Economic Study from the River Management Plan that we've not been able to pursue because the NPS has said they don't consider that an allocable expense. She feels that is something that could yield good results. She will present a list to the Alliance for the Upper Delaware River Watershed so that they can add it on to the overall ideas. Ramie will also reach out to the eight New York Towns and ask if they have any ideas. Saumure said he thinks the economic study is part of the justification. It's more than just project itself; we have to sell all of the benefits that we provide to all the people downstream from here. It's clean water because of what's done up here. He asked how can we get that message across?

Administration:

Personnel: Ramie arranged for Cilento's enrollment in the UDC's MVP medical, United Concordia dental, and VSP vision care plans at the 90-day Affordable Care Act eligibility mark on 10/14. She researched the status of annual staff evaluations at Personnel Subcommittee Chair Al Henry's request. She prepared a performance appraisal for Hall-Bagdonas on 10/22 and they met to discuss it. She forwarded a blank performance appraisal form for the executive director position to the subcommittee membership, with Henry's request to complete and return it by 11/5. Henry recommended the Personnel Subcommittee meet at 6:30 on 11/5 to review the performance appraisals with both Ramie and Hall-Bagdonas. Cilento's first evaluation will take place on or about the completion of the six-month probationary term on 1/15/21.

Public Relations:

"The Upper Delaware": Ramie requested a quote for FY 21 services on 10/19 and received it from Courier Printing on 10/20, at the same rate as FY 20. She will present a draft resolution to approve the FY 21 newsletter contract at the 11/5 UDC meeting. Ramie will prepare contents, gather information, arrange interviews, select photos, do layout, and start composition of the Fall/Winter issue, due to the printer by 11/25 for delivery on 12/7. Hall-Bagdonas will update the mail program database by 12/2 to send to Courier.

UDC Awards: UDC received delivery of the 27 plaques for 2020 honorees from J&C Awards on 9/22 and 100 copies of the souvenir booklet on 9/30. She sent copies with a cover memo to all recipients on 10/2. Ramie will publicize the availability of the program once it is posted to the UDC website. Richardson said anyone that has seen the souvenir booklet is impressed with it. The color of the booklet is vivid and impressive.

Consulting Projects:

Engineering Report for Ten Mile River Access Options: Ramie received a preliminary design plan for a proposed boat launch from JHA Companies on 9/30 and the structural engineering plan on 10/21. She forwarded both to the Water Use/Resource Management Committee and project stakeholders. Eric Baird from JHA will make a presentation on the plan at the 11/17 WU/RM Committee meeting.

Ramie said our November calendar is provided for review.

Richardson said last night at the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway (UDSB) meeting, an interesting topic came up. The issue of litter has been talked about often at UDSB as well. It was brought up that the chairman of the Legislature of Sullivan County, Mr. Doherty, was on vacation and he saw a Waste Management receptacle that compacts and recycles. Solar power is also involved. These are relatively new. UDSB is going to find out more about it. Doherty said maybe this would be applicable in a river corridor along with Route. 97.

Old Business

UDC Website Update: Staff continued working with Dorene Warner at W Design on the upgrades to upperdelawarecouncil.org for mobile device accessibility, ADA compatibility, and back-end system improvements

to limit vulnerabilities to spam and hackers. They installed a new Media Library manager for easier use and organization of images and PDFs. They repaired galleries which weren't showing in thumbnail view. Cilento provided text for the Project Review page with the fillable Workbook forms. Staff readied biographies and photos for a new About Us page. Ramie paid \$144 annual fee for new hosting service through Flywheel on 9/30. The next step will be to launch the updated site when all of the final improvements and ADA software is ready.

Social Media Update: Cilento provided a handout in the meeting packet with the Social Media proposal that was provided in August. She secured the handles for the social media sites and they're private right now until we go live with posting content. The committee's next directive was to make sample content which is shown on the handout. Her first sample post was #MarkerMonday that would provide a photo of a historical marker or historical location. She was also able to provide the information for Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) accepting nominations for new roadside historical markers in that post. Ramie had the idea of doing a post to honor each award recipient from this year's UDC award banquet. Cilento would provide a direct link to the booklet on our website. We will also be posting upcoming presentations and events. Cilento's example was the 11/5 Upper Delaware River Geologic Resource Mapping presentation. We can also keep the public up-to-date with what we are doing by posts like Cilento's planning for the 2021 BioBlitz with a picture of a salamander taken by Andy Weber from NPS. A Motion by Henry seconded by Robinson for the UDC Social Media to go live carried unanimously.

Records Management Update: Hall-Bagdonas shared that UDC received the order for 100 map folders (University Products) recommended by consultants K Sickler-Murphy and will be able to utilize the map tower we already have in the attic. Cilento said this material preserves paper better for filing. She showed the committee a map folder. Hall-Bagdonas said we can move towards staff training in the use of Excel database and how to properly archive files. A review of the Needs Assessment Report and Draft Policy and Procedures Manual to be approved through resolution is pending. Ramie said that the purchase of the map files was one of our final FY20 expenses.

PA Grant Status: Ramie provided a balance sheet for the PA Grant in the meeting packet. \$100,000 was deposited into a dedicated account we set up back in early April. The handout shows the progression of we have paid out and earned from compounded interests. When it gets to a certain level within the Pennsylvania grant, we have to pay it back. She explained each check written out listed on Balance Sheet. She received and processed payment requests from Shohola Township and Upper Delaware Litter Sweep Coordinator Dan Paparella on 10/19. Currently, that brings us to \$63,978.19. She responded to a 10/22 request from Lackawaxen Township on submission procedure. We still have Lackawaxen, Berlin and Damascus Township to submit their projects. \$7,000 will go towards the records audit. Lastly, she said a big share of this grant is going towards the Fiscal Sustainability Study. Grant contract close-out deadline is 12/31/2021.

Strategic Plan Update: The 10/3 Strategic Plan Retreat had 20 people in attendance Ramie said she wished it had been more, but we have weird circumstances and whatever people you can get coming out in person, we will take. It was a good discussion. The next step that we're going to do is an overview of the survey results, because the people were thoughtful and considerate in filling that out, and deserve to know that their opinions counted. Saumure had done a great job with showing a visualization of those responses. That information as well as the priority issues and potential actions to come out of the retreat are what we'll be sending out to the same group that received the survey. That is due to happen anytime now. She's waiting to get that back from the facilitators. They are expected at the latest to have a draft of the Five-Year Plan, ready for presentation at our 12/3 full council meeting. 12/30 is when we want to have it finalized.

Other: Henry asked Peterec is there is an update on the new Superintendent? Peterec said as of Monday a selection has been made. They have to go through the clearance check so the name hasn't been announced. She expects that person will start the first week in December. Saumure asked if it was someone outside of NPS? Henry said anyone can apply but they usually like someone with some experience. Ramie said we were expecting the new Community and Land Use Development Planner to start by 11/8 according to the last report.

New Business

"The Upper Delaware" FY 2021 Newsletter Contract Quote: A copy of the Courier Printing Contract Quote was provided in the meeting packet. Our dates for our three issues are listed for this coming year. The price is exactly the

same as this year; Ramie said she's very happy about that. A Motion by Greier seconded by Henry for Ramie to Draft a Resolution for the 11/5 full Council meeting carried.

Delaware River Watershed Environmental Fellowship Application: Cilento received information about the Environmental Leadership Program from Ramie whom recommended she look into it. She believes some folks from NPS have gone through the fellowship. It is a fully funded fellowship for a few spots for this Delaware River Watershed Leadership Network. Cilento can apply and would be able to do it free of charge next year. There are three-day clusters throughout next year, that she would participate virtually in. It connects people throughout the entire watershed. Cilento said it seems like a worthwhile program. The application is due by 11/16. A Motion by Greier seconded by Henry to authorize Cilento to submit her application for the Delaware River Watershed Environmental Fellowship carried with an abstention by Peckham.

Summary of Pending Bills 10-26-2020: A Motion by Henry seconded by Peckham to approve bills was carried.

Financial Statement 10-31-2020: Richardson said the financial statement is offered for individual review.

Other: Robinson said he has a question on the Financial Statement. He noticed the balance of UDC's unobligated funds remains the same year after year. He thought we had used some of those funds for something? The group talked about depreciation. Richardson also mentioned UDSB's donation as well as the auditor's donation. Ramie said she would look into that.

Public Comment: None.

Adjournment: A motion by Greier seconded by Henry to adjourn the meeting at 8:47 p.m. was carried.