

**Upper Delaware Council
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
November 22, 2022**

Committee Members Present: Andy Boyar, Larry Richardson, Fred Peckham (Zoom), Harold Roeder, Al Henry, Aaron Robinson (Zoom), Jim Greier, Ginny Dudko (Zoom)

Committee Members Absent: Jeff Dexter

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

NPS Partner: Cody Hendrix- Community & Land Use Planner (Zoom)

Guests: William Dudko- Town of Deepark Alternate (Zoom)

The UDC's Operations Committee held its monthly meeting at the UDC office in Narrowsburg on Tuesday, November 22, 2022. Chairperson Boyar called the meeting to order at 7:55 p.m.

Approval of the October 25, 2022 Meeting Minutes: A motion by Henry seconded by Roeder to approve the October 25, 2022 meeting minutes carried.

Executive Director's Report and Monthly Calendar:

Financial Status:

FY 2023 Federal Funding: Ramie withdrew \$24,185.14 from ASAP on 11/21 to cover the November bills, leaving a balance of \$106,036.91 through 3/31/23. She will prepare an Application for Federal Assistance package (budget, work plan, narrative report, and SF-424 forms) for the 3rd and 4th Quarters (or the time period to be allowed by NPS). She will adjust budget expenses for items such as health insurance reduction, grant allocations, and the 2023 cessation of the Sullivan County Solid Waste \$125/year business fee.

FY 2022 Audit and Reports: Eckersley and Davis CPAs have initiated work on the FY 2022 audit remotely, will schedule an office visit to examine financial records, and will deliver a report at the 1/24/23 Operations Committee meeting to be switched to 6:30 p.m. By a 12/29 deadline, Ramie will prepare a Fiscal Year 2022 Federal Financial Report (FFR) with the bookkeeper's assistance and a narrative Performance Progress Report (PPR) to submit to NPS via the Grant Solutions online program.

State and Federal Funding: Ramie sent a UDC orientation and funding overview to New York City Department of Environmental Protection's new Director of Outreach John Milgrim on 11/1 as suggested by Rajs. She prepared a draft letter to NYS Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther (Under New Business). She will arrange meetings of the Government Officials Liaison Subcommittee with new federal and state elected officials to advise them of UDC funding status, accomplishments and unfunded projects.

Administration:

Health Insurance: Ramie continued consultation with Tri-State Benefits broker Nancy Yoder to finalize enrollment for the two PA resident employees into individual medical plans through Highmark Blue Flex Premium Gold. The UDC submitted those applications via Gannon Associates on 10/25 for coverage starting on 12/1, along with proof of group health plan cancellation by MVP and the first month's premium payments. Based on research from CPA Mike Poska on potential tax implications for the UDC in offering a combination of health care plans, Yoder recommended setting up an Individual Coverage Health Reimbursement Arrangement (ICHRA) that will document the terms of the employer-provided health plans on a non-taxable basis, with limitations placed on the cost for self-only monthly premiums. Preparation of the ICHRA plan by Core Documents was a \$199 charge, with the information remaining on premises and any updates to be sent automatically. The two employees will need to bring in their monthly invoices that must be sent to their PA home addresses to be paid by the UDC; the MVP Health Care plan for Ramie will continue to be directly billed, while the Chamber Choice United Concordia dental plan and VSP vision plan will continue as 3-subscriber groups. The 2023 rates for Highmark were received on 11/14. The age-based premiums as of 1/1 will increase over the December 2022 rate, mostly due to the Highmark switch from a EPO to a PPO with broader coverage, by a collective \$119.24 per month or \$1,430.88 annually, still representing a

significant overall savings to the UDC compared to the MVP 3-suscriber group. The ICHRA manual in PDF format was received on 11/16.

Ramie read from a draft Resolution to Adopt An Individual Coverage Health Reimbursement Arrangement: “Whereas, Laurie Ramie has determined that it would be in the best interests of the Upper Delaware Council, Inc. and its employee(s) to adopt a “Individual Coverage Healthy Reimbursement Arrangement” allowing Upper Delaware Council, Inc. employees to receive reimbursement of insurance premium, so-called; be it known that a vote was taken, and all were in favor. Resolved, that Upper Delaware Council, Inc. adopt a so-called “Individual Coverage Healthy Reimbursement Arrangement,” all in accordance with the specifications annexed hereto; and, be it known that the Upper Delaware Council, Inc. “Individual Coverage Health Reimbursement Arrangement” Plan Document was executed January 1, 2023. Resolved further, that Laurie Ramie undertake all actions necessary to implement and administer said plan. In witness whereof, I have executed my name for above named Company of January 1, 2023.” A motion by Henry seconded by Boyar to approve the resolution to formally establish the ICHRA plan carried. Richardson asked Ramie to do a spreadsheet to show the UDC’s costs for its health care plans based on the new 2023 rates, along with an explanation of the coverage status.

Public Relations:

“The Upper Delaware”: Ramie drafted a resolution for the FY 2023 contract with Courier Printing for 11/3 UDC approval. For the Fall/Winter issue, she prepared a list of contents on 11/1, started research, photo selections and manipulations, set up an 11/10 interview with Pam Reinhardt (Fremont alternate) for the profile, assigned two articles to Engelhardt, did formatting, layout, composition, and proofing. She finalized her draft on 11/18, packaged the files with a cover memo for the Fiscal Year 2023 order instructions on Saturday, 11/19, then had to send on 11/21 (original deadline date) when the electronic transmission of the Quark file and 21 photos via G Drive then Dropbox wasn’t working, with Engelhardt accomplishing it through Microsoft OneDrive ultimately. She received and approved the PDF proof on 11/21. Hall-Bagdonas sent Courier the updated mail program database on 11/22. Ramie logged 48 intermittent hours of work on this issue between 11/1-11/21. Staff await delivery on 12/5. We will post it on the website and publicize its availability. Spring 2023 issue will be due to the printer on 3/20 for a 4/3 publication.

Leadership Sullivan: Ramie finalized two Power Point presentations and collated 17 information folders for the Upper Delaware River valley conservation partners presentation to the Sullivan County Chamber of Commerce Foundation’s Leadership Sullivan Class of 2022 on 11/8 at the Council office along with the National Park Service (Cody Hendrix) and Delaware Highlands Conservancy (Trey Talley).

News Releases: Ramie issued one news release: “UDC Will Present 3D Visualization of Land Use in the Upper Delaware Corridor on Dec. 1”, 11/18, with a photo requested from the presenters. She provided information and a quote on the NYS Environmental Bond Act’s passage to Derek Kirk at *Sullivan County Democrat* 11/10 for a front-page article. She shared Facebook posts from Leadership Sullivan’s UDC visit on 11/8 and World GIS Day with Engelhardt’s appearance at the Sullivan County Government Center on 11/16 including a video from their GIS director. Ongoing publicity occurs through Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube and Vimeo outlets. UDC also posts all NPS UPDE news releases at upperdelawarecouncil.org.

New Business

Draft letter to NYS Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther re: UDC Funding: Following its review, a Motion by Henry seconded by Roeder carried for Ramie to send the approved letter and fact sheet to NYS Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther that had been requested after the election.

Sign-on to Support Upper Delaware River Watershed Allocation in NYS EPF: A Motion by Richardson seconded by Greier carried to add the UDC as a signatory on the Alliance for the Upper Delaware River Watershed letter to Governor Kathy Hochul to renew the \$300,000 program’s budget line in the 2023 New York State Environmental Protection Fund, based on the 11/28 deadline for sign-on parties to respond.

Upper Delaware River Valley Representatives 2022 Election Results: Ramie provided a list of the Upper Delaware River Valley Representatives 2022 Election Results she compiled in the meeting packet. She will arrange

for the UDC's Government Officials Liaison Subcommittee to reach out to newly elected and re-elected federal and state officials for UDC orientation purposes and/or information on the Council's funding situation.

Summary of Pending Bills 11/30/2022: A Motion by Henry seconded by Greier to approve the bills and pay them in the normal fashion carried.

Financial Statement 11/21/2022: Boyar said the financial statement is offered for individual review.

Other: None.

Old Business

UDC Social Media: Hall-Bagdonas said we shared about World GIS Day 11/16 and Engelhardt's participation with that and continue to share partner news. Soon we will be sharing about the Fall/Winter Issue of "The Upper Delaware"!

Other: At the committee's request, Ramie will ask UDC Fiscal Plan consultant Michael Crane if he will update his calculations for the Council's operational sustainability from his report issued a year ago in December 2021 to use with funding appeals.

Ramie said that Henry had suggested discussing tonight a carryover item from the 11/15 Water Use/Resource Management Committee based on an email she sent. The DRBC has now scheduled a resolution to be heard at its 12/7 business meeting on the special regulations regarding HVHF water importations, exportations and wastewater disposal. She asked if that provided an impetus to draft the UDC comment letter to DRBC that WU/RM had discussed to present at the 12/1 full Council meeting. Members agreed, while also directing Ramie to proceed with inviting David Yoxtheimer from Penn State University's Marcellus Center for Outreach and Research to provide an updated presentation on his 12/7/2017 talk on "Shale Gas Development and Water Resource Considerations in the Susquehanna River Basin" at the 1/5/23 UDC meeting if he is available for its general educational value.

Adjournment: A motion by Roeder seconded by Henry to adjourn the meeting at 8:33 p.m. carried.