

**Upper Delaware Council**  
**OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**  
**November 23, 2021**

Committee Members Present: Jeff Dexter, Larry Richardson, Fred Peckham (Zoom), Al Henry, David Dean (Zoom), Aaron Robinson.

Committee Members Absent: Jim Greier

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

NPS Partner: Cody Hendrix- Community & Land Use Planner

Guests: Richard Eckersley, Susan Sullivan- Town of Tusten Representative

The UDC's Operations Committee held its monthly meeting at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. on Tuesday, November 23, 2021. Chairperson Dexter called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

**Approval of October 26<sup>th</sup> Meeting Minutes:** A motion by Robinson seconded by Henry to approve the October 26, 2021 Meeting Minutes was carried.

**FY 2021 Financial Review Presentation by Richard Eckersley, CPA:** Richard Eckersley referred members to a packet compiled by Eckersley and Davis, LLP. It included a cover letter that summarized what happened over the fiscal year, a draft of financial statements, a draft Form 990 for the UDC ending 9/30/2021 and a draft NYS filing form. He asked that the draft IRS Form 990 be reviewed and approved by the full Council in order for it to be issued in the final form. Eckersley said you will see that this year has \$100,000 less revenue than last year; that's because of the Pennsylvania Grant. He said in 2021 you didn't receive the PA DCED grant but you are still spending it. Otherwise, things are repetitively consistent and there's not much difference on the revenue side. Regarding the expense side, personnel is up about \$29,267. \$50,846 was spent from the PA DCED grant. When all the ups and downs are measured UDC spent \$31,770 more than the prior year which sort of ties in with the PA DCED grant. Eckersley explained this year was a review and not an audit year. A review means they give negative assurance and nothing looked bad. An audit is positive assurance where they say they have looked at everything and it presents what happens. Eckersley said they didn't find anything askew.

Eckersley said the most important document in the Financial Statement in their opinion is Exhibit I, the Statement of Financial Position. That represents what you have that is yours and what belongs to someone else. What UDC owns is called Net Assets (it used to be called equity). At the end of this year UDC had \$200,000 in cash and \$43,902 in Net Book Value in Equipment. With total value of \$245,358, it's not far from last year. In liabilities UDC had \$20,694 of obligations (Accounts Payable, Accrued Wages and Payroll Taxes). Net Assets are broken down by between those that have no restrictions (UDC money) and those that have restrictions (someone else's money - NPS). UDC's money was \$150,931. NPS's money was \$43,902. The PA DCED grant money is \$29,831 and that money is useable until the end of the year. Eckersley said in the NPS line basically what is left over is what they have in equity and that is the physical assets (building, desks, and chairs). At this point, the cash funds have been utilized. UDC has a reserve; that's the \$150,000 and that could keep UDC going for about a half a year. Exhibit II is what UDC considers to be most important, the Statement of Activity and Changes in Net Assets. UDC received \$300,000 from NPS. UDC spent that \$300,000 in accordance with the budget that NPS agreed to and UDC did exactly what they were supposed to do with it. \$50,847 was spent of the PA DCED grants and that was moved to income. Expenses for the year total \$363,859 of which \$12,095 is depreciation. When all is said and done UDC's net assets increased by \$9,701. If you look at page 5 under Other Income you will see \$10,485. NPS went down about \$12,095 and that's the depreciation on the assets they will get back. Exhibit III is where they present the Functional Allocation of Expenses/Expenditures of the \$300,000. This is the activity you spent that money to do. When they are allocated, they are allocated in two ways. Primarily they use staff time (from their time sheets) to find out what the staff did by hours. Then there are certain things they allocate specifically like the Technical Assistance Grants. Eckersley said the Financial Statement follows the budget. Then when they get to a point, they take the overhead that administration amount (\$121,577) and allocate it to the functions it did because the administrative functions support the other activities. Then they add to it the past two grants. He said that's been a very important presentation for folks because that's how they gauge is UDC accomplishing its goals. The next exhibit is a

Statement of Cash Flow. It just tells you if UDC's cash went up or down. The Notes to Financial Statements section encompasses what UDC does and how we do it, who participates, what UDC's accounting practices are, etc. On page 13 they note Liquidity and Availability of Resources. He said for UDC it's very simple; you have cash and you have obligations you have to pay. Eckersley noted page 14 under Subsequent Events reading "Management has noted no significant events occurring subsequent to September 30, 2021 through November 23, 2021 (the date the accountants' audit report was available for issue) which would have a material effect upon these financial statements." Looking at the draft 990, he will be asking Ramie to provide him a few answers to complete that form. Eckersley submitted letters for review and signatures. The correspondence included the delivery letter, a management representation letter, adjustment of journal entries for the year, and an engagement letter for next year's audit. Eckersley told Ramie they plan to come back the last week of December or the first week of January to do the required PA DCED grant Audit. The committee thanked Eckersley for his report.

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

***Financial Status:***

**FY 2022 Federal Funding:** Ramie withdrew \$24,027.70 from ASAP on 11/22 to cover the November abstract of bills, leaving a balance of \$34,161.00 from the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter federal allocation. Hendrix said he hadn't heard of any updates regarding the Continuing Resolution which is due to expire on 12/3.

**FY 2021 Federal Funding:** Ramie contacted the Grant Solutions Help Desk about problems with the online form for the FY 2021 Federal Financial Report (FFR) on 11/10 by email and 11/15 by phone. She resubmitted the SF-425 on 11/18, which was acknowledged on 11/22. She will prepare the Performance Progress Report (PPR) for FY 21 using the work plan goals assessment format to upload to Grant Solutions by the 12/29 deadline. Ramie will also review and process the FY 2021 Financial Review documents generated by Eckersley & Davis, LLC.

**State Funding:** Ramie had a meeting with the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) and will prepare a "blue skies" budget and list of accomplishments to assist NPCA with their offered advocacy of UDC state funding efforts for NY and PA.

***Administration/Office:***

**Personnel:** Ramie prepared a summary of applications for the Resources and Land Use Specialist position for the Personnel Subcommittee ahead of the interview with Kerry Engelhardt on 10/26. She facilitated offer discussions, benefits negotiations, conducted checks of three references and provided a summary. After the offer was accepted following the UDC's vote on 11/4, she drafted or sent documents including an Employment Agreement, Declaration for Employment, Training Reimbursement Agreement, IRS W-2 form, W-9 form, and Effective Salary & Benefits memo. Ramie sent Engelhardt's resume to the full membership on 11/5, arranged for an email account and website training, contacted the UDC's health insurance broker to make note of 90-day plan enrollment dates, and did a list of orientation and preparation materials for Hall-Bagdonas to handle such as updating the phone directory, copier folders, and printing in-house business cards. Ramie notified the other applicants on 11/8 of the outcome. Ramie did an interview and photo shoot with Engelhardt on 11/8 and issued a news release on 11/19 to announce her hiring. Engelhardt's first day of work was 11/22. A six-month probationary period is in effect through 5/22/22.

**Representative Vacancy:** Town of Delaware UDC Representative Tom Dent resigned as of 11/10 after serving on the board since 6/10/20 due to being overextended in his community service obligations. The town board plans to hold off on making an appointment to fill this vacancy until their January reorganizational meeting. Alternate Harold Roeder has been contacted and is willing to step in as needed.

**Bank Branch Closure:** Jeff Bank has announced that its 155 Kirk Road, Narrowsburg branch will close as of 3:00 p.m. on 2/11/22. Accounts will be automatically transferred to the Callicoon branch at 4499 State Route 17B. The UDC maintains four accounts (checking, savings, PA DCED Grant, and Litter Sweep) currently. UDC Bookkeeper Mike Poska assured Ramie that he takes advantage of every form of electronic banking these days so she believes there won't be a large impact on our operations from the branch closure. If it proves to be too inconvenient, the UDC can make a decision what to do at that time.

***Public Relations:***

**“The Upper Delaware”:** Ramie worked for 40.5 hours as of 11/23 to research, select or take photos, conduct interviews, manipulate photos, format, design, and proof the Fall-Winter 2021 newsletter. She sent the Quark Xpress file and 21 photos to Courier Printing via Dropbox on 11/23 ahead of 11/24 deadline with a cover memo of the work order. Hall-Bagdonas will update the mail program database to send by 11/29. Expected delivery is on 12/6. Staff will post the issue on the UDC website and publicize its availability.

**News Releases:** Three news releases were issued: “Upper Delaware Council Awards 2022 Technical Assistance Grant”, 10/26; “American Rescue Plan Act Conservation Funding Public Presentation at Nov. 16 UDC Meeting”, 11/5; and “UDC Welcomes Kerry Engelhardt as Resources and Land Use Specialist”, 11/19. Ramie circulated Liam Mayo’s River Reporter coverage of the 11/4 UDC meeting discussion of the NPS substantial conformance definition letter to the board for informational purposes. Ramie was interviewed by Peter Becker of Tri-County Independent on 11/10 about the Lackawaxen River Wild and Scenic designation. Ongoing publicity occurs through Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube and Vimeo outlets. UDC also posts all NPS UPDE news releases at [upperdelawarecouncil.org](http://upperdelawarecouncil.org).

***Grants/Fundraising:***

**Donation:** The UDC sent an appreciation letter on 11/9 to the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway, Inc. for its \$1,200 donation for 2021 as presented by Treasurer Larry Richardson in gratitude of providing a meeting place and storage of records for the fellow non-profit organization.

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 December’s monthly calendar. Ramie had three different meetings with Fiscal Plan Consultant Michael Crane, including with Kristen Bowman Kavanagh and Beth Brown (Delaware River Basin Commission), and with Sergio Moncado and Sharon Davis from National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA). December is a relatively light month but UDC still has its fair share of meetings. As a reminder, on the second Tuesday (12/14), all three standing committees will meet and we will try to abbreviate them.

**Old Business**

**Appoint a Nominating Committee for Slate of 2022 UDC Officers:** Dexter appointed Susan Sullivan, Aaron Robinson and Jim Greier to serve on the Nominating Committee. Their task will be to propose a slate of 2022 officers that will be announced at the 12/2 UDC meeting to stand for election by ballot at the 1/6/22 meeting.

**Letter from NYS DEC re: UDC Funding in State’s Executive Budget:** A copy of a funding denial letter from NYS DEC was included in the meeting packet. The introductory letter to Gov. Kathy Hochul regarding Fiscal Year 2022 Executive Budget Considerations was sent in its abridged form on 9/13 and acknowledged by Regional Representative Pavan Naidu on 9/14, who had noted, in part, “I will review it and move the documents up the chain.” It was referred over to the DEC and Diane English, chief of the Water Quantity Management Section for the Bureau of Water Resource Management’s Division of Water, wrote, “Governor Hochul requested that I respond to your letter regarding funding in the State’s Executive Budget for fiscal year 2022/2023. The Department appreciates the Upper Delaware Council’s valuable efforts on behalf of the basin through implementation of the River Management Plan. These decades of work have truly made a difference with improved water quality and access throughout the corridor. Unfortunately, there is no funding source available at this time. I will share your request for the State to meet its commitment with our Executive staff for their consideration during budget deliberations. The Department will continue to work collaboratively with you and our partners in the Basin to improve the management of the Delaware River to the benefit of all its stakeholders.” Ramie said that is typically the answer the UDC receives; however, UDC Town of Lumberland Nadia Rajs remained hopeful that we could set up a meeting via Naidu for further discussion.

**Replacement of UDC Fuel Oil Tanks:** Ramie reported as a follow-up to an advance email notification to the committee that Firmstone/Lakewood Fuels is refusing to deliver any additional fuel oil to the UDC due to the deteriorating condition of the tanks discovered during their last stop. They are rusting and starting to slightly bulge which could be a safety issue. Ramie said she appreciated their staff alerting us to the situation. She summarized the recommendation for a double-walled tank and provided a reference to a particular company since Firmstone/Lakewood does not have tanks in stock or do installations currently. Henry, Richardson, and Robinson

have all been researching options on replacing the two 275-gallon fuel tanks. Hall-Bagdonas will call Black Bear Fuels ahead of their scheduled 12/15 site visit arranged by Richardson to provide an estimate. She will reach out to Don Bellotti of Riverside Mechanicals to see if he is able to install fuel tanks with some urgency since they are down to half-full with no additional deliveries possible due to safety deficiencies. The Building Subcommittee will continue to pursue leads on tanks in stock and certified installers, so these tasks may not be necessary. Staff will assemble and send bids to the Operations Committee to review prices and options.

**Determination to Sponsor a 2022 Upper Delaware Litter Sweep:** The Water Use/Resource Management Committee has expressed support for the UDC to host another litter sweep event. Ramie noted that we previously had grant funding to apply toward this project but would need to raise money for it next year. It's not too soon to start planning if we want to do it again. Hall-Bagdonas will develop a budget, timeline, and task summary list for the UDC to host a 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Upper Delaware Litter Sweep around Earth Day in April to have ready by the 12/14 committee meetings. Ramie will propose a date for the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual River Valley Awards that would not be on the typical 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of April since staff would not have the capacity to organize both of these labor-intensive events in the same timeframe.

**Summary of Pending Bills 11/22/2021:** A Motion by Henry seconded by Richardson to approve bills was carried.

**Financial Statement 11/30/2021:** Dexter said the financial statement is offered for individual review.

**Other:** None.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Adjournment:** A motion by Richardson seconded by Henry to adjourn the meeting at 7:57 p.m. was carried.