

**Upper Delaware Council  
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
December 14, 2021**

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

Committee Members Absent:

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

NPS Partner: Cody Hendrix- Community & Land Use Planner

Guests: Susan Sullivan- Town of Tusten Representative (until 7:08), Ginny Dudko- Town of Deepark Alternate, Andy Boyar- Town of Highland Alternate (Zoom), Pat Jeffer- Shohola Township Alternate, Evan Padua- Town of Tusten Alternate (Zoom)

The UDC's Operations Committee held its monthly meeting at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. on Tuesday, December 14, 2021. Chairperson Dexter called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

**Approval of November 23<sup>rd</sup> Meeting Minutes:** A motion by Richardson seconded by Henry to approve the November 23, 2021 Meeting Minutes was carried.

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

***Financial Status:***

**FY 2022 Federal Funding:** Ramie withdrew \$24,642.47 from ASAP on 12/13 to cover the December abstract of bills, leaving a balance of \$9,518.52 from the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter federal allocation. President Biden signed a bill on 12/3 to keep the federal government operating through 2/18/22 under a second Continuing Resolution as lawmakers continue working on Fiscal Year 2022 appropriations bills. A budget will be prepared as well as a narrative report, updated work plan, and SF-424 forms for the next percentage allocation of federal funds that will be available to apply for though a Cooperative Agreement modification. Approval to enter into a contract for the FY 2022 full audit will be sought at the 1/6 UDC meeting. A draft resolution appears under New Business to enable the return of a management representation letter.

**FY 2021 Federal Funding:** Ramie reviewed the FY 2021 Financial Review documents generated by Eckersley & Davis, LLC. She provided missing information and collected EINs from UDC 2021 grant recipient local governments for IRS 990 Schedule I, which was returned on 12/10. Ramie contacted the Grant Solutions Help Desk again on 12/6 about problems with locked inaccurate data and the inability to open the form to access the FY 2021 Federal Financial Report (FFR). NPS UPDE AO Michelle Blockberger came over on 12/7 to try offering assistance and see the recipient's screen, to no avail. Ramie was able to reopen the report for editing on 12/9 and submitted it electronically. She will await approval of the FFR and 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. She will file Fiscal Year 2021 budget and NPS administrative documents for records storage.

***Administration/Office:***

**Fuel Tanks:** Under coordination by Al Henry and following a 11/24 site visit, Bluestone Environmental, Inc. of Honesdale removed the UDC's two 275-gallon deteriorating fuel tanks and installed a new 500-gallon, 12 gauge steel, double-walled, 4x6' AST heating oil tank with plumbing and all connections tested on 12/3 (\$6,350.00), including an add-on to transport and place seven 4x2x2 concrete blocks as purchased from Wayne County Ready-Mix Concrete of Honesdale (\$332.50) based on the Town of Tusten Building Inspector's requirement to install barriers around the outdoor enclosure. Engelhardt filled out the town's building permit application on 11/30 with the UDC's submission of a \$50 fee and insurance certificate attachments on 12/2. Ramie arranged for the co-signed payments, UDC tax exempt and W-9 form from Bluestone as a new vendor, and contracted Firmstone/Lakewood Fuels who filled the tank for \$825.00 on 12/7 (250 gallons at \$3.47/gallon). The New York State Department of

Labor Boiler Safety Bureau (Utica District Office) made an unannounced visit by Inspector Jim Jensen on 12/2 to check the furnace and subsequently sent an approved two-year permit along with their invoice (\$75). Hall-Bagdonas left a message for Don Bellotti from Riverside Mechanicals to come do an annual servicing on the boiler. UDC staff and committee members thanked Henry for Henry's coordination in arranging Bluestone Environmental, Inc. in such a timely manner. Henry recommended sending a Thank You letter to Bluestone Environmental, Inc. for accommodating the short notice.

**Personnel:** Ramie completed an Annual Performance Appraisal for Hall-Bagdonas on 12/6 and provided a copy to the Personnel Subcommittee. She reviewed it with Hall-Bagdonas for the employee interview on 12/10. The Personnel Subcommittee met at 6 p.m. on 12/14.

**2022 Transitions:** Ramie assisted the Nominating Committee in preparing a slate of candidates by providing the 1988-2021 directory of officers and researching the bylaws. Hall-Bagdonas sent UDC membership appointment forms to our participating Town/ship boards on 12/8. There will be a resolution at the 1/6 full Council meeting for the 2022 officers to be authorized signatories on UDC accounts at Jeff Bank. Conflict-of-Interest annual disclosure forms will be distributed to all members. Ramie will look into sexual harassment training requirements. She will confirm the IRS mileage reimbursement rate for 2022 once it is published. Regular meeting dates and upcoming deadlines will be noted on the calendar. Ramie will arrange for an officiant to preside over the swearing-in ceremony and for a reception for new officers if the board is able to meet in person on 2/3.

**Public Relations:**

**"The Upper Delaware":** Following the 11/23 final proofreading and submission of the Fall/Winter issue to Courier Printing via Dropbox, UDC received the blueline hard copy proof on 11/20 and Ramie approved a PDF version on 11/30. Hall-Bagdonas updated and emailed the mailing address database on 11/29. The newsletters were delivered on 12/9 and mailed after an additional \$30.23 was provided for the postage account. Engelhardt posted the issue to the UDC website. Ramie oversaw distribution, publicity, updated the archives and index of articles. The Spring 2022 issue will be due by 3/23 for a 4/3 release.

**News Releases:** One news release was issued: "*The Upper Delaware* Fall-Winter 2021 Issue Available On-Line and by Mail", 12/8. Delaware Currents editor Meg McGuire requested permission on 12/3 to share the UDC's support letter for the NYS funding proposal in her article. Ramie replied to questions on the UDC fiscal plan presentation to Peter Becker from Tri-County Independent on 12/2. Engelhardt add her biography and photo to [www.upperdelawarecouncil.org](http://www.upperdelawarecouncil.org) for the About Us/Staff page on 12/10. 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).

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.

**Old Business**

**12/9 Alliance for the Upper Delaware River Watershed Letter to Gov. Hochul:** Ramie noted that the UDC is a co-sponsor of this campaign for NYS funding for the Upper Delaware River Watershed. There was a petition drive and 1,607 signatures were collected supporting this campaign. Ramie included a copy of the Alliance's letter in the meeting packet.

**12/10 Letter: Trust for Public Land's Callicoon Riverside Park Funding Request:** Ramie was up against the clock for when the Trust for Public Land had to submit this grant application. Ramie said her policy is if it's a project that UDC has previously supported it doesn't require a lot of effort to write a similar letter for a different grant program. That had to be submitted by Monday. Ramie provided a copy of the support letter in the meeting packet.

**PA Grant Balance – Damascus Project, Fiscal Plan Payment, and Audit:** Ramie said she's happy to report that UDC has now spent down all funds allocated previously with the exception of audit costs. That was accomplished by the final payment for the Fiscal Sustainability Plan. Today, Damascus Township Supervisor Steve Adams provided Ramie with invoices for playground equipment. She was able to provide Adams with a \$15,000 check to

help offset the cost of the \$75,226 project. She will process the final project submission by Damascus Township and arrange for the audit by Eckersley and Davis. Ramie provided an updated balance sheet in the meeting packet. Ramie said any interest over \$50 has to be repaid to the Commonwealth of PA; we will have earned a little over \$106 in interest. Ramie said of the five PA Townships, only one (Lackawaxen) underspent. Henry recommended allocating the \$152.82 towards audio equipment for UDC. The grant contract close-out deadline is 12/30.

**UDC Social Media Analytics:** Hall-Bagdonas said UDC continues to show its value through its education outreach. We shared twice about the Northern Snakehead presentation on Instagram and gained 140 likes, 11 shares, 12 comments. With this promotion, members of the public attended this timely presentation. We also received positive feedback about posting the presentations online for those that could not participate. Hall-Bagdonas will be looking at the Social Media Calendar that she and Shannon Cilento had worked on for 2021 and will update that. We also look forward to posting about the DRBC Microplastics Study presentation on 1/6.

**Personnel Subcommittee Report:** Henry said the Personnel Subcommittee met to discuss Hall-Bagdonas' Annual Performance Appraisal, and she passed with flying colors. If you would like more information, you can reach out to Ramie. Henry thanked Hall-Bagdonas for all she does.

**Other:** None.

### **New Business**

**Nominating Committee Report for Slate of 2022 UDC Officers:** Speaking on behalf of the Nominating Committee, Robinson announced the following 2022 slate of officers for consideration at the Council's annual meeting and election in January: Chairperson – Andy Boyar (Town of Highland); Vice-Chairperson – Aaron Robinson (Shohola Township); and Secretary/Treasurer – Al Henry (Berlin Township). Other candidates can be nominated from the floor and elections will be by electronic ballot at the January meeting.

**Fiscal Sustainability Plan Follow-Up:** Ramie said, as you know, we had our earthshaking presentation by Michael Crane as the 12/2 full Council meeting. In the interest of time, tonight she wanted to focus on when UDC signed the contract with Crane in July, it included two tasks. One was the Fiscal Plan and the second was to do an accuracy check on the 1995 Economic Analysis that appears in the Appendix of the River Management Plan. Of the contract for \$17,930, \$15,950 was for the business plan based on the amount of time and research that went into that. There was \$1,980 for the second task. When we got to the 12/1 deadline for the project, Crane told her that the business plan became so complicated it led him right up to the deadline. Crane had proposed to budget 18 hours to do the 1995 Economic Analysis. He would instead like to use that time to help the UDC with any implementation of any recommendations we decide to pursue. The Economic Analysis could be a future fundable project for which bids could be sought. On 12/3, he heard back from Palisades Interstate Park Commission and they offered to meet with us to discuss how they are set up and funded. Crane had similar offers from Interstate Commissions or nonprofit groups. Ramie said in her opinion, the time that Crane has left on the contract would be better spent to help shepherd the UDC through recommendations and come up with a plan. He is willing to work with the UDC for the first two or three months of the new year. Ramie said it would just require her revising the original contract.

Greier said in order to talk about something like the Fiscal Sustainability Plan and its magnitude, members need to be in an in-person environment, not on Zoom because there are connectivity issues and not all of the discussion is heard. Ramie said maybe we would like to set up a subcommittee to start looking into this, saying it's hard to know how to tackle this. She said having the whole Operations Committee look into it may take too much time and may be too burdensome.

Boyar said he thinks the Fiscal Sustainability Plan is very important and it is incumbent of all of our members to read it and understand it. He suggests holding a council-wide roundtable discussion at Narrowsburg Union the same way we did when we updated the Five-Year Plan. Members were able to spread out and hear each other. He said then we can figure out if we want a special committee or for this to go through Operations or otherwise. Ramie said we will put some dates out in January and see what works for people.

**Draft Resolution 2022-01- Contract with Eckersley and Davis, LLP for Fiscal Year 2022 Financial Audit:** A motion to forward this resolution to the full Council was made by Henry, seconded by Richardson and carried unanimously.

**2022 Litter Sweep Budget and Planning:** Hall-Bagdonas provided a timeline and budget sheet for the 2022 Litter Sweep. She said it was easy to look over the 2021 timeline from Shannon Cilento's emails and correspondence and Ramie's press releases. Hall-Bagdonas did move up reaching out to PennDOT and NYSDOT earlier. This timeline can change and the Litter Sweep event dates are to be determined. Something we can think about at a later meeting is what UDC's specific expenses will be. Only one litter bucket was lost with all of the 2021 cleanups and that's easy to replace. Hall-Bagdonas said to take the information in and if anyone wants to reach out to her to please do so. We have Cilento's letter to the municipalities from 202 we will be using as a guide to stay on schedule. Richardson suggested when doing press releases, adding a solicitation on the bottom for businesses that are interested in supporting this effort. Hall-Bagdonas said that's a great idea and with UDC's social media it will be a great way to showcase the partners and businesses that are helping with the Litter Sweep.

**Summary of Pending Bills 12/13/2021:** A Motion by Richardson seconded by Henry to approve bills carried.

**Financial Statement 12/31/2021:** Dexter said the financial statement is offered for individual review.

**Other:** None.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Adjournment:** A motion by Robinson seconded by Henry to adjourn the meeting at 7:47 p.m. carried.