

Upper Delaware Council  
**OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**  
**December 15, 2015**

Committee Present: Al Henry, Larry Richardson, David Dean, Aaron Robinson, Jeff Dexter (7:07 p.m.), Debra Conway, Fred Peckham, Harold Roeder, Jr., Nadia Rajsz  
Committee Absent: None  
NPS Partner: Kris Heister  
Staff: Laurie Ramie, Travis O'Dell, Cindy Odell  
Guests: Andy Boyar, Pat Jeffer

The UDC's Operations Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, December 15, 2015 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Henry called the meeting to order at 6:58 p.m.

**Approval of November 24 Minutes:** A motion by Peckham, seconded by Robinson to approve the November 24 meeting minutes was carried, with Conway and Rajsz abstaining. There was no public comment on the agenda.

**Executive Director's Report:** Ramie reported that a short-term Continuing Resolution to fund the federal government through midnight on December 16<sup>th</sup> was introduced on December 9<sup>th</sup>. Jennifer Madello, Deputy Comptroller/Budget Officer for the National Park Service was quoted as saying, "This is a simple amendment to the current CR which maintains existing funding levels and will allow additional time for Congress to negotiate and pass a full-year Omnibus funding bill." Ramie provided the amount drawn down for the December expenses and the balance left from the 19.63% of \$300,000 allocation that had been available through the NPS Cooperative Agreement for the period of October 1, 2015 to December 11, 2015. Ramie stated that the balance is not enough to cover another month's expenses, but UDC unrestricted funds are available to keep the Council running for several months if necessary. Richardson noted that the UDC's unrestricted funds should remain liquid just for this reason. Ramie stated that any consideration of investing will be deferred until full federal funding for FY 2016 UDC operations is received.

Ramie noted that additional, requested financial information was provided to Richard Eckersley to complete his draft report which he presented to the Operations Committee on November 24<sup>th</sup>. Once the completed federal and state filings and the final Financial Review Report are received, officer signatures will be obtained as well as a check to cover state form filing fees to submit by the February 15 deadline.

Ramie stated that the Project Review Workbook Update continues. A.J. Schwartz from Environmental Planning and Design met with the Project Review Committee on November 24 to obtain feedback on the Workbook and procedures from members, and to provide an update on the consultants' work after holding stakeholder sessions that afternoon. The survey response time was extended when re-circulated on November 25<sup>th</sup> in hopes that a few more responses would be received, she added. Ramie provided the project budget balance and noted that the project is still on schedule for completion by March 31, 2016.

Ramie noted that the Records Management project is still on-going. The next step is to develop a UDC Records Schedule and put together a Request for Proposals for Phase 3 which is records management and digitization.

Ramie reported that she was advised on November 20<sup>th</sup> that the Leadership Sullivan class and Sullivan County Chamber of Commerce Foundation Board's determination deadline for its 2016 Community Impact/Service Project was extended from November 18<sup>th</sup> to December 16<sup>th</sup>. She awaits the decision on the Corwin Farm D&H Canal Preservation project submitted by the UDC on September 29<sup>th</sup>.

Ramie stated that next summer Governor Cuomo will host a Catskills Challenge to promote tourism and showcase all of the recreational opportunities the region has to offer, including fly fishing, paddling, hiking and mountain biking. The Challenge will be modeled after the Governor's successful Adirondack Challenge used to strengthen tourism in Upstate New York and will bring together state and local officials, tourism industry representatives and outdoor enthusiasts to explore the Catskills region. At the December 8<sup>th</sup> Sullivan County Trails Committee meeting, it was learned that the governor's office would like to schedule one event per Catskills region county (Delaware, Sullivan, Ulster, and Greene). The New York-New Jersey Trails Conference has requested proposals by February 1<sup>st</sup> to provide to the NYS

DEC. Ramie said she received a call from Bill Rudge on December 10<sup>th</sup> requesting assistance with the development of a particular proposal needed by that day for potential mention in the governor's State of the State Address in January. Richardson said we have tried numerous times to get the NYS Governor on the river and this may be a great opportunity to get him on the river to highlight the Catskills. In addition to the Catskill Challenge, NYS is also making \$5 million available for a tourism ad campaign to promote all the Catskills region has to offer visitors.

Regarding the Geotourism project, Ramie said she reviewed the active website nominations and submitted a listing for the UDC August 7, 2016 Family Raft Trip on December 7<sup>th</sup>, which was activated under "Things to Do-Outdoor Adventure-Boat Tours" on December 11<sup>th</sup>. She added that January 16, 2016 is the deadline for submitting nominations. To nominate, visit [www.DelawareRiver.NatGeotourism.com](http://www.DelawareRiver.NatGeotourism.com).

Ramie stated that she continues to work on the FY 2015 Annual Report. Once the report is completed, it will be distributed to members and posted on the UDC website.

Ramie reported that she reviewed the Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council Priority Projects report on December 1<sup>st</sup>. She circulated a summary of Gov. Cuomo's announcement of the grant awards on December 10<sup>th</sup> for Delaware, Sullivan, and Orange County funded projects after watching a portion of the live streaming video from Albany. She noted there was not a lot of success for Sullivan or Orange County projects in the Delaware River valley area particularly. These results were particularly disappointing to those individuals who invested much time putting the applications together. Ramie said she will participate in a strategy session of local applicants to try and determine how to improve on the applications in the future.

Ramie referred members to the January 2016 calendar of UDC Meetings, Activities, and Deadlines.

### **New Business**

**FY 2016 Audit Engagement Approval:** Ramie stated that Eckersley and Ostrowski, LLC has conducted a financial review for the Council the last two years. The schedule of having reviews conducted for two years followed by a full audit every third year was agreed upon at the December 4, 2014 full Council meeting. The cost for the upcoming FY 2016 audit will be \$8,425, Ramie noted. Included in members' packets was the letter presented by Dick Eckersley to the Operations Committee on November 24. Upon approval of this letter, a draft resolution will be prepared for approval by the full Council at the January meeting. A motion to approve the letter was made by Rajs, seconded by Roeder and carried unanimously.

**Summary of Pending Bills 12-15-15/Financial Statements:** The committee was provided with an abstract of bills dated December 15 to review. Ramie noted that member expense checks included mileage reimbursement for the September Special Project Review meeting that was previously overlooked. A motion by Rajs, seconded by Conway to pay the bills listed on the abstract was carried unanimously. Financial Statements as of December 31, 2015 to date were provided for individual review.

**Other:** Ramie shared an advance preview look at the front cover of the 2016 Sullivan Catskills Travel Guide which features the Delaware River with its feline photo and promotes the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway and 2016 NPS Centennial.

**Old Business:** None

**Public Comment:** None

**Adjournment:** A motion by Roeder, seconded by Dean to adjourn the meeting at 7:16 p.m. was carried unanimously.

*Minutes submitted by Cindy Odell, 12/17/15*