

Upper Delaware Council
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
December 19, 2017

Committee Present: Jim Greier, Alan Henry, Jeff Dexter, Aaron Robinson, Harold Roeder, Jr., Larry Richardson, Fred Peckham, Dave Dean
Committee Absent: None
NPS Partner: Kris Heister, Carla Hahn
Staff: Laurie Ramie, Cindy Odell, Pete Golod
Guests: Roger Saumure, Pat Jeffer (7:25 p.m.), Doug Case (7:29 p.m.)

The UDC's Operations Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, December 19, 2017 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Greier called the meeting to order at 7:21 p.m.

Approval of November 28 Meeting Minutes: A motion by Roeder seconded by Peckham to approve the November 28 meeting minutes was carried. There was no public comment on the agenda.

Executive Director's Report and Monthly Calendar: Ramie referred members to her written report provided in their packets. She reported that there has been no action yet on approval of the UDC's FY 2018 Application for Federal Assistance. The UDC awaits the execution of Modification #6 to our FY 2016-2020 Cooperative Agreement to authorize the release of federal funds. Heister said she received word from the Department of the Interior that no reviews of Cooperative Agreements will take place until January 2018. She added that the Upper Delaware did have the opportunity to provide information about why the Cooperative Agreement should be reviewed earlier and requested funding by December 8. As of late last week, "nothing had come out of DOI yet", she noted. Roeder asked if they do not honor this funding in a timely manner, are they not voiding the contract? Heister said she does not know the answer to that. Dean asked Heister for clarification that this lack of funding is not a unique situation to the UDC. Heister said it is not; anybody that has a Cooperative Agreement \$100,000 or more is "in the same boat." Henry asked what the Council has remaining in available assets. Ramie provided that figure as well as the average monthly expenses amount. Ramie stated the role of our Agreements Technical Representative (ATR) for the UDC contract has changed from Administrative Officer Karen Henry to Administrative Support Assistant Michelle Blockberger. She added that this change will require a modification to the Cooperative Agreement as well. An update on the extension of the Continuing Resolution under which the federal government is operating was provided. The total owed in federal reimbursement for the 1st quarter of FY 2018 was provided. A motion to send a letter to the Secretary of the Interior, the NPS Director, and the NPS Northeast Regional Director expressing the UDC's concerns and hardships over the funding delay for FY 2018 was made by Henry and seconded by Richardson. Henry suggested that our federal and state elected representatives be copied on the letter. After a brief discussion about the content of the letter, a vote was taken and the motion passed.

Ramie noted that the response to the National Park Service's request for all supporting documentation to address the origin of the UDC's Unrestricted Fund was sent on November 30 to meet the December 1 deadline. We received confirmation of the package's delivery from Financial Assistance Policy Branch Chief Heidi Sage on December 4, without any communication since then, she added.

In terms of state funding, Ramie reported that letters from the towns of Tusten and Fremont in support of the UDC's \$50,000 project request to the NYS DEC have been received. Regarding Pennsylvania, she said that following her participation in a January 11 webinar on the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' Statewide and Regional Partnership Grants Program to obtain basic information and deadlines, Tim Dugan will facilitate a meeting with the DCNR regional advisor to discuss whether the C2P2 grant could be a potential source of Commonwealth funding for the Council.

Henry asked for more information to supplement the email sent out regarding the availability of \$10 million in Conservation Innovative Grants through the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Services. Golod will find out more details and circulate that information.

Ramie reported that effective January 1, 2018, private employers in New York State will be required to obtain Paid Family Leave insurance for employees who work a regular schedule of 20 or more hours per week after 26 weeks of employment. She said that while it is a New York State law, it does

pertain to anyone who works in New York; it does not matter where the employee lives. Employers may choose to cover the cost themselves or deduct the premium cost from employee contributions. She provided the expected annual cost for UDC staff. A motion that the UDC cover the premium for New York Paid Family Leave under the existing disability insurance rider was made by Richardson, seconded by Henry and carried.

Ramie noted that effective January 1, 2018 the Internal Revenue Service has set the standard mileage rate to calculate the deductible costs of business costs of business travel at 54.5 cents for every mile driven, which is an increase of one cent.

Ramie said we received the finalized IRS Form 990 and New York State Charities Bureau Form 500 from Eckersley and Ostrowski. Officer signatures will be obtained and the forms will be mailed to the appropriate agencies by the specified deadlines, including a \$75 filing fee for the NYS submission.

Ramie stated that U.S. Senator Charles Schumer's office has accepted the UDC's request for a constituent meeting after New Year's. The meeting will be with Regional Director Allison Biasotti at the Hudson Valley Office in Peekskill. When arranged, we will pursue a meeting with U.S. Senator Kristen Gillibrand in Mahopac on the same day. We will continue to pursue additional appointments with federal and state representatives, and notify the board when they are scheduled, Ramie added.

Ramie referred members to the January 2018 calendar of UDC Meetings, Activities and Deadlines provided in their packets. She noted that a presentation by Michael Mrozinski, planning director for the Pike County Office of Community Planning, on the Pike County Hazard Mitigation Plan will take place at the January 4 full Council meeting. Hahn provided a brief update on the Shippensburg University GIS project. A presentation on the GIS mapping tool is planned for March.

New Business

UDC Expenditures for NPS Funding Inquiry: Ramie referred members to her written report provided in their packets that breaks down the UDC expenditures to respond to the National Park Service's inquiry to the UDC's Unrestricted Fund. She noted that the report does include staff time to respond to the inquiry, although she said she would not expect to be reimbursed for this as staff was on the clock. Ramie said that a November 9 letter from Alexa Molnar, Chief Financial Officer, NPS Northeast Region, Philadelphia, PA stated, "The cost of assembling these records for review is an allowable Indirect Cost, but no additional funds are guaranteed." Ramie said she researched the federal award rules to find out how indirect costs are defined and it says, "There is no universal rule for classifying certain costs as either direct or indirect under every accounting system. A cost may be direct with respect to some service or function, but indirect with respect to the federal award or other final cost objective. Therefore, it is essential that each item of cost incurred for the same purpose be treated consistently in like circumstances either as a direct or an indirect cost in order to avoid possible double charging of federal awards." Henry suggested that staff time be included in the request. Heister asked Ramie if the hours that were worked on this went beyond a normal 40-hour work week. Ramie said they did not. Ramie said she does not recommend asking for staff reimbursement; she said staff was distracted from accomplishing other tasks, but the staff time was covered in our normal salaries in her opinion. Robinson commented that simultaneous with our lack of funding, we're asked by the federal government to expend resources on an audit. He stated it was irrational. Heister said the UDC's funding comes out of the Upper Delaware budget and suggested that if a letter requesting reimbursement is written, the appropriate place to send it is to the Upper Delaware. After a brief discussion, a motion to send a letter to UPDE Superintendent Heister, with copies to Patrick Reidy at NPS Northeast Regional Office and Heidi Sage at the Financial Assistance Policy Branch in Colorado, requesting reimbursement of UDC expenditures accrued from responding to the NPS Unrestricted Fund Inquiry was made by Robinson, seconded by Dean and carried.

Summary of Pending Bills/Financial Statement 12-31-17: Ramie referred members to the copy of the December 19 abstract provided in their packets. A motion by Peckham, seconded by Henry to pay the bills listed on the abstract was carried unanimously. Financial Statements as of December 31, 2017 were provided for individual review.

Other: None

Old Business: None

Public Comment: None

Adjournment: A motion by Richardson, seconded by Roeder to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. was carried unanimously.

Minutes submitted by Cindy Odell, 12/28/17