

**Upper Delaware Council  
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
March 26, 2019**

Committee Members Present: Harold Roeder Jr., Aaron Robinson, Fred Peckham, Larry Richardson, Jim Greier, David Dean, Al Henry, Jeff Dexter

Committee Members Absent: None

Staff: Laurie Ramie, Pete Golod, Ashley Hall-Bagdonas

NPS Partner: Carla Hahn

Guests: Roger Saumure (Shohola alternate)

The UDC's Operations Committee held its regularly scheduled monthly meeting on Tuesday, March 26, 2019 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Roeder called the meeting to order at 8:10 p.m.

**Approval of February 26<sup>nd</sup> Meeting Minutes:** A motion by Henry seconded by Peckham to approve the February 26<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes was carried. There was no public comment on the agenda.

**Executive Director's Report and Monthly Calendar:**

**Financial Status:**

**FY 2018 Federal Funding:** Ramie said the UDC submitted our second Application for Federal Assistance package on 3/4 for the \$244,110 balance of FY 2019 (\$300,000 minus the \$55,890 share of 18.63% received on 12/18/18). The Council approved a resolution for the new budget on 3/7. Two additional documents (Certificate Against Lobbying and Audit Statement) were requested by NPS and provided on 3/7. On that date, Agreements Representative Michelle Blockberger said that she was forwarding the request to the Northeast Region Contracting Office to process Modification 11. On 3/25, Ramie inquired about the status of the funding. Heister replied, "Sorry to say that the NPS/UPDE budget is still provisional. It will not be finalized until the NPS Operational Plan has been approved by DOI." She did not have an estimated timetable for when that would occur. This is the first time that particular reason has been given to UDC regarding funding delays. Henry asked if NPS staff is getting paid. Hahn said they are getting paid retroactively but she can't say going forward how they will address that with the provisional funding. Henry said the \$300,000 for NPS is operational and part of the Upper Delaware budget so if they are getting funded he doesn't understand. He said this may be a good time to start the letter writing campaign. It's executive overreach once again. Henry proposed sending letter to our Congressmen, particularly since Rep. Cartwright sits on the House Appropriations Committee. The committee agreed. Ramie said the UDC's ASAP account balance has \$1,203.37 remaining from the \$55,890 reimbursement. The UDC is currently owed \$61,403.72, representing January (\$19,918.07), February (\$19,239.37) and March (\$22,246.28) expenditures.

**Bank Balance:** As of 3/25, the UDC has \$84,869.66 in its Jeff Bank accounts.

**Administration:**

**Government Officials:** Ramie provided a summary of state lawmaker visits on 2/26. She sent out invitations to board members, and prepared agendas, attendance lists, and literature folders for 3/19 meeting with Congressman Cartwright (PA) in Hawley and 3/20 meeting with Congressman Delgado (NY) at the UDC office. She sent thank you notes and did publicity as appropriate after the meetings. UDC's next steps will be to continue pursuing meetings with the NY and PA governor offices to discuss operational funding for UDC, and handle follow-ups with federal legislators. Realistically it may be too far gone for this year's budget being that New York is April 1<sup>st</sup> and Pennsylvania is July 1<sup>st</sup>. Ramie said anything we can do to start this process is in UDC's best interest. Ramie had information from Assemblywoman Gunther that she did introduce the \$100,000 appropriation to Governor Cuomo on 3/1. Ramie will be sure to update when details become available as she would like to share that with other Government officials. Ramie knows that our Pennsylvania Representatives were looking into some creative options and Ramie will be checking back in with them and see what ideas they may have. Hahn asked if they are putting a request in for this fiscal year or next? Ramie said for Gunther's case it was this fiscal year and Ramie doesn't have the confirmation that it made it into the budget plan.

**NPS-related Tasks:** Ramie sent a memo to all UDC municipalities on 3/12 requesting their input by 3/26 on a three-question survey for the NPS Upper Delaware strategic planning process. Ramie reviewed and sent comments and questions to Heister on the Upper Delaware's FY2019 Work Plan on 3/13 and received a final version and responses on 3/25. Next we will collate any survey replies received and include them on the agenda of the 4/4 UDC meeting in order to provide the collective response to NPS on 4/5. The final Work Plan will be circulated at the 4/4 meeting.

**Neighboring Property:** Ramie researched UDC property information and sent a comment letter to the Town of Tusten Planning Board on 3/13 regarding the proposed real estate office use for Apartment 2 of the neighboring building at 225 Bridge St., in advance of their 3/18 public hearing. The letter emphasized that the UDC's parking lot is for our exclusive use while offering no objections to the application. Ramie spoke with Ed Jackson, Planning Board Chairperson. He said it was approved. One of the conditions is they have to put up a sign that says "parking in the rear" to try to defer people parking in the UDC lot. He also said they want to combine two lots into one. They are small slivers of property on the other side of the telephone pole. That was also approved. In the process of looking up information Ramie went through the tax records. The building was built in 1960. In 1993 the UDC purchased it for \$60,000 as an office building. The land assessment as of 2018 is \$7,000. The assessed value of the property is \$125,000 and the full market value is \$231,481. The size of the primary lot is .34 acres and then UDC has a residual .1 acre. Ramie didn't find a map with boundaries but did find a written survey. Roeder offered to go online and access a property map. He requested the Section-Block-Lot number.

**SAM Registration:** UDC's System for Award Management registration is coming due on 6/15. Ramie went online today to update and now UDC is in good standing again. This is the registration that must be in effect to receive federal funds.

**Public Relations:**

**"The Upper Delaware":** Ramie received the blue-line proof of the Spring 2019 newsletter from Courier Printer to review. Her deadline had been 3/13. The newsletter will come out April 1<sup>st</sup>; if not, UDC has our penalty built-in. Ramie counted the time to get the newsletter camera ready for the printer and it was 41.5 hours, in a concentrated time. That time also includes work on the FY 2019 newsletter contract bidding process.

**Publicity:** The UDC issued three news releases: "Upper Delaware Council Names Roster for 2019", 2/28 with photo; "Congressman Matt Cartwright to Deliver Keynote Address at April 28 Upper Delaware Council Awards Ceremony", 3/15 with photo; and "Rep. Delgado Meets with UDC", 3/20, a photo & caption. There are quite a few "next topics" coming up this is when we get into our event season to promote the UDC's Awards Banquet, raft trip and other activities.

**8/4 Raft Trip:** Hall-Bagdonas worked with Kittatinny Canoes to secure a quote for the 31<sup>st</sup> Annual UDC Family Raft Trip on Sunday, 8/4, from Ten Mile River to Barryville of \$29 for adults and \$19 for ages 5-12, so Ramie could include this information in the Spring newsletter. The reservation deadline will be 7/26.

**Grants/Fundraising:**

**River Clean-up Grants:** UDC put the solicitation memo out to all of the towns and townships and 4/19 is the deadline. Today Ramie issued a news release about that remind the towns and townships about that deadline again. At next month's Operations Committee meeting we will review proposals and then hopefully approve awards at the 5/2 UDC meeting. There is \$5,000 allocated for that program.

Lastly, Ramie asked all to refer to the April calendar, noting lots of activity with some quarterly meetings. Everything leads up to the UDC Awards Banquet, which is all encompassing from now until then. On 4/4 UDC will be having a meeting of the Personnel Subcommittee at 6:30. It is time for our annual evaluations for the staff.

Richardson would like to suggest when Ramie puts together the letter regarding the federal funding delay he would like to see as much detail as possible on the procedures and hoops that Ramie goes through to get this money. The Reports themselves are impressive and Congressman Delgado was absolutely surprised when UDC was recounting what they have to go through.

### Old Business

**Summary of Congressional Member Meetings:** Ramie included the thank you letters which offer a summary of the issues that came up during those two meetings on March 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. Congressman Cartwright was opening his Hawley office that day, so UDC's meeting was actually with his Chief of Staff, Bob Morgan. Rep. Cartwright arrived later for that event and it was a coffee klatch situation where he went from table to table and spoke with constituents. In both cases with these Congress members, we were orienting them to the UDC, who we are and what we do. That takes up about half the meeting because we're a complicated organization. Ramie did want to say in particular that the turnout for our Congressman Delgado meeting was stunning. We had 11 board members here and that was really appreciated. Everyone spoke very articulately and passionately when we went around the room. Everybody had a chance to address Congressman Delgado personally and say their background, why they're involved in the UDC, what it's importance is in this community in river valley. Ramie thinks that by hearing all those different voices, Congressman Delgado came away pretty impressed by all that UDC is responsible for. Also as Richardson mentioned, he was flabbergasted to hear that we're still operating on that same \$300,000 from 31 years ago. He did express interest in seeing if there were any remedies to that. Roeder said he thinks Congressman Delgado had a very good ear and he listened to the UDC. Roeder came away from the meeting feeling like "Wow, someone is really listening to the UDC". Let's hope that something develops from all of our efforts. Richardson said they expect to have Congressman Delgado's Liberty office open in about a month and it will be located on Main Street.

### New Business

**Awards Banquet Update:** Congressman Cartwright is UDC's keynote speaker this year. He called here personally on 3/15 and told Ramie he has an interesting dilemma that day. Subsequent to accepting our invitation to be our keynote speaker, he is also on the House Appropriations Committee for military and veteran affairs. Which is taking a trip to Philippines to visit military bases. He returns from it that Sunday morning, 4/28. He'll be flying into Andrews Air Force Base at 11:00 AM and he said he is going to book a charter plane to take him to Avoca and then drive from there to Central House in Beach Lake so that he can be with us. Ramie said that is going the extra mile. When Ramie expressed UDC's gratitude for really going above and beyond to keep his commitment, he expressed how important the environment is to him and how he already told us he would be there. Ramie didn't have to change the original itinerary because his point was he hoped he was speaking later in the day so that he had that time to get to us. He is speaking at approximately 5:00.

Our other big event was to get our nominations together for who we're honoring at this banquet. 3/15 was the deadline. We did receive a few ideas from the outside. Ramie keeps a folder going year round and puts deep thought into these various categories. The slate was approved by the Awards subcommittee, which is the chairs of our three standing committees. They received the staff recommendations and signed off on the list. Ramie started to notify everybody in those 10 categories. Now we can open up the invitation process. Hall-Bagdonas is working on the database of our past guests and dignitaries and those who get our direct mail invitation. Those will be going out soon, but the packets in the meantime include our list of recipients for this year as well as a reservation form. Ramie hopes everyone is pleased with the variety of honorees. It's unfortunate that there are a couple people that won't be here to accept personally. That includes Larry Neal, who will be fishing in Florida at that time, and Frosty Myers, the sculptor from Damascus who, is debuting his documentary film and is currently at his studio in Saint Augustine, Florida. He won't be back until May. In cases like that, Ramie does ask the recipients to either have somebody accept on their behalf or for them to write remarks. Now the work begins to put this souvenir booklet together because we basically do a page per person. 4/19 is the advance payment deadline for reservations.

**NPS Strategic Planning 3-Question Survey:** Ramie put this memo out there to all our towns and townships and nobody has responded. We had asked for these back by 10:00 AM today so that Ramie could compile and collate. Ramie provided the survey in meeting packet. Ramie does know via Dave Hulse that the Town of Lumberland brought it up at their town board meeting. Their decision was they would delegate it to Nadia Rajsz to fill it out for them. Ramie did suspect that's probably what a lot of towns and townships will do, defer to their appointees as the people who know these issues best. Ramie will compile responses to show the board on 4/4 because 4/5 is when she's been asked to respond to the survey. The UDC gets one collective comment to streamline the process. Ramie encouraged the members to start answering these questions unless their town or township has told them differently.

**Summary of Pending Bills 3-25-19:** A motion by Peckham, seconded by Henry to approve the bills was carried.

**Financial Statement 3-31-19:** Roeder said the financial statement is offered for individual review.

**Other:** None

**Public Comment:** None

**Personnel Subcommittee:** Henry said members of the Personnel Committee and members of the committee are invited. A motion to go into Executive Session at 8:45 p.m. for the purpose of discussing Personnel Issues was made by Richardson, seconded by Robinson and carried. A motion to come out of Executive Session at 9:12 p.m. was made by Richardson, seconded by Greier and carried. Richardson reported there was no further comment on the personnel matter.

**Adjournment:** A motion by Robinson seconded by Henry to adjourn the meeting at 9:13 p.m. was carried.

*Minutes prepared by Ashley Hall-Bagdonas, 4/3/19*