

Upper Delaware Council
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
August 27, 2024

Committee Members Present: Aaron Robinson, Harold Roeder, Al Henry, Fred Peckham (Zoom),
Larry Richardson, Jeff Dexter, Christine Martin, Ginny Dudko
Committee Members Absent: None
Staff: Laurie Ramie, Kerry Engelhardt, Stephanie Driscoll
NPS Partner: Carly Marshall
Guests: Bill Dudko

The UDC's Operations Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, August 27, 2024. Chairperson Dudko called the meeting to order at 7:22 pm.

Approval of the July 23, 2024 Meeting Minutes: A motion by Henry seconded by Dexter to approve the 7/23 meeting minutes carried, with G. Dudko abstaining.

Executive Director's Monthly Report: Ramie reported that we withdrew \$39,727.55 on 8/26 of our federal funds to cover the August abstract of bills, leaving a balance of \$45,837.13 in the Fiscal Year 2024 ASAP account. 7:00pm on 9/21 is the deadline to request funds before all accounts will be suspended until 10/1 to close out the fiscal year. She has that date marked on her calendar. The next period of performance under the UDC-NPS Cooperative Agreement in FY 2025 is 10/1/24-12/31/24. After those dates, there will need to be a new Cooperative Agreement. NPS Superintendent Kurnath, NPS Administrative Officer Harbert, and Ramie have been discussing a longer term for the Cooperative Agreement. Ramie was able to successfully transfer \$3,400 from the Upper Delaware Litter Sweep dedicated Jeff Bank account to the Vanguard Federal Money Market account on 8/6 after mailing the required forms on 7/25 to set up Electronic Bank Transfer via ACH. Adding that transfer, the brokerage account was valued at \$137,525.08 as of 8/6, earning 5.4% interest.

Payment will be sent to our IT consultant Chris Marshall for setting up a new UDC newsletter email address and renewing security software. Ramie thanked Henry for repairing the flag pole on the side of the UDC building last week. After the WU/RM Committee meeting on 8/20, staff came in to find the flag and pole was hanging on the building by one screw and had been ripped from the concrete by the wind.

The 36th Annual River Valley Awards banquet is coming up on September 22nd. Staff updated the activities timeline and prepared the 2024 awards nominations and reservation forms. Ramie publicized our solicitation of nominations in a 7/25 press release and social media posts. A letter was sent on 8/1 to Central House Resort confirming our menu selections, reservation date, and room set-up needs. A draft news release was sent to the keynote speaker Nathan Reigner's office for advance review, then edited and issued on 8/8. Ramie collected public nominations through the 8/23 deadline, researching each, finding additional documentation, and compiling a confidential list of recommendations with explanations given to the Awards Subcommittee (G. Dudko, Richardson, and Padua) to review on 8/23. The slate of honorees was finalized on 8/26. Next, she will notify the 11 award recipients before issuing a press release announcing the winners. Staff will mail invitations to include the reservation list and directory of 2024 honorees. We will secure a printing company to produce bound, color copies of the program booklet from the UDC file, request photos and set up interviews as needed, begin design work and finish composition by a to-be-determined printing deadline. Staff will also order plaque hardware and provide inscriptions, track reservations through 9/13, and provide a guest count to Central House on 9/16.

Five news releases were issued this month on topics of "UDC Seeks Nominations for 36th Annual River Valley Awards by August 23rd" on 7/25; "The Upper Delaware Summer 2024 Newsletter Out" on 8/5; "UDC Raft Trip Hosts 76 Paddlers" on 8/7; "PA Director of Outdoor Recreation Named Keynote Speaker for River Valley Awards"

on 8/8, and “UDC to Host Sept. 5 Presentation on Upper Delaware Oral History Project” on 8/22. The newsletter was scheduled to arrive by 8/5 and ended up getting delivered early on 8/2.

The DRBC will be hosting “A Day on the Upper Delaware River” Roundtable Luncheon and Raft Trip on 9/13 at the UDC office. This was originally supposed to take place during their quarterly business meeting on 6/5, but was rescheduled. Engelhardt will be attending the 12th Annual Delaware River Watershed Forum on behalf of the UDC in Bethlehem on 9/26-27. Ramie, Engelhardt, Driscoll, G. Dudko, and B. Dudko will be attending Friends of the Upper Delaware River’s 1st Annual Upper Delaware River Rendezvous at the Villa Roma Resort on 10/16-17 where the UDC is a sponsor, poster session exhibitor, and Ramie is a panelist.

We have deposited \$754.61 to date in donations from the “Big Eddy Narrows” map poster donated by Lisa Glover. Since there are only 5 original posters left, we placed an order to Spencer Printing of Honesdale for 25 copies at \$98.72 to meet our continued demand at \$20 per poster. There has been a lot of recent publicity on the map. We recently deposited \$135 from public donations on 8/13 for the blue UDC t-shirts, and \$132 at \$11 each from the Equinunk General Store to stock that PA outlet with UDC t-shirts. Driscoll is ordering 45 more t-shirts to have 15 shirts per size on hand. Henry asked if we could order different colors for the UDC t-shirts? Ramie said we could look into it with our supplier, Platform Industries.

New Business

Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Status: Ramie said our bookkeeper advised that there is \$3,980 left to spend by the end of Fiscal Year 2024 on September 30th. That number reflects recent salary adjustments, TAG payments, and river cleanup grants that we will pay out by 9/10. We will have to wait until the end of the month for final numbers. Dexter suggested filling the heating fuel tank. Ramie said there was a discussion at last month’s Operations Committee meeting about staff bonuses. Henry reiterated his proposal to spend the surplus of funds on staff bonuses, with the Personnel Subcommittee deciding how they will be portioned out, if that amount holds until the end of the month. Richardson said that motion should come before the full council. Ramie said it could be put on at the September 5th UDC meeting agenda.

WJFF Community Awards Ad: Ramie said the UDC has been asked if we would like to take out an ad for WJFF’s 9/12 Community Awards ceremony program. We need to let them know by tomorrow morning. There are a few different options; 1/8th of a page ad would be \$100, a quarter of a page at \$200, a half-page at \$300, a full page at \$500, and the front or back of the inside cover at \$1,000. Robinson said taking a 1/8th page ad would be good. Martin said that’s very small at a couple inches; she would suggest taking a half-page. Henry asked what the ad would say? Ramie said it could have the UDC’s logo and a congratulations message to all the recipients or her personally, whatever the committee decides. G. Dudko said the committee would support a congratulations message to Ramie specifically. A motion by Robinson to take a half page ad at \$300 payable from UDC funds, seconded by Henry, carried.

Town of Tusten FY 2024-01: Technical Assistance Grant Project Payment Approval: A motion by Henry, seconded by Richardson to approve payment of \$10,000 for the Town of Tusten FY 2024-01 TAG, carried.

Damascus Township FY 2024-02: Technical Assistance Grant Project Payment Approval: A motion by Henry, seconded by Dexter to approve payment of \$2,822 for the Damascus Township 2024-02 TAG, carried.

Summary of Pending Bills 8/27/24: Motion by Henry seconded by Robinson to approve the bills and pay them in the normal fashion carried.

Financial Statement 8/31/24: The statement is included in tonight’s packet for review.

Other: None.

Old Business

State and Federal Funding Updates: The UDC has posters from the past three Pike/Wayne Legislative Breakfasts that address our funding issue that we plan to bring to the Upper Delaware River Rendezvous on October 16-17.

Hopefully there will be some elected officials in attendance. After sending the letter on the Skinners Falls-Milanville Bridge, Senator Peter Oberacker's aide Camille O'Brien called to ask for more information on the subject. She also said she would try to get the Senator to another UDC meeting when his schedule allows. Robinson asked if we ever heard back from anyone after sending the funding letter to PA and NY governors? Ramie said no. Henry said we should invite Senator Oberacker and Congressman Cartwright to the UDC River Valley Awards Banquet. Ramie said we always send invitations to all our representatives. Henry said we should offer to pay their ticket. Ramie said sometimes elected officials can't accept gifts or comps. Henry said it feels like they have forgotten about the river valley.

36th Annual Family Raft Trip Report: A copy of the press release on the raft trip is included in the packet. Driscoll reported that we had 76 paddlers on Sunday, August 4th; 71 adults and 5 children. We only had one group cancel and ask for a refund and a couple people not show up in other groups who donated their payment to the UDC. The weather turned out to be decent; cloudy with one storm passing through. Paddlers parked at the Lander's Minisink Base where Ramie and she checked guests in. Lander's bussed the rafters to the Ten Mile River Access to start their journey. Ramie met them there to get photos of the launch. It did seem like Lander's was a bit unprepared for us despite our advance contacts, but the manager working the Minisink Base was very helpful. Overall, it was a successful year. Payment will go out to Lander's River Trips this week.

E-newsletter and UDC Email Updates: Driscoll said she tried both Constant Contact and MailChimp to compare. MailChimp seemed to be a lot more user friendly, so she canceled the Constant Contact subscription before the free trial ran out. MailChimp will cost \$20 per month for 500 email contacts, which she thinks should be more than enough. She was able to make a couple of test emails with the newsletter and "monthly UDC updates" that she sent to Engelhardt and Ramie. Ramie said that the emails looked good, very straightforward with helpful information links. Engelhardt commented that they looked good to her as well. Martin asked how many email addresses we currently have? Driscoll said probably about 15; this is very new for us, so we only gathered a few at the festivals and events we tabled at this summer. She showed an example of the "monthly UDC updates" email she had sent as a test. Everyone agreed that it looked good. At next month's meeting she will have more to show. Marshall asked if we could put a button for donations on the emails we send? Driscoll said that's a great idea.

Other: None.

There was no Public Comment.

Adjournment: A motion by Roeder seconded by Dexter to adjourn the meeting at 8:03 p.m. carried.