



# Upper Delaware Council

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## UPPER DELAWARE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES January 6, 2022

The Upper Delaware Council held its monthly meeting on Thursday, January 6, 2022. Chairperson Dexter called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. and roll call followed.

In attendance: Town of Hancock- Fred Peckham, Town of Fremont- Jim Greier, Town of Cocheton- Town of Tusten- Susan Sullivan, Town of Highland- Andy Boyar, Town of Deerpark- Virginia Dudko, Town of Lumberland- Nadia Rajsasz, Damascus Township- Jeff Dexter, Berlin Township- Alan Henry, Lackawaxen Township- Doug Case, Shohola Township- Aaron Robinson, Westfall Township- Michael Barth, State of New York- Bill Rudge, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania- Tim Dugan, Delaware River Basin Commission- Jacob Bransky, National Park Service- Superintendent- Joe Salvatore (joined at 7:30 p.m.). Staff in attendance: Executive Director- Laurie Ramie, Resources and Land Use Specialist- Kerry Engelhardt, Secretary- Ashley Hall-Bagdonas. Absent: Town of Delaware- Vacant. Guests: Evan Padua- Town of Tusten Alternate, Dave Dean, Buck Moorhead, Rebekah Creshkoff. Media: Liam Mayo- River Reporter, Peter Becker- Tri-County Independent, Meg McGuire- Delaware Currents.

Ramie just received a text from Superintendent Salvatore saying he has to drive back to his house because the internet is down in his office. Salvatore will call back in about 30 minutes.

**Election of Officers:** Ramie announced that the annual election was done electronically, by Doodle poll. The slate of officers proposed by the nominating committee for the ballot included Chairperson- Andy Boyar, Town of Highland; Vice-Chair- Aaron Robinson, Shohola Township, and Secretary-Treasurer- Al Henry, Berlin Township. She's pleased to say that on a vote of 12 to zero, the slate has been approved by electronic ballot. Members congratulated Boyar.

Boyar said it's nice to see everybody without masks since we are on Zoom. He thanked all his colleagues on the UDC for entrusting the chairmanship to him. He thanked UDC's outgoing Chairman Jeff Dexter and his leadership in these trying times and the challenges of 2020, saying they're going to get better but they're still formidable. He asked, how do we carry out our mission with budget and resources that are shrinking with time and inflation? This is a big issue. Secondly, how do we best facilitate communicating with one another as a group via Zoom? He is very optimistic that this group can handle our everyday business and also the collective wisdom to successfully evaluate reorganizational restructuring and ultimately funding sources. He hopes every member will carefully read the Michael Crane Report, as it is time to develop a sustainable business plan. If you need a print copy, please reach out to Hall-Bagdonas. Boyar said all members should read this because we're going to have to use our best collective abilities to come up with the right answers for the problems that we face. Day to day tasks come out of this council without abatement, the wheel keeps turning. How do we squeeze in this big picture item for strategic planning? We hardly have a chance to catch a breath and reflect on where we have been. Even with diminished resources and funding, let's take a quick look back at the past year: UDC conducted day-to-day operations including fulfilling all the obligations under our Cooperative Agreement with the NPS and documenting the same in the Annual Progress Report. This is a 24-page report that Ramie just finished. He asked members to read it to be reminded of all that the UDC does and all that we accomplish. Boyar mentioned just a few: UDC contracted and received a Long-Term Fiscal Sustainability Plan; we administered a River and Shoreline Cleanup Grant program; we facilitated the first ever 73.4-mile river litter sweep and set protocols for future sweeps; we conducted regular monthly meetings and committee meetings. This alone accounts for hundreds of hours. The public has no idea how many hundreds of hours actually over the year the council members put in and all this time goes into preserving and protecting the

Upper Delaware. Every month we facilitated informational programs on invasive species such as the Spotted Lanternfly, Japanese Knotweed and the Northern Snakehead. UDC conducted programs on dam safety, broadband expansion, and many others. We accomplished a record storage system, and secured our exterior fuel tank and that list goes on. Boyar asked how do we now fit in the larger issue of how does UDC sustain ourselves for years to come, not just this year? The Council has been and continues to be an advocate for the river community on issues from the environment, infrastructure, fisheries, everything from bridges to eagles, from parking and safety issues at Hawks Nest and Mongaup River to the removal of spent railroad ties, pursuit of improved river access at Barryville, Ten Mile River and Hancock Junction Pool, and much more. The public is little aware of all that we do. Sadly, the same unawareness is present in our state houses and governor's office. NY and PA must make good on their commitments to fund the UDC now unfulfilled for 30 plus years.

Boyar said UDC will meet by Zoom until such time as we can safely meet again face-to-face, saying if corporate America can conduct business this way, so can we. Boyar and staff will keep an eye on the Zoom screen and if anyone has something to say on an issue just raise your hand and everyone will have a chance to weigh in. Boyar said hopefully we'll be able to conduct our regular committee meetings with the proper spacing and so we'll have some face-to-face activities, but it's a matter of time and circumstances to figure out how we can meet again.

Boyar said tonight we continue with our advocacy for the river corridor, like calling for a common-sense bridge restoration at Skinners Falls -Milanville Bridge, and by advocating for water protection relative to the Delaware River Basin. He said he knows from the faces on his screen that we can meet our challenges. Let's get to work.

**Virtual Presentation: "DRBC Microplastics Study" by Jacob Bransky, Aquatic Biologist from the Delaware River Basin Commission:** Boyar introduced Jacob Bransky, Aquatic Biologist from the Delaware River Basin Commission. Bransky said Kristen Bowman Kavanagh's power went out and she is attempting to get back on as soon as possible.

Bransky said his presentation will focus on microplastics work that the DRBC has done over the past couple years. The DRBC is a federal interstate agency comprised of four states of Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and New York, as well as the federal government. DRBC's broad responsibilities include water quality, water supply, drought management, flood loss reduction, watershed planning, regulatory review, outreach education and recreation. Ultimately, DRBC is responsible for water quantity providing adequate sustainable resilient flow and water quality providing clean and healthy drinking water to the basin. Bransky works on the water quality side of operations. In his department, they study many topics from fish and macroinvertebrates, to dissolved oxygen and contaminants of emerging concern. One topic that they began studying recently was microplastics.

Microplastics are defined as small plastic particles, less than five millimeters in size, roughly about the size of a sesame seed or smaller. They can come from a lot of different sources such as microfibers from synthetic textiles. A lot of fleece material is made out of plastic fibers which can then break down and get into the water cycle. They can also be found in micro beads and personal care products like face washes and toothpaste. A lot of plastics also come from the break down of larger items like tires, plastic bags, bottles, fishing line, Styrofoam cups, etc. that get out in the environment and then break down over time.

The impacts of microplastics on aquatic life are still very much in development and being studied but it is known that many species do confuse plastic particles for food items and they will ingest them. This consumption of plastic by aquatic life can do several different things; it fills their stomachs so that they reduce their feeding on other more nutritious food items, therefore reducing their growth and their reproductive ability. There's also new research that shows that plastics can increase the transfer of toxic chemicals into aquatic species. Very small plastic particles called nano plastics can actually travel across cell membranes of animals and get into cells. If these nano plastics are picking up toxins from the environment, they can then transport those toxins into the cell's organisms. Microplastics are a relatively new contaminant of concern and there's a lot of different ways to look at them in the environment.

The DRBC used three methods in their study, the net sampler, simple grab sampler, and a Niskin sampler. Bransky explained the net sampler first. It's the same type of net that you would use to sample plankton in the water column. They have fixed floats to the opening of the net so that the opening floated right on the surface of the water, skimming that surface of the water. Then the net is tied to a rope to an anchor and oriented so that the flow of the water is entering the mouth of the net. That flow continues to keep that mouth open and collect particles for as long

as you leave it out there, as long as there's not enough debris to get the whole thing clogged up and back the system up. When sampling is done, they take the net out, rinse everything down into the sample collection jar and take it to the lab to process the samples. This sampling is great for processing large volumes of water. You can filter thousands of liters of water over the course of a day letting that sit out in the river. The downside to the sampling method is that it is a mesh net. There is a certain portion of your particles could pass through that mesh; some of your fibers might be able to wiggle their way through the holes in the mesh. It's better at sampling the larger particles like fragments, spheres, films and things of that nature.

DRBC also did simple grab samples. They took an amber glass jar and put it into a bridge sampler, tied it to a rope lowered off the bridge down into the water directly, filled that plastic jar with river water kept off so no contamination from their hands or clothing could get in there, and took that sample of directly that the lab for analysis. The advantage of these samples is that any plastic particle that's in that water is staying in there until you get it to the lab to analyze it. The big downside of the grab sample method is just the volume of water. You just can't sample the same volume of water that you can within that sampler DRBC did. Ten liters sampled with the grab sample versus the thousands of liters that were sampling with the net sampler.

DRBC has a Niskin sampler which this is a version of a grab sampler. That allows them to sample different levels of the water column. The sampler is lowered into the water on a rope that has a trigger mechanism to hold the sampler open and you send a weight down the rope that hits the trigger and closes the sampler at whatever depth in the water column, you're looking to take a sample. This allows you to take vertically stratified samples. For instance, for this study, DRBC were sampling the Mainstem Delaware, where it's 4550 feet deep in the navigation channels and the urban portion of the estuary and they were able to take a sample of the surface and the bottom to see if there are differences in plastic concentrations of those two areas. Bransky said there's a lot of other things in the sample besides plastic. There's a lot of sediment in the samples and in order to remove that they use density separation. They take all the solids in the sample and put it into a salty water mixture and all the plastics end up floating to the surface. That mixture and all the sediment settles out the bottom. Then they can either pull off the bottom or scoop off the top to isolate just the plastic particles. Additionally, they get a lot of organic matter in the samples, especially sampling in the fall when leaves are coming down within that sampler. In order to move that organic matter, they use the oxidation process, pouring hydrogen peroxide onto the sample to break down that organic matter. The hydrogen peroxide doesn't react with the plastic, so that's preserved for analysis. Once plastics are isolated, they can study them from a straight count, by color, shape, or size. The analysis is as simple or as complex as you want it to be. On the simple end of things, they can look at the particles under a microscope. It sounds very simple but often times they are looking at something the size of a period. They have no idea what it is until they put it under a microscope and it's obvious that it's plastic. They can also do a hot needle test where if you heat up a needle and touch the particle. If the particle doesn't melt, then it's most likely a piece of sediment or maybe a piece of wood, etc.

More complex analysis comes from Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy (FTIR) and Raman spectroscopy, and that's what DRBC did in this study. With FTIR spectroscopy you're scanning each individual particle with a high-tech microscope. For their data, they were able to go a step past just accounting in the size and the shape and able to get the chemical composition breakdown of the plastic, whether they're polyethylene, polypropylene Styrofoam PVC, etc.

This specific DRBC study was done over the past few years and funded by the NFWF from the Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund. They set out to collect surface water samples in the Delaware Estuary. They had four sites in the mainstem river that were sampled by boat and there are sites where they used the Niskin sampler and took a surface and a bottom sample. They also had nine sites that were tributaries to the estuary, and one site in the non-tidal river in Trenton. The ultimate goal of this study is to collect data to inform models that would allow them to identify high plastic loading tributaries, which would then be targeted for cleanup efforts with some of our partner organizations. They did hit several hiccups throughout the study mainly driven by shutdowns related to the COVID-19 pandemic. They were not in the lab analyzing the samples so things did not quite go in the order they had originally planned in terms of data modeling and targeting cleanups. but ultimately, DRBC got everything done.

Bransky offered preliminary results, stating a lot more will be shared in the coming months as they finalize their report. Another portion of this study is going to be a web-based Data Viewer that they're developing. It will be a

map-based web viewer that will allow you to see all the points that they sample based off the plastic concentration, size and color.

Targeted cleanup efforts at high plastic loading tributaries were planned. They ran into some time constraints due to COVID, and had to schedule these before they had the analytical data back. They went by their on the ground and in the field knowledge of what they saw out collecting the samples. Frankfurt Creek in Philadelphia was one, a large portion of the creek is actually concrete underneath it used to be basically a storm drain. They also did one along the main stem Delaware River at Palmyra Cove again. Both of these efforts were very successful. DRBC was also able to get out and talk to volunteers that came out to help with these cleanup efforts. Bransky wanted to briefly mentioned a couple other studies in the basin on plastics, specifically this USGS study microplastics in the Delaware River. This study was completed last year and focused on the non-tidal river. They took samples from Washington Crossing all the way up to Narrowsburg and Port Jervis. They looked at plastics in water sediment, fish and mussels. There's also a study by the University of Delaware where they looked at microplastics in Delaware Bay. Between these two studies and the DRBC study they kind of have a good coverage of the river now in terms of preliminary looks at microplastics in the whole basin.

Bransky shared some not so fun facts about plastics. 91% of plastic ever made was not recycled worldwide. Since 2012, the United States only recycle about 9%, which is less than some of our counterparts overseas. One prediction that's out there is that by 2050 there's going to be more plastic in the ocean than fish. Plastic can take more than 400 years to decompose so it's important to get it out of these systems because it's not going anywhere on its own. Bransky said consider using the following to conserve water and reduce plastic waster: refillable coffee mug; refillable water bottle; reusable bags; say "no thanks" to straws or BYO; BYO carryout container; and also participate in volunteer cleanup efforts in your local watersheds similar to what DRBC did here in this study. There was a brief questions and answer after the PowerPoint which can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QqVNfLSYc7w&t=1129s>.

**Approval of December 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting Minutes:** A motion by Henry seconded by Peckham, to approve the December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021 meeting minutes carried.

**Public Comment on the Agenda:** None.

**Committee Reports:** There were no questions regarding the following meetings: Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> Water Use/Resource Management, Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> Project Review, and Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> Operations.

### **Status Reports**

**Delaware River Basin Commission:** The Hydrologic report was provided in the meeting packets. Bransky said all meetings can be found at <https://www.state.nj.us/drbc/meetings/>. DRBC will hold its first-quarter public hearing on Wednesday, February 9, 2022, and will hold its first-quarter business meeting on Wednesday, March 9, 2022. Both the public hearing and business meeting are open to the public.

**NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation:** Rudge said there are three press releases in the meeting packet. The 1/3 press release is "DEC Announces Start of Annual Tree and Shrub Seedling Sale." The Colonel William F. Fox Memorial Saratoga Tree Nursery annual spring seedling sale, which is open to the public runs until 5/13. Each year, the nursery offers low-cost, New York-grown tree and shrub species for sale to encourage conservation plantings and foster the next generation of forests. There are more than 50 conifer and hardwood species available in bundles of 25 or more, plus several mixed species packets for those looking for a variety. For more information including how to order, visit the Spring Seedling Sale on DEC's website at <https://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/9395.html>.

The 1/4 press release is the announcement of \$11 Million for Climate Smart Community Projects. The Town of Delaware was a big winner, being awarded \$2 million for their new wastewater treatment plant. The Town will construct a new wastewater treatment plant outside of the floodplain on a recently purchased five-acre parcel in Callicoon. The current facility has reached the end of its useful life and was constructed in what is now recognized as a floodplain. The plant has sustained damage during past flood events and is at increased risk as climate change results in more frequent and heavier rainfall events for the area. The existing outfall will be maintained, and the plant has been designed to meet revised effluent limits including those for nutrient removal.

The 1/6 press release was that NYS DEC was named Agency of the Year by the National Deer Association for its outstanding leadership in deer management. Agencies that received the NDA's award in the past boast a record of innovative and progressive deer management, initiating positive change through science, regulation, and hunter involvement. DEC's Deer Management Plan, guides management actions to balance the diverse values of the public with the biological and ecological needs and impacts of deer. Significant elements of the plan include integrating data of deer impacts on forests with public preferences for deer population changes to set deer population trajectory objectives; furthering protections against introduction or spread of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD); and recommending hunting-related changes to strategically increase antlerless harvest where needed and to provide additional hunter opportunity. DEC's deer program worked with researchers to develop a simple protocol for landowners to monitor deer vegetation impacts on their property. This past year, DEC worked with the Governor and Legislature to reduce the minimum age for deer hunting with a firearm from 14 to 12. DEC also expanded deer hunting hours to 30 minutes before sunrise and 30 minutes after sunset, and implemented requirements to wear hunter orange or pink during big game season to improve hunter safety.

Rudge said to end his report he's not speaking on the department's behalf but his. He did read the Crane report and thought it had some really excellent suggestions, and he would go so far as to say unless the committee adopts a significant number of those recommendations, UDC's going to continue to be frustrated by the state's lack of providing funding for the UDC.

Dudko congratulated Rudge on the NYDEC's award. She asked Hall-Bagdonas to forward the DEC Seedling Press Release to NY Representatives and Alternates so it could be circulated further. Engelhardt asked if the Seedling Sale was open to NY residents only? Rudge said they have to be planted in NY State.

Sullivan said Rudge has a perspective of what works and what doesn't for NYS government and his input would be valuable during the UDC group meeting the UDC Long-term Fiscal Sustainability Plan Recommendations.

**PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources:** Dugan said it's the Commonwealth's planning season right now, especially in DCNR. They are doing a lot of planning for their upcoming insects and disease treatment season, including Hemlock Woolly Adelgid and Gypsy moths, which will no longer be called Gypsy moths. They will be referred to as *Lymantria dispar*, the Latin name. They are also planning for the spring fire season. Coming out of the holidays they are crunching numbers, looking at budgets and what needs to be treated for the year going ahead. There's a lot of paper planning for some of their reports they they need to get out.

With Governor Wolf nearing the end of his second term, there has been talk of his Legacy Plan or leaving a legacy. We heard this, when his representative from the Northeast office, Tom Caffery, attended a meeting at UDC. Dugan said they were asked if there were any suggestions they could bring to push up to their Executive staff and he has kept them in the loop of UDC's interactions and the need to bring this funding through. Dugan said he can't make that change but he can keep beating the drum and see where it goes. He said he did not read the whole Crane report yet but saw the bullet notes and much like Rudge was saying, there are definitely some opportunities there that would fold into state government funding in a much easier way.

Otherwise, they are in winter preparation mode. It looks like we're starting to get a chance for some freezing conditions and snow potential for ice fishing to start within the next week, as long as this cold weather hangs in. They expect probably by Sunday, or Wednesday of next week, that some adventurous ice anglers will be heading out. PA Fish and Boat Commission has started to put out some of their normal safety messaging. If we get some snow, it will start our snowmobile trail systems up and then more passive recreation being cross country skiing and snowshoeing as well.

In the past two years, Dugan has posted an Assistant Forest Manager position in their Delaware Forest district. Applicants must have two years of experience as a Forester; or two years of experience as a Forest Nursery Assistant Manager; or any equivalent combination of experience and training which affords the applicant the required knowledge, skills, and abilities is required. Link for more information is at: <https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/pabureau/jobs/3348496/forest-assistant-manager-delaware-state-forest>. Closing date for applications is February 19, 2022.

**National Park Service-Upper Delaware:** Superintendent Salvatore said staff is coming off leave. NPS is also in winter prep. Salvatore reported that Cody Hendrix's father passed away. If UDC members and staff have a moment please pass condolences onto him. If anyone has something urgent that you are waiting on from Hendrix send an email to Salvatore with the header "URGENT". Salvatore said he has a few questions regarding Cochechton Cottages and will need UDC's help clarifying.

NPS finally signed off on the Delaware Highlands Conservancy agreement. They have other agreements that are expiring this year as well with the states and Hendrix is working on them. Right now, they are prepping for seasonal hires and for some law enforcement to come to work this year as well. If anyone knows someone that may be interested let Salvatore know and he can send you the link.

Salvatore would like to see if Kevin Reish could come back and help with water safety training. He found a government program in which he could bring him back and Reish would still be a government employee but he would only be on an ad hoc basis.

Zane Grey Museum was hoping to open this weekend but that may happen next weekend. Since they got the DHC agreement signed they can start living in that facility now and helping NPS manage. The third week of January, Salvatore is planning a three-day off site retreat with his management team. One area of focus is team building. Other business will be finalizing the NPS work plan and reviewing their Strategic Plan. He would like to look at their future, retirement dates and start creating a secession plan. He would also like to find a replacement for their Biologist position. He wants to find diverse qualified candidates and if anyone has any applicants, please reach out to him. Salvatore said since he has been here for a year, he will be dusting off the Transition report to review and respond to it with his familiarity now.

**UDC Executive Director's Report:** Ramie said as our local town/ship members make their reorganizational appointments for 2022, we're starting to hear about some changes to our board although we encourage anyone impacted to tell us directly since it can take a while to receive anything official from the municipalities. So far, we're aware that the Town of Highland elevated Boyar to be its UDC representative and Jim Gutekunst will switch to the alternate role. For the Town of Deerpark, David Dean is retiring from the UDC after joining the board in October 2011. We thank him for his service and wish him well. Ginny Dudko was appointed as Deerpark's representative, while her husband Bill named alternate.

This is a good time to remind everyone that any interested representative or alternate is eligible to join the UDC's three standing committees. We have Water Use/Resource Management which meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays, and the Project Review and Operations Committees which meet back-to-back on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays. While you are all welcome to attend these public meetings anytime, we do need to establish their membership numbers to establish quorums for voting purposes. At the January meetings, each committee will select a chair and vice-chair. All you need to do is let us know of your intentions to join or leave any committee. We're currently planning to have these smaller groups meet in person at the UDC office on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, but we will continue to offer a call-in or Zoom option. Thanks to research by Robinson and Hall-Bagdonas, we have just purchased a new 360-degree camera with a built-in microphone and speaker system for videoconferencing that should improve our audiovisual capabilities. We tested it on Tuesday morning, then she and Engelhardt made their first successful use of it an hour later for a meeting with representatives from Northgate Resorts who were in three different locations to give us a preview of their Camp Fimfo \$43 million investment plans for the Kittatinny property in Barryville. That's a teaser for a report you would be able to hear if you served on the UDC Project Review Committee.

While we operate on the Federal Fiscal Year for our finances, we had a 12/29 deadline for submission of our Fiscal Year 2021 reports to the National Park Service. Ramie submitted our SF-425 Financial Report on 12/9 after navigating through the typical issues with the Grant Solutions software system, and she received approval of it on 1/5. The Performance Progress Report, was requested in a goals-based narrative format which was new to us this year. One reason it took that long to get it done was that it seemed a higher priority to get the SF-424 package together for the next block of funding we'd be eligible to receive after the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter allotment ended 12/31. Our federal account balance is down to \$9,518.52, which is not enough to pay this month's bills. Ramie worked with our accountant to develop a 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter budget for \$75,000 and the forms that accompany it. That was submitted on 12/22 and will take us through 3/31. We received word yesterday that it's being reviewed by a grants specialist at the NPS Regional Office in Philadelphia who asked Michelle Blockberger at Upper Delaware to ask us to provide

the budget narrative report in an Excel format instead. Ramie said when our fiscal plan consultant calculated that staff spends 44% of our time on administration, this is all an example of why. On a more positive financial note, we received two unsolicited contributions through the Donate button on our website at the end of the year from two individuals unfamiliar to her. Mr. Edward Winters from Chester, NY donated \$100 “in support of the good work of the UDC” and Ms. Margaret Robinson from Rumsford, Rhode Island contributed \$50 with a note saying, “Thanks for all you do to protect the Upper Delaware!” Those donations were minus the modest PayPal fees for processing, and added up to \$144.68 of unrestricted funds. We sent appreciation letters, of course.

Thanks to Engelhardt, we have expanded our social media outreach. She set up a Twitter account for the UDC, which will supplement our presence on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube and Vimeo. The IRS has increased its 2022 standard mileage reimbursement rate from last year’s \$.56 to 58.5 cents per mile. That new rate will be reflected in member and staff travel payments as of Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>. Looking ahead to our 2/3 UDC meeting, we will play a video on sexual harassment to watch and discuss collectively. The NYS Department of Labor hasn’t updated its training video since 2018 when this annual requirement began and we also already watched one from the New York City Commission on Human Rights. Ramie found a new-to-us video that is a concise 15-minute overview to supplement the reaffirmation of our policy that is coming up on the agenda. If we meet in person in February, that would also be when we have our swearing-in ceremony for new officers. We’ll need to decide that by 1/21, which is when we issue our advance meeting notice, to allow time for Boyar to invite his selected officiant and we haven’t confirmed a presentation for that meeting yet either. Gov. Hochul has extended the indoor mask mandate to 2/1 but there are no associated gathering limitations. Please give some thought to our meeting format.

Lastly, the January calendar handout is in the packets. Ramie wanted to mention 2022 dates for our three biggest events. We would like to kick off the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Litter Sweep on Earth Day itself, which is Friday, 4/22. Then it’s a question of how long to allow for the 15 NY and PA river valley municipalities to organize their clean-ups. Last year, it ran for 9 days which was a bit exhausting by the end. Hall-Bagdonas is ready to send out Litter Leader letters to the Town/ships to start recruiting volunteers, so we need to decide on a reasonable end date. Our 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Family Raft Trip will be on Sunday, 8/7, with Lander’s River Trips on a river section to be determined. The River Valley Awards shifted last year from April to September due to 3 COVID postponements and to free up April for the Litter Sweep, she feels it worked out nicely to come at the end of the recreational season, when we’d have a full year of accomplishments and potentially new river rescues to consider. She is looking at Sunday, 9/18. We could stick with Central House Family Resort in Beach Lake or check other venues, but it’s actually not too early to get it booked somewhere and think about keynote speakers.

### **Old Business**

**Draft Letter to DRBC: Proposed Rulemaking for Amendments to Special Regulations, Part 440-High Volume: Hydraulic Fracturing (2/28/22 comment deadline):** A Motion by Dudko seconded by Henry to send the draft letter to DRBC carried with 9 in favor, no by Dexter, and an abstention by Peckham.

**Federal Railroad Administration 1/3/22 Response Letter to UDC:** Ramie said there was a letter of response provided in the meeting packet. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) was extremely responsive to our concerns raised about a potential safety issue with the culverts in the Town of Fremont, and they looked into that very extensively. We had some inquiries about railroad ties that we had seen piled up along the tracks. Not only did they send this letter formally but Ramie had phone calls from at least three different individuals from the FRA. It was pretty impressive how seriously they took our issue and their appropriate response to it. Peckham said there are still railroad ties near his property that haven’t been picked up yet.

**Arrange Workshop to Discuss UDC Long-term Fiscal Sustainability Plan Recommendations:** Ramie will propose dates via a survey to convene a UDC special workshop to review the Long-Term Fiscal Sustainability Report produced by Crane Associates after checking the availability of the Narrowsburg Union as the venue. She will work with Boyar on the workshop format and advance study requests. Michael Crane has some time left on his contract and Ramie feels it would be well spent helping shepherd the UDC through recommendations and coming up with a plan. He is willing to work with the UDC for the first two or three months of the new year.

Greier said he would like to thank Rudge and Dugan on their comments on their individuals states funding but he feels it's time that UDC needs to get our state representatives in for a meeting.



**Other:** None.

**New Business**

**Draft Resolution 2022-01: Contract with Eckersley & Davis, LLP for Fiscal Year 2022 Audit:** A Motion by Henry seconded by Rajsz to approve Resolution 2022-01 carried.

**Draft Resolution 2022-02: Authorizing Signatories for UDC Bank Accounts in 2022:** A Motion by Henry seconded by Rajsz to approve Resolution 2022-02 carried.

**Draft Resolution 2022-03: Reaffirming Sexual Harassment Policy for 2022:** A Motion by Henry seconded by Rajsz to approve Resolution 2022-02 carried unanimously.

**Draft Letter to PennDOT: Skinners Falls, NY-Milanville, PA Bridge Draft Purpose and Need Document (1/8/22 comment deadline):** A Motion by Richardson seconded by Robinson to approve the letter to PennDOT: Skinners Falls, NY-Milanville, PA Bridge Draft Purpose and Need Document carried. Sullivan thanked Ramie for doing an excellent job with the letter.

**Draft Letter to NPS: UDC 2021-010 Heron Hill Hunt Club, Damascus Township:** A Motion by Henry seconded by Dudko to approve the draft letter to NPS: UDC 2021-010 Heron Hill Hunt Club, Damascus Township carried. Richardson asked Engelhardt if the Township approved the variance application? Engelhardt said they did.

**Annual Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statements – please return by 2/3/22:** Hall-Bagdonas will be mailing the Conflict-of-Interest Disclosure Statements to each representative and alternate. She will include a memo that explains how to fill that out. You may scan and email it back, drop it off at the office or return it by mail. Please return them by the next UDC meeting on 2/3.

**Other:** Henry asked Rudge for an update on the Long Eddy Access for the next meeting.

**Public Comment:** Richardson said he would like to thank Dave Dean for his commitment and dedication to the UDC, with others wishing Dean well.

**Adjournment:** A motion by Henry, seconded by Rajsz, to adjourn the meeting at 8:49 p.m. was carried.

*Minutes prepared by Ashley Hall-Bagdonas 1-24-2022*