

UPPER DELAWARE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

February 4, 2016

The Upper Delaware Council held its monthly meeting on Thursday, February 4, 2016 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Fred Peckham called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance and roll call followed.

In attendance: Town of Hancock-Fred Peckham, Town of Fremont-Jim Greier, Town of Delaware-Harold Roeder, Jr., Town of Cohecton-Larry Richardson, Town of Tusten- Susan Sullivan, Town of Highland-Jeff Haas, Town of Lumberland-Zoriana Gingold, Town of Deerpark-David Dean, Damascus Township-Jeffrey Dexter, Berlin Township-Alan Henry, Shohola Township-Aaron Robinson, State of New York-Bill Rudge, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania-Tim Dugan, Delaware River Basin Commission-Steve Tambini, National Park Service-Kris Heister. Staff in attendance: Executive Director-Laurie Ramie, Resource Specialist-Travis O'Dell, Secretary-Cindy Odell. Also in attendance: Tony Ritter, Town of Tusten alternate, Deb Conway, Town of Highland alternate, and Andy Boyar, Town of Highland alternate. Absent: Lackawaxen Township, Westfall Township. Media: Dave Hulse, Peter Becker, Autumn Schanil.

Members were asked to state their names and the town or township that they represent as there were new people in attendance due to 2016 appointments at the municipal levels.

Swearing In of 2016 Officers: Peckham welcomed Town of Hancock Supervisor Samuel N. Rowe, Jr. The new officers: Chairperson Fred Peckham, Vice-Chairperson Jeffrey Dexter, and Secretary/Treasurer Alan Henry; took their oaths during a swearing-in ceremony officiated by Rowe. Peckham presented Rowe with a UDC lapel pin and thanked him for performing the swearing-in ceremony.

Approval of January 7 Meeting Minutes: A motion by Richardson seconded by Henry to approve the January 7 meeting minutes was carried unanimously.

Public Comment on the Agenda: None

Committee Reports: Committee reports were provided based on the meeting minutes. They were: January 19 Water Use/Resource Management by Ritter; January 26 Operations by Peckham; and January 26 Project Review by Richardson.

Ritter stated that the river is open at Callicoon and approximately 37 degrees. There is no snow pack currently in the Catskill region, he added. The Cannonsville Reservoir is at 83.8% and Pepacton is at 81%.

Status Reports

Delaware River Basin Commission: Tambini stated that while it's important to keep an eye on reservoir levels when there is no snowpack, last year at this time, storage in the NYC reservoirs was 180 billion gallons and trending lower. This year, storage is at 226 billion gallons and trending higher.

Tambini noted that the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, February 10, and a business meeting on Wednesday, March 16, 2016. The hearing and business meeting are open to the public and will be held at the Washington Crossing Historic Park Visitor Center, 1112 River Road, Washington Crossing, Pa. Hearing items will include draft dockets for the withdrawals, discharges and other water-related projects subject to the Commission's review and a resolution authorizing the Executive Director to enter into an administrative agreement with the New York State Department of Environmental Protection (NYSDEC) for the administration of water withdrawal and discharge projects under the One Process/One Permit Program.

Tambini stated that he appreciated receiving a copy of the UDC's January 7th letter to the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court Decree Party Principals. He thanked the UDC for recognizing that the Delaware River Basin Commission's Regulated Flows Advisory Committee (RFAC) agreed to meet in Hawley, PA on Dec. 3, 2015 to facilitate hearing from the upper portion of the basin. He understands there was disappointment over the absence of any Decree Party Principals at the meeting. He explained that it was a committee meeting which was attended by all the committee members and that the Decree Party Principals were not expected to be at that particular meeting. He said committee members' responsibilities include reporting back to the Commission and also to the Decree Party Principals. He believes they carried out that responsibility.

NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation: Rudge reported that the Governor announced that New York State will allocate \$300 million for the State's Environmental Protection Fund – the highest amount ever for the fund and more than double the fund's level when the Governor first took office. Rudge said he will report back on this once the budget is passed tentatively in April.

Rudge referred to a February 3 press release titled, "DEC Accepting Applications for Pheasant Release Program" provided in members' packets. The application period for the cooperative Day-Old Pheasant Chick Program to enhance opportunities for pheasant hunting in New York is open, Rudge noted. The program provides pheasant hunting opportunities through a partnership among DEC, sportsmen and sportswomen, 4-H youth, and landowners who are interested in rearing and releasing pheasants. More information on the Day-Old Pheasant Chick Program, including a downloadable "Pheasant Rearing Guide" and application are available at www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7271.

PA Dept. of Conservation & Natural Resources: Dugan referred to the handouts provided in members' packets. He reported that the Governor has signed into law a partial spending plan for Pennsylvania. Dugan noted that the Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) is the main grant program that DCNR offers to communities. He referred to the press release dated January 28th and titled, "Governor Wolf Announces \$28 Million DCNR Investment to Improve Recreation, Community Revitalization Efforts Across Pennsylvania". Dugan spoke of two projects receiving funding in Lackawanna and Wayne Counties, and Pike County. A complete list of grants by county can be found at www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/grants/brcinteractivemapping1/grantannouncements/index.htm. Dugan announced that the next round of funding is now open through mid-April and more information can be found on the DCNR website also.

Dugan referred to the January 7 press release titled, "Governor Wolf Announces Task Force to Maximize Job Creation in Pennsylvania Forest Products Industry". The Green Ribbon Task Force was called together after discussion on how Pennsylvania's nearly 17 million acres of forestland could best play an active role in the Governor's call for statewide job creation. The task force will hold monthly meetings for six months. Details on the Green Ribbon Task Force can be found at www.dcnr.state.pa.us/councils/Greenribbontaskforce/index.

Dugan stated that Pennsylvania has unveiled a comprehensive strategy to "reboot" the state's efforts to improve water quality in the Commonwealth and the Chesapeake Bay. The strategy relies on a mix of technical and financial assistance for farmers, technology, expanded data gathering, improved program coordination and capacity and—only when necessary—stronger enforcement and compliance measures. Dugan stated a lot of effort is going towards maintaining water quality or improving it in Pennsylvania.

Dugan reported that the Governor will give his 2016-2017 budget address on February 9th. Dugan said he does not have any details about the address, but noted the DCNR is waiting anxiously to see what his proposal is.

Regarding insects and disease, Dugan said he has no new information on Emerald Ash Borer. He added they are starting to put together their numbers for spring for the spraying of gypsy moths. It will be an active spraying year.

Dean asked Dugan if his agency has heard anything from the City of Port Jervis regarding the proposed whitewater park. Dean explained the project to him. Dugan said he is unsure if the Commonwealth has been contacted. He said he could look into that for him.

National Park Service-Upper Delaware: Heister referred to the Oral History Transcriber volunteer position handout in members' packets. She said they are seeking help with producing and reviewing transcriptions of the Upper Delaware Oral History collection with the intention of publishing excerpts of the interviews on the park website highlighting some of the area's most interesting stories and making the tapes available for research and educational purposes. Volunteers will help with transcription, obtaining consent forms for those interviews that do not have them, and producing excerpts for publication on the website. Anyone interested can contact Museum Technician Lauren Hauptman at (570) 685-4871 ext. 6606 or at Lauren_Hauptman@nps.gov. Also provided in members' packets is an updated list of the people they need to contact that they have interviews for but are lacking consent forms. Progress has been made contacting individuals or family of the interviewees, Heister said, and she thanked members for their assistance. She said she would like to form a small work group that could help with the language related to whom the oral history tapes will be released and for what purposes. She referred to the "Oral History Association: Principles and Best Practices" handout in members' packets. She asked members to look it over, noting that it basically is about honoring the purpose for which the interview was done. Anyone interested in being part of the small group is asked to contact UDC staff.

Heister referred to the UPDE Centennial Schedule of events for the upcoming year provided in members' packets. She noted that the winners of the 2015 photo contest will be announced next week. The FY 2016 photo contest will be announced on March 1st. The release of the UPDE Virtual Tour, which was previewed by the UDC Water Use/Resource Management Committee, is scheduled for April, Heister added. An introduction will be added to the tour in advance of its release. Also launching in April will be the "Adopt-An-Access" program. The NPS has the right, but not the obligation, to assist in the maintenance of the river accesses, Heister noted. They intend to increase those efforts this year with this program. It will be similar to the "Adopt-a-Highway" program. In May, the "Take a Paddle" program will be launched. June 4th will mark the launch of a 100 mile paddle, Heister said, noting that 70 of the miles will be in the Upper Delaware and 30 in Delaware Water Gap. She said they will be inviting municipal officials and others to participate in certain legs of the paddle. She would like to see UDC members join them as they paddle through their participating town or township. The paddle will also be open to the public, she added. On a date in August to be finalized, Heister said they will hold their 100 Canoe Challenge where they will try and form a big 100 on the river and host the NPS Birthday Bash.

Heister said she responded to Robinson's request for information related to NPS radio towers in the Upper Delaware Valley on February 4th. A copy of her response was shared with UDC staff, Henry, and Peckham.

Heister said she has with her copies of two part-time job openings for Park Guides in the Upper Delaware. She said anyone interested can go to the USA Jobs website for information. The job announcement is open through February 11th. The position pays \$15.64 per hour, she added.

Heister asked members for their feedback on the "Wear It" lawn signs. A concern had been brought to her about the signs being put in places where they were not necessarily wanted. Heister said she needs to make a decision whether or not to fund the signs again. Henry feels they are a great idea. Boyar said it is a very important program and although they do not need to be everywhere, he said they need to be somewhere. He referred to the program as a smart one. Conway suggested that they may want to look into sturdier stakes for the signs. Ritter suggested adding a hashtag to the signs to keep up with current social media. Heister said the Park Service is looking into creating guidelines about placement to give to people who receive the signs.

Heister said that law enforcement letters of support will soon be going out to Sullivan County and the Towns of Highland, Lumberland, and Deepark. Replies will be due by March 15th, she added. She provided the amounts going to the county and each municipality.

The National Park Service Upper Delaware's FY 2015 Annual Report was provided in each member's packet.

Hulse questioned how the Park Service determines the amounts given for law enforcement assistance to the County and municipalities. She is unsure how the amounts are determined, but explained that Deepark is receiving funding this year to specifically address a noise issue on the Hawk's Nest.

Henry suggested that the NPS try to paddle all the way to the southern terminus in Sparrowbush for their 100 mile paddle. Heister explained the scheduling hurdles they face, but stated if they can do that, they will.

UDC Executive Director's Report: Ramie welcomed Town of Highland Representative Jeff Hass and Town of Lumberland Alternate Zoriana Gingold to their first Council meeting and said we look forward to working with them.

Ramie regrettably announced that tonight will be O'Dell's last full Council meeting as Resource Specialist. He submitted his resignation effective February 26th to pursue other opportunities. As a result, we will have a vacancy for Resource Specialist that we will be advertising for next week in the local newspapers and posting on our website. Ramie said we regret O'Dell's departure, but appreciate the time he has spent with us since October 4, 2012. Dean wished O'Dell luck and said he did a great job. Boyar said that O'Dell has done "a spectacular job. Part of the strength of this Upper Delaware Council has been the staff has been really balanced and strong and responsible in following up on everything. I know that Travis is moving on. I hope it is not over a matter of dollars, because I think he's a very valuable employee and colleague". O'Dell said he has grown personally and professionally and met a lot of great people in his time here. He stated he has no regrets, but needs room for advancement and would like to spend more time with family. He feels the groundwork is laid for the success of his successor. He noted he will still be involved in his community and the historical community. He thanked members for the opportunity and the kind words. Ramie said she welcomes any members to help with this particular job search. If anyone is interested, they should contact her.

Ramie noted that we've had one round of meetings of the standing committees dedicated to the subjects of Water Use/Resource Management; Project Review; and Operation in 2016. She stated membership remains open on these committees and any representative or alternate who wishes to join may still do so at any time. Peckham noted that it is at the committee level that the "nuts and bolts" of the organization are and where much discussion takes place. He added that the committees are important and he encourages anyone that is not on a committee to get on a committee.

Ramie stated a press release titled "Upper Delaware Council Names Roster for 2016" was included in members' packets. This release lists the 2016 roster and indicates the changes that have taken place this year. It will go out February 5 with photos that will be taken immediately after the meeting.

Ramie reported that she solicited proposals from three venues on the NY side to host the April 24 UDC Awards Banquet. A report outlining the proposals was provided in members' packets and was also sent out to members in advance, along with Ramie's recommendation, for their review. She would like to get a venue booked as the first order of business in the logistical planning. A motion to defer to Ramie's recommendation for the venue for the banquet was made by Robinson and seconded by Dean. After a brief discussion, a vote was taken and the motion carried. Ramie said she awaits a response to the invitation sent out for a keynote speaker to Dr. Andrew Kozlowski from the New York State Geological Survey.

Ramie reminded members of the Project Review Committee that our Project Review Workbook consultant, AJ Schwartz from Environmental Planning & Design, is looking for feedback on his draft recommendations as presented at the January 26th meeting. Schwartz is tentatively scheduled to present his final report to the full Council on March 3rd. Staff-level meetings with NPS are to take place in advance of the March 3rd meeting.

Ramie referred to the February calendar of UDC Meetings, Activities, and Deadlines provided in members' packets. A March preview is also included on the calendar, she noted. The solicitation of nominations for the Awards Banquet will take place in March. We strongly encourage the public to get

involved with this by nominating any individuals, communities, or organizations that have done something outstanding in service of the river, she said.

Ramie shared a copy of an "Old Timers from along the Erie Tracks" booklet compiled originally by the late Jack Niflot, UDC Town of Fremont Representative, and re-printed recently by Ed Kraus, Odell's father. The booklet will be available in local stores, she noted.

Old Business: Henry asked Heister for clarification on the addition to the NPS Virtual Park Tour. Heister stated she took the recommendation of the WU/RM Committee and will be adding an introduction to the tour that will offer a welcome and ask visitors to respect private property along with other information. Henry thanked her for that. Peckham said that Virtual Park Tour preview was a great presentation.

New Business: On behalf of Upper Delaware Scenic Byway Chairperson Nadia Rajs, Richardson presented the Council with a donation from the organization. He thanked the Council for supporting their mission.

Other: Peckham thanked everyone who voted him into the Chairman position. He said the Council has been in his family from the very beginning starting with his uncle, the late George Frosch. Peckham said he is well versed in the River Management Plan and the application of it. He will follow the Plan. He would like the UDC this year to take the lead on implementing some sort of emergency warning system up and down the river and look further into expanding communication in the river valley. He noted the Council is a good avenue for dispersing information to the participating thirteen towns and townships.

Public Comment: None

A group photo and reception will follow the business meeting, Peckham announced.

Adjournment: A motion by Greier, seconded by Haas, to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m. was carried unanimously.

Minutes prepared by Cindy Odell 2/18/16