



Upper Delaware Council

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UPPER DELAWARE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

October 3, 2024

The Upper Delaware Council held its monthly meeting on Thursday, October 3, 2024. Chairperson Dudko called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll call followed reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Attendees:

Town of Hancock- Fred Peckham (Zoom), Town of Fremont- Jim Rodgers, Town of Cohecton- Larry Richardson, Town of Tusten- Evan Padua (Zoom), Town of Highland- Christine Martin, Town of Lumberland- Nadia Rajs (Zoom), Town of Deerpark- Ginny Dudko, Damascus Township- Jeff Dexter, Lackawaxen Township- Doug Case, Shohola Township- Aaron Robinson, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania- Tim Dugan (Zoom), New York State- Ryan Coulter, National Park Service- Carly Marshall

Absent:

Westfall Township- Michael Barth, Town of Delaware- Harold Roeder, Delaware River Basin Commission, Berlin Township- Al Henry

Staff:

Executive Director- Laurie Ramie, Resource & Land Use Specialist- Kerry Engelhardt, Administrative Support- Stephanie Driscoll

Media:

WJFF Radio- Rosie Starr (Zoom), Tri-County Independent- Peter Becker (Zoom)

Guests:

Town of Deerpark- Bill Dudko, Town of Tusten- Cathleen Breen, NPS- Ingrid Peterec, NPS- Jamie Myers, Don Hamilton (Zoom)

Presentation: “Upper Delaware’s Interpretive and Education Programs” by National Park Service Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River Chief of Interpretation Ingrid Peterec and Ranger Jamie Myers:

Peterec said she has been with the NPS at UPDE for 31 years. She brought on Myers in 1997. Tonight, they are here to talk about the educational and interpretation programs the NPS offers. Others within the Interpretation Division include Ranger Susie Kaspar who works at UPDE part time along with Myers, Visual Information Specialist Jasmine Lueng, and Community Volunteer Ambassador Corrine Hinton. During the summer they expand with seasonal staff, interns, and volunteers. The seasonal staff are usually hired from spring to fall, but some do stay and work through the winter to help with Eagle observing and other things. Peterec commented that the seasonal interns they had this year were a great group.

Myers said UPDE focuses on school programs in the spring. The school programs have been developed over many years in conjunction with state school curriculum to target local history and science. They have programs on the Delaware and Hudson Canal through “Canal Days”; an interpretive history for local 4th grade classes in both NY and PA around the Roebling Bridge site. In the early years of Canal Days, they were presenting to around 1,000 4th grade students each spring. Myers said to start this programming, Peterec will go to the classrooms to give a background and history on the canals and why they were so important, to give the students a mental picture of what the interpretive part of the program will be like. The students come to the Roebling Bridge by bus. They circulate through four different stations where they get fully immersed in the canal day era. They hear canal songs, learn about coal mines and canal locks, and see what life would have been like for the children during that time. They also walk across the towpath. This program has ebbed and flowed over the years based on the schools’ schedules and what they have already planned for the year, but overall has been well received.

UPDE also offers a more environmental focused educational program called the “Water Snapshot” for 5th grade students. This program is also offered to children in the river valley in both NY and PA. The Water Snapshot program was started many years ago with the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) in conjunction with Earth Day. UPDE first visits the school to explain to the students what it means to be environmental stewards, learn about water quality, and their watershed address. They go out to tributaries or the main stem of the Delaware River a few weeks later with an NPS Ranger to do Water Snapshot testing themselves. After that, they put together a booklet. UPDE digitally uploads the results of the data they have collected over the years. This program gives 5th graders a great appreciation of the exceptional water quality in the Upper Delaware and how the choices they make help keep it that way. The Water Snapshot program is also offered to kids older and younger than 5th grade upon request.

They also offer Water Safety programs for 5th graders mostly, but will do any age group since it’s never too early to start talking about water safety. For this program, they discuss all the basics of water safety and encourage water safety over their summer break.

Peterec said all programs can be offered to older and younger children. In the interest of trying to accommodate what is asked, the Interpretation Division does a multitude of other things for education. They have presented at career days, participated in Earth Day festivals, helped with the trout release field day that Sullivan West School District does, and other similar outreach activities.

They offer “educational trunks” as well. The trunks are based on topics such as: frogs, wildlife, animal tracks, Bald Eagles, butterflies, moths, and more. Seasonal staff often use these to develop programming. The trunks can be lent out to teachers, camp leaders, scout groups, and others as requested. Just this week three trunks are going out to Rondout School District.

Peterec said the Interpretation staff table at a lot of fairs and festivals as well, educating the public on different topics. This year they were at Callicoon Country Fair, Riverfest in Narrowsburg, Port Jervis Fall Festival, and other events. They try to be present at as many events as possible, focusing on park information and water safety. They set up a “win a prize” wheel and give a safety quiz; whichever prize you land on, you get to take. This summer UPDE reached 2,815 people at these fairs, festivals, and events. They would like to expand and go beyond the river valley to events next year to reach visitors before they get here.

Peterec said there used to be more programming done within the National Park unit itself, but they realized the staff was putting a lot of energy into the programs and people weren’t showing up. Instead, they now go to youth groups, camps, schools, libraries, etc. in the river valley to do the programming there. They are also open to appearing before senior groups.

They also do some cultural programming, although that is not a focus at UPDE. They did some geology programming this year as well. Special programming occurred this year with a bilingual nature hike at Minisink Battleground Park with 17 people participating, then at the Damascus Forest Trail. This year, UPDE staff gave 103 programs, reaching 1,746 individuals. They had 8 seasonals, 4 interns, and one Pike/Wayne Workforce Alliance student.

Myers said all the river kiosks (at four river accesses: Skinners Falls, Ten Mile River, Lackawaxen, and Mongaup) provide educational information. The primary job of an Interpretation Ranger, or any Ranger within the NPS, is education. At all four accesses for the 2024 season (Memorial Day – Labor Day) the kiosks served over 23,476 visitors. 9,435 contacts were made while roving (walking/paddling) the Delaware River, bringing the total to just over 32,000 contacts made to our river valley visitors. National Canoe Safety Patrol (NCSP), who works closely with NPS Rangers, made 9,000 contacts this season. Peterec and Myers both commented that NCSP is a great service to the public as well.

Peterec said that if anyone is interested in educational programming, please reach out to her for more information or to set something up.

G. Dudko asked what schools they go to? Peterec said they will go to any school. For Canal Days, they have gone to every school district that borders the Delaware River in the upper region. That includes Port Jervis, Eldred, Sullivan West, Hancock, Livingston Manor, and Roscoe in NY, Wayne Highlands School District, Western Wayne,

Wallenpaupack, and Delaware Valley in PA, to name a few. G. Dudko said she's sure funding the field trip and transportation can be an issue. Peterec said yes, field trips have proven difficult. Typically, schools are only allowed to do one trip a year. It can be difficult for them to choose. Last year Wayne Highlands School District opted to visit the Lackawanna Coal Mines, for example. UPDE has gotten grants for bussing in the past. Eastern National also provides a portion of money for each park. Last year, with help from Eastern National, they were able to fund three schools to come to Canal Days. G. Dudko asked if local school are aware of the educational trunks available? Peterec said yes, and that information is available online as well.

Richardson said years ago, there was a biologist who did some studies on bats in Cochection; are they still doing that? Peterec said she believes there is an antenna up at the maintenance building in Lackawaxen to track the bats. Studies were done this summer in conjunction with Stroudsburg University. Richardson said there was a survey done at the Cochection Station on Route 97. The biologist came and did a presentation on the information found. He commented that people have a misconception about the benefits bats contribute to this area. Don Hamilton said UPDE also did a lot of bat research with Dr. Howard Whidden of East Stroudsburg University, putting nanotags on about 20 bags in an effort to follow their migration.

Ramie commented that the visitor statistics are impressive. They must collect that information subtly? Peterec said the staff at kiosks are asked to write down how many people they've spoken to every half hour. Ramie said the UDC tabled at the Zane Grey Festival this year next to the D&H Canal Historical Society exhibit staffed by Bill Merchant who had a clicker that tracked every person he spoke to. Merchant told her it's good information to have to give to grant funders. Peterec said they have the same kind of device to track contacts at fairs, festivals, and events. All the data collected goes into an Annual Report for every park that Washington looks at very closely.

Everyone thanked Peterec and Myers for their time and presentation. They left the meeting.

Approval of September 5, 2024 Minutes: A motion by Robinson seconded by Dexter to approve the September 5, 2024 meeting minutes, carried.

Public Comment on the Agenda: None.

Committee Reports: There were no questions regarding previously distributed minutes for Water Use/Resource Management 9/17 (Evan Padua), Operations 9/24 (Ginny Dudko), or Project Review 9/24 (Larry Richardson).

Status Reports:

Delaware River Basin Commission: Absent. The hydrologic report is included in the packet for review.

NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation: Coulter said on 8/6 NYS acquired land in the Town of Delaware. That 2-acre parcel in the hamlet of Callicoon will become part of a new river access. The concept plan to develop it will take a couple years. They plan to make it similar to the Long Eddy Access. Richardson asked if that's the parcel close to the Community Center in Callicoon? Rodgers said he thought it was by the cemetery. Ramie said it is at the old Upper Delaware Campgrounds. Coulter said he will be involved in developing the plans for this access as part of the fisheries unit. Rodgers asked if this new access will eliminate the old access that was abandoned due to washouts? Coulter said yes.

Coulter said the Mongaup Falls Reservoir Access will be improved at the launch site; the launch pad, the path down, and the parking area will be improved. They will be expanding the parking area to accommodate about 10 trailered vehicles and adding a couple of regular car parking spots. The concept plan is in hand. It will hopefully be done in 2025.

Region 4 Fisheries is getting ready to present a Delaware River Tailwaters Fisheries Management Plan. Coulter will keep the council updated on this. Fisheries staff will also be doing a presentation on it at FUDR's Upper Delaware Rendezvous.

October 1st was the first day for bow season for white tail deer in NYS. Wildlife staff is busy stocking pheasant weekly. For hunting season, NYS will no longer require back tags. The paper that licenses are printed on is also different this year. G. Dudko said that's a shame about the back tags; hunters were easily identified with those. B. Dudko commented that the lifetime license was printed on different paper as well.

Coulter said staff has been out at accesses hanging new signage.

There has been a confirmed case of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) in Ulster County, with one person passing away from the illness. There were some cases in Orange County as well. They are suggesting using bug spray and to avoid going outside at times of the day when mosquitoes are most active. Coulter passed around a warning sign for EEE. G. Dudko said if she saw EEE on a sign, she wouldn't know what that meant. B. Dudko asked if there had been any updates on Chronic Wasting Disease? Coulter said nothing in this area; there have been a couple of cases popping up in Dutchess County.

Rodgers said he was in Middletown this week and saw a bunch of Spotted Lanternfly. Coulter said he hasn't seen them recently up by him (Ulster County). Case said he saw some around Lackawaxen last year, but none this year. G. Dudko commented that there are a lot of dead ash trees along the roads this year. Coulter agreed. G. Dudko said it's too bad there isn't funding to take those trees down before they fall down and take power lines out or block the roads.

Pennsylvania Dept. of Conservation and National Resources: Dugan said PA is heading into fall foliage season currently, with reporting and excitement happening with local media and news reports. Hunting seasons are starting in the Upper Delaware region. In PA, deer archery season starts this Saturday (10/5). This is the time of year DCNR opens up the gates to forest lands to increase hunter traffic and allow other groups and individuals to use that space. They typically see hunters, jeep clubs, and enduro bike groups. There are still no ATV's allowed in the state forests.

C2P2 Grants will be announced soon and hopefully the Upper Delaware region will receive some funding. The Open Space Institute was finishing their last round of the DREI 10-Year funding stream coming out of the William Penn Foundation. There has been chatter that some of the decisions for the grant funding have been made. Once the press release is out, he will be sure to share it with the council.

There are two upcoming meetings on Spongey Moth in Pike County; 10/24 at 6pm at the Bushkill Fire Department and 10/28 at 6pm at the Blooming Grove Fire Department. They received a lot of good feedback from the last meeting addressing Spongey Moth defoliation in Milford last month. Colleagues have been replicating the meetings in other parts of the Commonwealth. In Eastern PA he hasn't been seeing as many lanternflies. He has counted less than 10 in the last two months. In previous years, he was counting them by the dozens in mid-August.

Martin asked if rut season for whitetail deer coincided with the full moon? Coulter said that there will be activity this year around the full moon. The cool weather season moon phases can trigger the seeking and chasing phase we're familiar with seeing. Dugan added that in the fall, you typically see an increase in wildlife activity. Agricultural crops are being harvested and habitats are being disturbed, resulting in heightened activity. Also, animals are trying to bulk up heading into the winter months. Richardson said, as a lifetime hunter, the rut season usually starts end of October/beginning of November. You have to watch deer on the roads carefully during that time.

National Park Service: An NPS monthly activity report is included in the packet. Marshall reported that UPDE has reached an agreement with USGS to provide stop gap funding for the Barryville Gage for Fiscal Year 2025, until alternative funding can be secured. The gage was scheduled to restore full functions on 10/1, and she believes it has.

Interpretation staff participated in three river clean-ups this month (9/7, 9/15, & 9/18). More information on those can be found on the UPDE website.

UPDE held their Post-Season Water Safety Partners meeting on 9/20 at the UDC building. The Post Season Fishing Guides meeting will be held on 10/30 at 11am at the Hancock Town Hall. Anyone is welcome to attend and a flyer for that is included in tonight's packet. They plan to discuss the netting that is being installed at Skinners Falls-Milanville Bridge as one topic.

Ramie asked if the funding amount for the Barryville Gage was negotiated, or was it \$12,090 as per the USGS's original figure? Marshall said she will find out. Ramie asked about the PennDOT Long Eddy Bridge that is listed on the monthly activity report? There is no such thing. Marshall said that was a typo; it was supposed to say NYDOT. Ramie asked what the bridge in Long Eddy is though, since there's no interstate crossing there. Marshall said she will have to check and report back.

UDC Executive Director: Ramie reported that the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) held a roundtable at the UDC office building on 9/13 before heading out for a short raft trip down the Delaware from the Damascus Access to above Skinners Falls. For the roundtable, DRBC put together a list of suggested topics to keep the conversation going. It turned into a lively open discussion about what people think the needs of the Upper Delaware Watershed are, and how the DRBC can be helping. Dexter and Martin both attended the roundtable and paddle as well. She asked if they had anything to add? Martin said she thought the discussion was interesting; it was good to hear from people up and down the Delaware River. The paddle was beautiful and they had great weather. Dexter said it was nice to have the DRBC up here twice this year. Sometimes, you can forget how beautiful the Upper Delaware River is when you are only seeing the Delaware River past Trenton, NJ. It can look like two different rivers. Ramie held up a photo of the group that participated in the roundtable. The photo included: DRBC Director of External Affairs Beth Brown, DRBC Community Engagement Specialist Avery Lentini, DRBC Deputy Executive Director Kristen Bowman Kavanagh, UDC Damascus Township Representative Jeff Dexter, Field Representative for Congressman Marc Molinaro Alex Horton, Sullivan County Legislator Matt McPhillips, UDC Executive Director Laurie Ramie, Friends of the Upper Delaware River Deputy Director Sherri Resti Thomas, Tim Bruno with WJFF Radio Catskill, Director of Planning at Sullivan County Heather Jacksy, Delaware County Planning's Theresa Ferrigno, UDC Town of Highland Representative Christine Martin, UDC Damascus Township Representative Jeff Dexter, and UPDE Chief of Interpretation Ingrid Peterec among the attendees.

Ramie reported that Rebekah Creshkoff, who had been appointed the Town of Delaware Alternate for the UDC on 6/12, has resigned as of 9/25. She reached out via email to Town Clerk Tess McBeath and UDC Representative Harold Roeder to say that she had felt she overcommitted herself taking on the role and is simply too busy. She commented that the UDC is a well-run organization and she is an admirer of the work we do. She did send the name of a person who may be interested in serving as the UDC alternate for the Town of Delaware.

The 36th Annual River Valley Awards banquet was held on 9/22 with 133 guests attending. The souvenir program is available online with profiles for all 11 awards. UDC staff has been posting photos of each award recipient daily on social media platforms. There was great coverage of the banquet in Delaware Currents, River Reporter, and Sullivan County Democrat. Ramie said Certificates of Merit are usually received without soliciting them, but this year she had to reach out after finding a particular Gold Seal program by U.S. Senator John Fetterman for PA constituents. Robinson received his personalized letter in the mail this week and passed it around for everyone to see.

The Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC) is still working on accesses. The Matamoras Access will be closed from 10/7-10/9 so they can make improvements to the launch ramp, after having completed jobs at Damascus and Darbytown.

PennDOT is accepting comments starting 10/7 on a proposal to replace the Calkins Creek Bridge in Damascus. That bridge is on River Road (State Route 1004) and located within the river corridor. Marshall had sent information on that this week via email. The proposed new bridge would have a wider shoulder for pedestrians. There is also a [press release](#) under Partner News on the UDC website on the topic. Comments will be accepted through 10/21.

Ramie said on Sept. 18, \$17 million worth of Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund awards were announced by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. The 45 grants represent the 7th round of funding and the largest amount to date. Funded projects for the Upper Delaware watershed include \$584,800 to Friends of the Upper Delaware River for Stream Restoration and River Access Improvements in Delaware and Sullivan Counties; \$779,300 to Trout Unlimited for a Brook Trout Restoration Program for the East Branch Delaware River and Willowemoc Creek, \$1 million to the American Bird Conservancy to restore dynamic forest structure for priority birds in the Poconos-Kittatinny region of PA; and some multi-state projects focusing on invasive mud snails, headwaters and coldwater habitat assessments, and dam removals, with no specific locations listed.

Ramie said there is a new pot of New York State funding available as a source of the required matching funds for that federal grant program. Ramie has been serving on the Upper Delaware River Network Re-grant Committee along with Coulter, Kurnath, and others to set up those guidelines and review applications, which are due by Oct. 18. She did forward that request for proposals to all our NY towns on Sept. 24.

Some highlights from our October calendar: Sunday is Driscoll's birthday; this one isn't listed on the calendar, but the UDC received an invitation to honor NYS Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther for her conservation leadership and

political career at a reception by the New York League of Conservation Voters, Friends of the Upper Delaware River, and the Catskill Fly Fishing Center and Museum next Friday, **Oct. 11**, from 4-6 at the fly-fishing museum in Livingston Manor. There's no cost but reservations are requested; if anyone is interested, Ramie said she can forward the link. The first Lackawaxen River Sojourn is happening on **Oct. 12 and 13**. All UDC staff will be out of the office on **Oct. 16** and for a half-day on the **17th** to attend the Upper Delaware River Rendezvous conference at the Villa Roma. As a follow-up event to the Sept. 21 Pollinator Festival, planning is underway for a Butterfly Bike Ride on the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway in the Town of Cochecton on **Oct. 20**. The final Project Review Road Show for the 13 UDC member municipalities is on **Oct. 21** at Lackawaxen Township. There is also a November calendar preview in the packets.

Ramie said we didn't have a presentation scheduled for the November full council meeting until this afternoon, when Christine Foland from the Lackawaxen River Conservancy agreed to present. We received a letter this week asking for a letter of support and participation in the planning efforts to initiate a Congressional study for National Wild and Scenic Rivers designation for the Lackawaxen River. Foland had given a presentation at the 9/19/23 WU/RM Committee meeting, so Ramie reached out to Foland to come back and give a refresher to the full council on what they are asking, to which Foland agreed. Thanks to the Upper Delaware's new Natural and Cultural Resources Program Manager Tom Kearns, who we met at the Oct. 15 WU/RM Committee, we have a presentation scheduled for the 12/5 UDC meeting from the National Park Service Submerged Resource Center about their archeological inventory of the river bottom.

Coulter thanked Ramie for the Partnership Award NYSDEC received for being involved with the development of the Long Eddy Access.

New Business:

- a. **Draft Resolution 2024-07: Approving Technical Assistance Grants for Fiscal Year 2025:** Richardson said this was received at the last Project Review Committee meeting on 9/24 and passed to the full council for approval the three TAGs are \$9,740 to the Town of Tusten for their Open Space and Recreation Plan completion; \$3,000 to the Town of Deerpark to develop new brochures; and \$260 to Berlin Township for tax maps. A motion by Richardson, seconded by Rodgers, to approve the Technical Assistance Grants for Fiscal Year 2025 carried, with G. Dudko abstaining.
- b. **Five-Year Plan Development and River Management Plan Orientation/Refresher Workshop:** Ramie said there was a discussion about scheduling a Five-Year Plan Development workshop at the 9/24 Operations Committee meeting. During the conversation, the Five-Year Plan and the Cooperative Agreement got mixed up. She clarified that the Cooperative Agreement deals with funding and what the UDC and NPS responsibilities are, with about 50-pages of regulations and citations. That is the document NPS is currently working on which Kurnath expects to turn over for review by mid-November. The Five-Year Plan is a document that needs to be done in conjunction with the Cooperative Agreement. It is a list of tasks that the UDC wants to accomplish from 2025-2029 as a strategic plan.

We also discussed at previous meetings holding a River Management Plan (RMP) Refresher Course for council members. We could do them at the same time. She researched how they've been done in the past. For the 1997-2002 plan the UDC held a workshop on 6/21/1997 that lasted about 5 hours and was facilitated by Tom Shepstone; 16 people were present including the UPDE Superintendent. During that workshop they came up with 56 tasks, and the plan was written and approved. For the 2003-2007 plan, the UDC held a retreat offsite at the Beach Lake Inn on 9/29/2001. A six-person panel was brought in in of people involved in the RMP development, including Shepstone, the first UDC Chairperson Phil Fitzpatrick (Westfall Township), former Tusten Town Supervisor Rick Lander, consultant Chuck Hoffman, Roger Fickes from PA, and Mike Gordon, NPS retiree. At that retreat, they determined the original RMP was still working and meeting its intention, therefore it did not require any amendments. The 2008-2012 plan included a workshop at the UDC office on 8/11/2007, with Alan Sorensen facilitating and overseeing a weighted voting exercise. We did the same process for the 2013-2017 plan, hiring Sorensen for a 6/23/2021 workshop for a \$250 fee again. The plan's time period was amended in 2016-2020 due to NPS funding policy changes. That plan was written internally by staff with the board's approval.

For the 2021-2025 plan the UDC went all out, starting in March of 2020, issuing a RFP for strategic planning services. We opted to hire someone to write the plan for the UDC. The retreat was scheduled for

5/30/2020 and we set up a Steering Committee to work with the facilitator. The UDC chose Buck Moorhead, a graduate of Pace University Land Use Leadership Academy, for \$3,800. Since COVID hit in the spring of 2020, we weren't able to hold the workshop on the scheduled date. They ended up having a full-day retreat on 10/3/2020 at the Narrowsburg Union that included lunch with 30 participants to develop the plan after NPS extended the due date. Ramie said she can send out the current Five-Year Plan that was approved on 1/7/2021 for review.

G. Dudko asked Richardson what he thought the best method was, since he's been a part of the UDC the longest. Richardson said, in his opinion, it worked best to have an independent facilitator look at the plan. In the end, it's still up to us to make any final decisions. Rodgers asked if the facilitator will go back to previous plans to see what has been accomplished and what hasn't? Richardson said it depends on who we get; some in the past had been involved with the UDC. Rodgers asked if Tom Shepstone is still available? Ramie said we also talked about asking Chuck Hoffman to facilitate, but he currently lives in Florida and the travel and lodging costs would be too much. Robinson said a facilitator speeds up the process. G. Dudko asked if anyone had any suggestions on facilitators? Ideas were provided. Ramie said we should set a fee; we aren't asking them to write the plan this time, just facilitate. We should also pick a date so she can say in the request when the workshop would be. Engelhardt suggested sending a poll of dates and times via email.

For the Cooperative Agreement, Robinson recommended anything related to stipulated compensation to the UDC from NPC be omitted at this time. Being a 5-year agreement, we are in a spot where being frozen in our payment would result in dysfunction by the end of the plan. The funding component needs to be thoroughly thought through and negotiated. Michael Crane's report was accurate on funding. Maybe this should be a discussion had at the Operations Committee meeting. We could talk to our attorney too. Marshall said an amount needs to be stated in the Cooperative Agreement. Robinson said okay, then this is the time to cope with the issue. Martin asked if this is due by Jan. 1st? Marshall said it would be effective as of Jan. 1st.

Ramie will send a poll via email with preferred date preferences for the Five-Year Plan workshop.

- c. **Distribution of Council and Committee Meeting Minutes to Towns/Townships:** This topic is something Henry had suggested at the last Operations Committee meeting; to send all UDC meeting and committee meeting minutes to Town/Township Supervisors. Rajs said she provides the minutes to her town when requested. Members should be responsible for their own town or township. Richardson asked if there is an archive of the minutes on the UDC website? Driscoll said yes. Richardson agreed with Rajs; if the minutes are sent to the town, they will ignore them. He gives an oral and written summary at each town meeting. Robinson suggested sending out an alert that the meeting minutes are available. G. Dudko said Henry felt strongly about having the minutes sent. Rodgers said we could request who should receive the minutes. Driscoll said she is developing the new monthly e-newsletter; she can add a direct link to minutes on that email and send that to the town/township Supervisors, secretaries, and clerks. Everyone agreed that is a good idea.
- d. **Other:** None.

Old Business:

- a. **9/30 Meeting with American Rivers Mid-Atlantic Regional Director Adam Schellhammer:** Ramie said a meeting on 9/30 with American Rivers Mid-Atlantic Regional Director Adam Schellhammer was held at the UDC office. The meeting was set up by Chuck Hoffman, a previous staff member at American Rivers and a consultant for the UDC when the RMP was being developed. Hoffman thought American Rivers could be helpful providing strategies or advocacy for the UDC. Schellhammer happened to be in the area on the 30th to be filmed for a program CBS News is doing on the Delaware River that will air in April 2025. He suggested to CBS that they should speak to the UDC. They weren't able to schedule it that day, but Schellhammer plans to connect them via email. Ramie commented that Schellhammer seemed very sincere about helping the UDC. Dexter, Henry, Martin, Marshall, Engelhardt, and she participated in person, with Robinson and Roeder participating via Zoom. They talked about the history of the UDC, our responsibilities, and where we stand now. They discussed Michael Crane's report and projections.

Schellhammer listened intently. He's been in the Regional Director position for a year, so he's still getting to know what they are capable of. He plans to get us in touch with the NY staff member at American Rivers and their River Protection staff. In February, they go to Washington to lobby and plan to add our cause to the list. We were invited to join, but of course know we cannot lobby. American Rivers is a 501(c)3 but has also formed a 501(c)4 that frees up some of the lobbying prohibitions. Schellhammer reached out to Ramie on 10/2 to thank the UDC for hosting him. Richardson asked if American Rivers has dual designation? Engelhardt said no, they established a second organization under the 501(c)4 that they work closely with. Rodgers asked if American Rivers is still based out of Virginia? Engelhardt said Schellhammer noted they are all remote now. They had been were focusing on rivers in the west, but now have moved to rivers in our area. There are about 100 employees total at American Rivers. Robinson said Schellhammer was a good listener and seemed sincere. It depends on his connections. Dexter said Schellhammer mentioned talking about our meeting with his supervisor. Marshall agreed that Schellhammer was a good listener; he seemed like he genuinely wanted to advocate for the UDC. Martin said during the meeting they discussed that the landscape could completely change with a lot of uncertainty over the upcoming election and federal funding. Robinson said the UDC is an Act of Congress. We can't go anywhere.

b. **Other:** None.

Public Comment: None.

Adjournment: A motion by Robinson seconded by Case to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m. carried.

Minutes prepared by Stephanie Driscoll, 10/10/2024