

UPPER DELAWARE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
December 6, 2018

The Upper Delaware Council held its monthly meeting on Thursday December 6, 2018 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Aaron Robinson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance and roll called followed.

In attendance: Town of Hancock-Fred Peckham, Town of Fremont-Jim Greier, Town of Delaware-Harold G. Roeder, Jr., Town of Cocheton-Larry Richardson, Town of Tusten- Susan Sullivan, Town of Lumberland- Nadia Rajs, Town of Deerpark- David Dean, Damascus Township-Jeff Dexter, Berlin Township- Alan Henry, Lackawaxen Township- Doug Case, Westfall Township-Michael Barth, Shohola Township- Aaron Robinson, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania -Tim Dugan, State of New York-Bill Rudge, National Park Service- Kristina Heister. Staff in attendance: UDC Executive Director- Laurie Ramie, Secretary- Ashley Hall-Bagdonas. Absent: Town of Highland-Kaitlin Haas, Delaware River Basin Commission-Steve Tambini, UDC Resource Specialist-Pete Golod. Media- Peter Becker. Guests: Roger Saumure-Shohola Township, Ginny Dudko- Town of Deerpark, Evan Padua- Town of Tusten, Cheryl Korotky.

Presentation by Tim Dugan, District Forester, PA DCNR Bureau of Forestry: “Delaware State Forest Resource Management Plan 5-10 Year Update”: Robinson introduced Dugan, the District Forester for the Delaware State Forest at Pennsylvania DCNR Bureau of Forestry, who shared a power point presentation. In the calendar year 2018, the Commonwealth went into a planning process for local forest districts. About a month ago Dugan’s district held a public meeting where they presented the plan. It’s available online. There is still an open opportunity to comment. One issue DCNR faces in the current age of technology and instant gratification is that when plans are rolled out in a 5-10 year timeline, they often get a decreased amount of input from the community and stakeholders. Dugan believes this is because there is an expectation of a relatively instant response, when an individual has an issue. DCNR is going through a change in their operational function. They are trying to incorporate a better ability to make appendices, shorten the timelines and abbreviate plans. DCNR presents these as an opportunity for the public and stakeholders to give their input and show their concerns because “these are the people’s forests, not just the Bureau of Forestry’s forests”. In 1895 the full-time Forestry Commission office was established to deal with the state forest problems. On behalf of the state the commission was ordered to acquire land that was suitable for growing forests, protect the headwaters for streams, to ensure wood supply, and demonstrate the benefits of forestry to the public. Originally DCNR Bureau of Forestry was called the Department of Forests and Waters because of the direct correlation between protecting forest land and its relation to clean waters and clean streams. The commission ordered the office to organize a fire prevention protection system to enforce laws and educate people regarding careless use of fire and detecting wildfires as they occur to minimize damage. In the late 1800s and early 1900s wildfires were rampant across much of the Commonwealth; controlling them was a big concern to the government and public. Another edict was to assist the wood industry and forest landowners in growing and utilizing materials from state forests. Through that they would continuously gather and distribute information regarding the forest situation with a lot of reporting and analysis. Lastly, a goal was to propose solutions to the tax drain occurring on forest lands where private owners were able to cut and abandon forests. Many of the forest lands across the Commonwealth were commercially acquired. A business would come in, clear it, and because the tax burden was so minimal they simply abandoned the land. The Forestry Commission came into place and started to acquire a lot of those lands and bring them back to the tax rolls. Current day it’s called Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILT). The Commonwealth pays the County, the School District and the Municipality a share of taxes on each acre of land the Bureau of Forestry owns (2.2 million acres in total). The PILT payment for Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry land right now is \$6.00 per acre, equally split, \$2.00 to the county, \$2.00 to the school district, and \$2.00 to the township. Even though they are public lands DCNR is still making an effort to support the local tax base. It’s not the same tax rate as privately held lands, but the demands on the community, school districts, and counties are not the same. This was the beginning of State Forest Management with the Department of Forestry being created in 1895. Looking across the Commonwealth, Pennsylvania is divided into 20 forest districts. The Delaware Forest District, which encompasses all of Pike and Monroe Counties, has approximately 645,000 acres of forest land (public and private). Of that approximately 85,000 acres are State Forest

lands. There are responsibilities and duties on public and private land throughout. The Delaware State Forest is the 85,000 of acres State Forest within the Delaware Forest District. There are 2.2 million acres of State Forest land across 49 of Pennsylvania's counties. State Forest land is managed by the Bureau of Forestry; this is different from other public lands such as State Game Lands, State Parks, Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and some others which are managed by their corresponding agency under their own mission and goals. DCNR's legal authority comes from the Pennsylvania Constitution and Legislature through certain acts such as the Conservation and Natural Resources Act, and through DCNR's strategic plan written in 1995 which is known as Penn's Woods. Penn's Woods lays broad, long term guidance for DCNR's mission on both public and private land in Pennsylvania. In 2019 DCNR will begin revising their strategic plan. Each local forest district has their own resource management plan that focuses on district-level priorities. In addition to that, DCNR has appendices in its plan such as Public Information Plan, Communications Plan, Interpretive Plan and Recreation Plans. Dugan believes one of the best tools DCNR has is the Annual District Activity Plan. They tried to make it brief, emailed it out and posted it on their website, trying to make a correlation to how people are using the forest lands in the district so that it references if there's a road project, a timber sale, a deer fence built or torn down, prescribed fire activities; any activities that the average user would be interested in. It's a short document that is easy to update and is also passed along to legislators, so if their constituents have questions they can find an answer before having to call someone else. In DCNR's Penn's Woods strategic plan it lays out their Mission Statement: "To ensure the long-term health, viability and productivity of the commonwealth's forests and to conserve native wild plants." It also sets forth state policies for state forest management including managing state forests under sound ecosystem management, retaining wild character, and maintaining biodiversity, all while providing the other attributes that come from that such as pure water, low density recreation, high quality timber, and mineral resources. In this version of the district management plan, they have adjusted to a unit called landscape management units. Across the Commonwealth they delineated 191 landscape management units (LMU) and nine of those units are found in the Delaware Forest District. The purpose of the unit is to divide state forest land in a consistent way for planning purposes based on environmental factors. DCNR delineates the factors using land form and ecological features to determine their boundaries. Then they serve as a fundamental plan unit for implementing ecosystem management at a landscape scale. They take a block of land that has similar characteristics, typically bound by smaller watersheds, maybe some topography or geology features in that area and lump them together. The LMUs also include private lands as the goal of the Bureau of Forestry is to be a source of information and education and guidance to private land owners. DCNR doesn't have any authority to tell private landowners how to manage their forest however, in DCNR's management, if they have a 6,000-acre tract of land DCNR is going take into consideration what the private landowners within that LMU are doing. If there are already a lot of clear-cuts with early succession habitat (young forest) or if it's all old forest in the rest of that private land they are going to try to balance the matrix, balance the age classes so there is a mixture of old forest and young forest. If they don't see any open grass lands in private or state lands they may try to incorporate larger log landings after a timber sale to put in warm season grass to increase a little bit of meadow habitat in an area. The concept is DCNR manages this piece of State forest land but the LMU looks at the whole so that may guide and direct, to balance out that specific landscape. At the same time in Pike County and Monroe County there are a lot of large landowners. Among them are hunting and fishing clubs. DCNR comes to the table with them to see what their tactics are and balance it out for the benefit of all the species. Dugan provided a slide of DCNR's nine units. They range in size from 21,000 to 74,000 acres in size and the District Management Plan is built upon these management units. The purpose of the District Plan is fairly common sense; it is to guide DCNR's staff, provide consistent goals for the agency and the district and to communicate the Bureau's goals and the district goals and objectives to DCNR's stakeholders. The plan is broken down into sections: 1. Sustainably manage and conserve natural resources; 2. Identify and conserve, and enhance the diversity of habitats of plant species in the communities. This is important across the Commonwealth but Dugan believes is particularly so in the Poconos. Dugan showed a picture of a Black and Red Spruce Bog with tamarack, and pitcher plant flowers, which is a carnivorous plant. It is a floating bog mat that has been forming since the last ice age retreated, about 13,000 years ago. It's a glacial bog and lake with a beautiful ecosystem. The Poconos have a real unique set of relic habitats with some rare, threatened and endangered species, more so in plants and macroinvertebrates. DCNR takes a lot of pride in conserving and protecting special plant species and their communities. 3. DCNR provides low density recreational opportunities in areas while protecting valuable natural resources. A major difference between State Forest and State Park is the difference of recreational use. The State Park system follows the ethic of John Muir, much like the National Park Service. In the State Park system there are more organized condensed high density recreational activity with amenities available close by. Whereas, the Bureau of Forestry follows the Gifford Pinchot

ethic, much like the U.S. Forest Service which provides a much more wild experience with dispersed recreation and natural resource extraction from the forest, ensuring it is there for current and future generations. DCNR's mantra is often low density, dispersed recreation. 4. Protecting water quality. Going back to their roots and original Forestry Commission in the Poconos and the Delaware Watershed they have been making an investment into water quality around infrastructure, for improvements now that are going to last. DCNR does that through acquisitions, habitat improvements and best management practices on all operations. 5. Manage the State Forest using sustainable timber management to provide wood products for the economy and set the example for private forest landowners. DCNR's state forest system is green certified. This year they just began a dual certificate, so all wood products that are cut/produced from state forest land are Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) certified. Those are two different international third parties. DCNR hires auditors that come in every year, they take a random sampling, go through DCNR's books in their offices in Harrisburg, and, then they go into the field to make sure they are living to a higher degree of sustainable forest management. The less chemicals used will be a higher threshold for water quality improvement. Dugan said they take those examples that they put in place in the state land and transfer that as an opportunity to private landowners. 70% of the forest land in Pennsylvania is owned by private landowners. They take this opportunity to use their working forest to show private landowners different ways to sustainably manage their forest.

Dean asked if Pennsylvania has a 480- A program that they have in New York State regarding tax reduction. Dugan said yes, it's called "Clean and Green" or "Act 319", 10 acres or more, you can either get forest reserve or agriculture reserve. The county establishes how much the tax reduction is going to be. Dugan reiterated that is why the Bureau's Service Foresters try to educate landowners of those opportunities to ensure forest land stays forest land. Greier asked if he heard correctly that 70% of the State forest land is owned by private landowners. Dugan replied 70% of the forest land in Pennsylvania is private forest lands. 58% of Pennsylvania is forested, of that 58%, 70% of it is private landowners. Estimates range from 550,000 to 750,000 landowners with five acres or more.

Continuing with the plan sections Dugan read 6. To protect life, property and natural resources from wildfire, having provided for public and firefighter safety first. Dugan provided a slide of a fire in the Upper Delaware corridor. It is a constitutional delegated duty that it is their job to go on any lands in the Commonwealth to suppress wildfire. Peckham said the railroads used to create a lot of fires in the past with grease and other things spattering off onto the loose leaf brush. Dugan said yes, they didn't have spark arrestors on the engines and also often started fires when grinding the rails (a maintenance activity). He said you still see a fair amount of railroad fires, mainly from rail grinding. He talked about the fire towers along the river valley going back to the 1940s, 50s & 60s that are no longer in use because of technology and management. Dugan showed a slide of an airdrop on a fire in Rosa's Switch in Pond Eddy, PA. The terrain coming toward them was very steep and an expansive area with no roads, no trails. It's private land, game lands and State forests. The wind was coming up from the river heading up. They were nervous it was going to carry the fire across the railroad. Another priority goal is to report and proactively search for insect disease and invasive plant issues to maximize forest health. This is a big topic when Dugan and DCNR go to speak, people want to know what is going to kill their tree, what is the next threat. Dugan provided a slide showing a tree with an injection insecticide system for Ash treatment to prevent Emerald Ash Borer from killing these trees. Across the district they have 200 trees that they have been treating every other year. Peckham asked what DCNR hopes to do by injecting the trees. Dugan said they are trying to preserve a valuable seed source for the future. Rudge asked were they trees that already had some natural resistance? Dugan said not necessarily because they picked the trees before the first wave of EAB came through; they picked overall healthy, thriving trees. He also showed a picture of a contract crew coming through a blueberry wetland bog near Lily Pond area in Westfall Township. Barth said the boy scouts used to help with clear-cuts for the past 25 years. Dugan said they were called browse cuttings, Scouts helped, hunting clubs helped, usually in their area of concern. All volunteers for the Commonwealth and DCNR have to sign a workers' compensation form. Dugan said if they don't have volunteers doing the cuts they are paying contract groups to do that work. DCNR was down in staffing temporarily but it is back now, Dugan told the staff over the winter he would like them to look over the volunteer projects because there are a lot of requests.

Richardson said last year Dugan mentioned a pond reclamation project and wanted to know the status of that. Dugan said the project has not started yet. It's Peck's Pond, a 400-acre pond/lake with a couple hundred-acre wetland associated. It is still drained, the project has progressed, there are a 180 recreational cabins around the pond that have been there since 1924. Aquatic vegetation overtook the pond making it very hard to fish, boat and making it

more shallow. The dam project is separate from the pond issues but DCNR is trying to get two birds with one stone. The pond is drawn down. Dec. 13th is when the bids are due for the project. It's a very shallow pond and it had a milfoil species that had come in. It grows exponentially and acts like a layer cake. It was laying down layers of dead organic material faster than it could decompose. Plants thrive off of that and what it did was build up a muck layer on the bottom of the pond, became shallow, choked out a lot. What DCNR is going to do is a balance of natural resource protection and recreational opportunities. They've designated 100 acres of the pond to be considered as a weed management zone where they will take an active role in using herbicides. Herbicides are the only tool that they have other than drawdowns to regulate plant growth. By U.S. Army Corps of Engineers standards, they are not allowed to disturb the bottom of the pond because originally it was a peat bog with a dam built over in 1894 and 1906. Richardson asked is there an amount of time you need to have it dry out. Dugan said their assessment was looking for 18 months, so you get one winter cycle, one spring and one summer cycle. From Dugan's observations it worked. They were trying to eliminate as much of the seedbank in the pond muck over the draw down. What happened was the water level fluctuated the first year. It happened every year but what they saw was the first year the water level came up, it got warm, they saw germination of all the milfoil plants and the pond receded as the pond dried out and they all died. Then there would be a rain event, the pond level would come up, it would warm up, they would germinate, and the level went back down. It did a good job of knocking that weed back.

Approval of November 1st Meeting Minutes: A motion by Case, seconded by Greier, to approve the November 1st, 2018 meeting minutes was carried.

Public Comment on the Agenda: None

Committee Reports: Committee reports were provided based on the meeting minutes. They were: Nov. 20th Water Use/Resource Management by Peckham; Nov. 27th Project Review by Richardson, and Nov. 27th Operations by Robinson.

Status Reports

Delaware River Basin Commission: The hydrologic report was handed out.

NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation: Rudge announced that DEC Commissioner Basil Seggos will be stepping down early next year.

PA Dept. of Conservation & Natural Resources: Dugan provided an update on a Wayne County land acquisition he spoke about previously at a meeting. The property has about 20 acres of land and about 1,600 feet of riverfront in Manchester Township in Wayne County, Pennsylvania is being donated to the Bureau of Forestry and will be part of the Pinchot Forest District. Currently owner Mr. Jeff Brown intends to donate the property to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania via the Bureau of Forestry. Access is limited. There are no reservations on the resource rights. The closing should have been in October. Dugan's counterpart said he hasn't received final word yet, but he expects to get the paperwork soon confirming that it went through. For future use, there are no hard and fast plans for it. The land is currently open field and forest lands extending to the edge of the river; there is river buffer and riparian buffer habitat. The ground is steep in places with limited access. Primary use of the property will be outdoor recreation, public access to the river and as an interpretive site for forestry, environmental and river ecology, with education demonstration programs. Henry asked if this would be a place where people could hunt. Dugan answered yes, as long as they are abiding by Pennsylvania Game Commission laws. Dugan had provided a handout last meeting on Chronic Wasting Disease and people had follow-up questions. Dugan provided additional information including what to do to test a deer if you harvest one inside or outside of a deer management area. NYDEC and Pennsylvania Game Commission have additional information on their websites. Lastly, Dugan handed out the 2019 version of the Smokey Bear pocket calendars.

National Park Service-Upper Delaware: Heister said there is a Continuing Resolution on the President's desk that will take UDC and NPS through December 21st; they feel confident that he will sign it. NPS has three major retirements occurring this month. Karen Henry, the long-term Administrative Officer of 40 years, will be retiring on Jan. 3rd. NPS Information Technology Specialist, JoAnne Merritt, who has been there 35 years, is retiring on Dec.

31st and NPS Chief Ranger Larry Neal is retiring on Dec. 31st. Heister said she found out two days ago about Neal's retirement. He has been there for 27 years. The Law Enforcement Division will be in a bit of flux as they are in the middle of seasonal hiring now and permanent hiring will not happen until seasonal hiring is complete. Heister said she would not anticipate seeing some of those positions being listed until mid to late summer. Sullivan asked if Heister knew who the Acting-Chief Ranger would be replacing Neal. Heister said they met today with the three staff. They have a lot of problems recruiting and retaining law enforcement. That's because two of their positions are subject to furlough. Also it is not necessarily an attractive job since 95% of the land is in private ownership and they are not doing most of the things that a traditional law enforcement ranger would be doing if they had a land base. There are no speed enforcement or hunting patrols for example. NPS made the decision today to convert their one furloughed person to full time. Heister said they are hoping that will help with recruitment and retention. NPS may have two seasonal employees instead of one but not until they know who is in the permanent positions.

UDC Executive Director's Report: Ramie handed out a revised budget that went to NPS Contracting Officer Patrick Reidy in Philadelphia. There's a column for the full \$300,000 budget and one that breaks down the 18.63% share. It was the third draft package that Ramie had submitted first for the full funding, then UDC was told to develop documents for the smaller share of 18.63%, then there were corrections requested based on the preliminary review. That was submitted on November 30th. It also included a whole separate budget narrative report just for the smaller portion, a new annual work plan and the financial forms known as the SF-424 series. Ramie shared that today midmorning, Reidy did provide Modification #10 to UDC's Cooperative Agreement. That's the instrument that's needed in order to modify UDC's agreement by adding funds. Ramie said that basically means he has signed off on the latest budget submission that UDC provided. Ramie subsequently asked what sort of timeframe can we expect before the money is deposited in to UDC's online account. Reidy had not gotten back to Ramie by the end of the day. Since it's a wire transfer so it should be fairly instantaneous when it does happen. The deposit will be \$55,890 from which the UDC will be able to reimburse ourselves for the funds that we've outlaid since Oct. 1st, which amounted to a little over \$31,700 for UDC's Oct. and Nov. expenditures. Then once Dec. 21st rolls around with this latest C.R., our best situation would be if a full federal budget passes and UDC be entitled to receive the balance of the \$300,000. On Tuesday of this week, Ramie received a call from Washington, D.C. and it was from Congressman Faso's office. His senior legislative assistant, Nick Tortorici, had been asked by the congressman to reach out to UDC to ask how we are doing with FY 19 funding. Ramie thought that was terrific that they take the initiative to check in with a group like UDC and told Tortorici what UDC's status was as of that day, what UDC had submitted and what was required of us for compliance with the Continuing Resolution. Tortorici said that Congressman Faso had always considered the UDC's funding to be among his top priorities within this district and now that he's wrapping up loose ends before he leaves office, he wanted to make sure that UDC had any help that we needed. Ramie thanked him for that consideration as well as all the others over his single term. Ramie said we cannot downplay the assistance that Congressman Faso provided to this organization in our times of need and she is happy that UDC made the decision to give him the Advocacy Award at the last banquet. Ramie said she can only hope that that the new federal representatives we have coming in with Antonio Delgado for New York and Matt Cartwright for Pennsylvania will be as responsive. She is putting together introductory letters and will also request meetings so that UDC can orient them to who UDC is, what UDC does and the whole Upper Delaware story. Ramie referenced the next handout which was another initiative Congressman Faso had taken on in advocating for the development of an action plan to address the Barnes landfill leachate situation after contacting Commissioner Seggos at DEC. His latest effort is a letter dated Nov. 26th to the New York State Department of Health seeking information on the testing of the residential wells in the area. Ramie hopes that might result in some information coming forward. Faso largely relied on the UDC's correspondence with various agencies as the basis for his letter. Ramie said that New York State Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther has also been on the case following the Oct. 18th meeting that took place between Sullivan County and the DEC officials. Rajs said Gunther's office called her and said there will be a letter coming out toward the middle of December on the status of the DOH testing of the wells. Ramie provided members with extensive notes she had prepared following the Dec. 4th meeting at the UDC office on the topic of Federal Funding for River-Related Law Enforcement. Ramie was very pleased with the turnout with 25 people participating, mainly the municipalities that have police departments or constable forces. Ramie shared, "It was a very good exchange of information among everybody to show just how complicated that program is. It truly is a tricky situation. If you were there and participated in a meeting, you know this. I thought that Kris Heister's presentation was very on point." Larry Neal was there to talk about his expertise in having administered this program. Getting the direct communication from the towns, townships and others that have been using these

funds was very valuable. Suggestions for follow ups and recommendations are included in the handout of what the group collectively thought about and different angles to approach. One option is using the \$58,000 that's allocated for this program to hire seasonal rangers and augment the forces of local law enforcement. Ramie said if people are under the impression that the administrative aspect of having this funding is too onerous for the local municipalities, really it has to be decided individually if they choose to participate. The federal contracting rules still apply no matter who's administering the program because as Heister said, it stems from where the funding originated. It had been discussed about having the UDC take over the administration of that program as grants the way they do for UDC's Technical Assistance Program, but it would not be any less complicated. Ramie relayed this type of facilitation is exactly the role that the UDC is supposed to be playing in this river valley, to bring all the parties together in one room to try to hash it out and come up with a game plan. Ramie would like to refer this to Operations Committee, which has been discussing this topic. Henry said the concern he heard from a lot of folks was even though it works well they don't get compensated until the end of the summer. That was an issue that could potentially be addressed. That needs a follow-up. Robinson said another point that was brought to light at this meeting was that the cost to administer the program is reimbursable. Ramie said the Undersheriff said that can be part of the proposal, yes. Heister said typically they have put in hours for the chief constable, who's not out there on patrol, and that's how they've obtained the funds for the administration. Heister said she did speak with Councilwoman Jill Padua from the Town of Tusten and she thinks that is one of the best probabilities for being able to use those funds since they are considering starting up a constabulary. Sullivan talked about the timing and reliability of the reimbursement. Towns are budgeting and want to know if they make a commitment to the program they will be reimbursed, the rules won't change in the middle, the funds won't get held back. Ramie asked the council to review the meeting notes and if anyone has any thoughts to share on it, UDC will be discussing it at the Dec. 18th Operations meeting. Voting is underway through January 4th for the Pennsylvania 2019 River of the Year. Ramie has sent an email on this. There is a copy of the press release in meeting packets from PA DCNR. The Pennsylvania Organization of Watersheds and Rivers is administering that program. This is a ninth annual popularity contest, and the press release describes what rewards this designation brings. The Appalachian Mountain Club nominated the Delaware River and would receive the \$10,000 grant. It also comes with a sojourn, which the Delaware River already has, but it would help with the funding and all sorts of publicity. There are four waterways in Pennsylvania that are nominated. In the first week they had over 7,300 online votes cast and as of this morning when Ramie looked at the website, the Delaware River was in second place. The Clarion River had the lead, with 52% percent of the votes. The Delaware River had 22.4%, the Conodoguinet Creek was at 15.6% and Lackawanna River had 10.1%. Ramie encouraged all to vote for the Delaware River by visiting www.pariveroftheyear.org. Ramie said the Delaware River Sojourn Steering Committee is interested in this because it will be the 25th anniversary of the Sojourn. Hall-Bagdonas prepared a list of 2019 meeting dates for UDC full council and the three committees that was in the meeting packet and these dates are posted on the website. Ramie referred all to the December calendar of meetings, deadlines and activities that was provided. On Dec. 14th, the NYCDEP asked for permission to use the UDC conference room as they are updating the public on the status of the Cannonsville Hydroelectric Project. Ramie will forward the DEP's news release with additional information to all once she receives it. The meeting is at 12:30 p.m. no reservations necessary. Ramie wanted to remind everyone again that all three committees meet on the same night this month, which is the third Tuesday, Dec. 18th. The calendar lists the order of the three meetings, which are meant to be abbreviated. UDC has assigned a half hour to each. Ramie asked for the Council to read the rest of the calendar at their leisure. Rajsiz wished Ramie a Happy Birthday from Dec. 2nd. Henry also wanted to mention the hard work Ramie did revising the budget and there was a round of applause.

New Business

Nominating Committee Report: Henry relayed that nominated for Chairperson will be Harold G. Roeder, Jr., Town of Delaware; Vice-chair will be Jeff Dexter, Damascus Township and for Secretary/Treasurer, it's Al Henry, Berlin Township. Ramie said UDC will conduct a ballot vote at the January meeting based on those nominations and other nominations can be taken from the floor at that time.

UDC Draft Resolution 2018-06: Approving Fiscal Year 2018 Independent Accountants' Review and IRS Form 990 Tax Return for Upper Delaware Council: Ramie noted that Eckersley and Ostrowski needs UDC to offer blessings on the IRS form 990 in particular, so they can finalize and get it back to us. The Operations Committee is aware that Ramie did review that pretty exhaustively and submitted some questions to Dick Eckersley

to clarify a few of those points. Eckersley has not gotten back to Ramie yet, but Ramie suggested since none of them were major and didn't involve any of the figures, that UDC could approve the Draft Resolution conditionally upon receiving answers. A motion by Peckham, seconded by Henry to approve UDC Draft Resolution 2018-06: Approving Fiscal Year 2018 Independent Accountants' Review and IRS Form 990 Tax Return for Upper Delaware Council was carried.

UDC Draft Resolution 2018-07: Enter into a Contract with Eckersley and Ostrowski LLP for the Upper Delaware Council's Fiscal Year 2019 Audit: Ramie provided the UDC Draft Resolution, the engagement for the FY 2019 audit, which being more than a financial review costs more. There's an estimated fee of \$11,500, but she said to be mindful of the verbal offer by Eckersley to donate back \$2,000 donation to the council, so essentially it'll be \$9,500 for the audit. Every third year UDC does a full audit, and the two-years prior it does independent accountant's financial reviews. A motion by Richardson, seconded by Sullivan to approve UDC Draft Resolution 2018-07: Enter into a Contract with Eckersley and Ostrowski LLP for the Upper Delaware Council's Fiscal Year 2019 Audit was carried.

Draft Letter: Town of Delaware Local Law §220-35 E (9): Renewable Energy Systems: Ramie told the council it was brought to her attention by our friends at the park service that this may be premature because UDC has not taken action yet on our solar position paper in order to know where solar falls on the Schedule of Compatible, Incompatible and Conditional Uses, so how do we judge substantial conformance. It may be something that we should take back to the Project Review Committee for further discussion. Richardson asked if UDC approved the original solar law; this is just amended. Heister said no. Without Golod here the correspondence could not be found. Heister believes that the letter that went out, it was still up in the air, and UDC was working on the position paper and until that time couldn't come to a conclusion stating because the first step of Substantial Conformance Review is to determine whether it falls on the use table. Heister said she doesn't think a delay is a horrendous thing, until UDC/NPS can talk to Golod and see what that last correspondence was. She knows NPS did not approve it. Ramie said the town approved the amendment in October so they weren't waiting for UDC. A motion to table Draft Letter: Town of Delaware Local Law §220-35 E (9): Renewable Energy Systems and refer it back to Project Review by Richardson, seconded by Rajs, motion was carried.

Other: Robinson addressed the Council: "As chair this year I had the opportunity to view the UDC from a much different vantage point. This year in particular was a year of nonstop challenges. The funding crisis and the loss of a staff member forced to the surface many critical issues. UDC concurrently was under the stress of an unexpected Federal audit. Issues were brought up regarding how to improve UDC's working relationship with its partners. Most importantly how UDC can better serve our member municipalities. The UDC has to deal with the most complex issues in a way that both fulfills the RMP and serves its members. In the interest of making the council a more efficient and effective organization I'd like to suggest that UDC establish an executive-advisory committee: to assure the continuity of issues from one year to the next; to help narrow down and prioritize discussed topics; to act as a think tank, solve difficult problems when they arise; to provide a forum for discussion about things of importance; a place to vet strategies before putting them in front of the full council. This committee would work very closely with UDC Executive Director to achieve these objective. I would suggest that it consist of the current year chairperson, the 3 committee chairpersons and the prior year Council chair. After this year's financial turmoil, it is obvious that our three top priorities are funding from NYS, funding from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and Federal Funding. UDC now sees how boxed in and limited we are being reliant on only Federal funding. UDC must immediately pursue getting the State revenue that was agreed to when the RMP was executed. I would also like the organization to find ways to better assist its members in areas other than zoning. Although our Towns are unique there are many commonalities. And my sense is that we can provide many services once UDC gets our funding in order. As chair I had the opportunity to work closely with our staff. We are so fortunate to have a talented team that is enthusiastic and eager to do whatever is necessary to fulfill the UDC's mission. I want to thank Laurie for her genuine dedication to UDC and her desire to keep it moving forward in a positive direction. I want to thank Pete for his willingness and desire to seek out additional training to enhance his skills as they relate to project reviews. I want to thank Ashley for taking on our secretarial position with enthusiasm and skill. I want to thank Tim and Bill for their monthly contributions and reports. I especially want to thank Kris. It's been a turbulent year between the UDC and NPS. I feel that we are closing out this year with a much better relationship than we began. I

must say I learned a lot this year. I learned about the strengths and weaknesses of the RMP. I learned a lot about the roles each partner plays in this cooperative effort. Beyond all the detailed gobbledygook I learned that we all have a common goal of preserving this majestic Upper Delaware. Although we may differ in the approach we seek to maintain this goal without compromise. I want to thank all of the members. It's a big effort to come out to all of these meetings and read all of the correspondence and participate. I want to thank everyone for your confidence and support. It was an honor to serve as this year's chairman." A round of applause followed. Ramie said the proposal for the formation of an Executive Advisory Committee will be referred to the Operations Committee.

Public Comment: None

Adjournment: A motion by Roeder, seconded by Greier, to adjourn the meeting at 8:47 p.m. was carried.

Minutes prepared by Ashley Hall-Bagdonas 12-18-18