

WATER USE/RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMM. MEETING MINUTES
May 17, 2022

Committee Members Present: Ginny Dudko, Andy Boyar, Al Henry, Evan Padua, Fred Peckham
(Zoom)
Committee Members Absent: Pat Jeffer
Staff: Laurie Ramie, Kerry Engelhardt
NPS Partner: Don Hamilton (Zoom)
Guests: Bill Dudko- Deerpark Alternate

The UDC's Water Use/Resource Management Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, May 17th, 2022. Chairperson Dudko called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Approval of April 19th, 2022 Meeting Minutes (0:15 time on recorded meeting): A motion by Boyar, seconded by Henry approving the April 19th, 2022 meeting minutes carried.

Old Business

Upper Delaware Litter Sweep Final Report (0:30): Hall-Bagdonas provided a report to Ramie as she was unable to attend the meeting due to illness. Ramie provided at the full council meeting a press release recognizing the 2022 Litter Leaders. Hall-Bagdonas thanked her for her press releases during the Litter Sweep and also the local papers' coverage. Social media will continue with posting pictures and encouraging volunteering, along with education provided by UDC's partners. Litter Leaders were helpful in returning their supplies in a thoughtful fashion so other town/ships could utilize them during the Litter Sweep. She's thankful to all the Litter Leaders that handed the required documents back. We are building great lists for future events with sponsors as well as volunteers. Local artists have reached out interested in designing next year's logo. Hall-Bagdonas thinks it would be useful to consider continuing this volunteer energy with partnered trail cleanups in the fall. She thanked everyone that was involved and supported this event. Boyar said the staff did a wonderful job on the event. Padua said it's important to remember that "Every day is Earth Day" and Sullivan County is holding their Litterpluck and free dumping until the end of June. The committee will consider the value of keeping the current Litter Sweep logo as a consistent UDC branded image or perhaps holding a contest to develop a new logo next year. The committee will also explore Hall-Bagdonas's idea to organize/partner trail clean-ups using UDC supplies and shirts as an incentive to participate this fall.

4/25 Upper Delaware Scenic Byway Minutes (4:58): Ramie provided the 4/25 Upper Delaware Scenic Byway (UDSB) Minutes for members' review. The 4//25 UDSB meeting was the annual election of officers, and we have included a news release about who was elected, and it's a new chairperson who's not only new to the UDSB, but relatively new to the area. You can read a little more about Richard H. Lowe III's background and the organizations that he has associated himself with thus far. Day-to-day, his job is director of Regional and Economic Development for Hancock Partners. Ramie said he seems to have experience in fundraising, which is always an important asset to have for any nonprofit group and they are happy to have him.

Ramie also shared that this weekend is The Festival of the Founding Fish which was discussed at the full Council meeting. You can go to festivalofthefoundingfish.com for the full itinerary of events that feature a mixture of free local community events as well as ticketed events. Padua said the author of "The Founding Fish" John McPhee, is a part-time local resident. They were out fishing with him today and struggled all day on the river. The only person to catch a Shad was 91-year-old McPhee on a flyrod! Boyar commented that it would be an honor to fish with McPhee.

Ramie also displayed the UDSB grants poster that shows the 4 different programs that are competitive to seek funding. The grants are available for the pollinator program, culture and history, vista enhancement, and signage. They were produced as laminated copies or regular poster board so they could be placed in municipal buildings and public gathering locations along the byway to inform people that these funds are available.

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4/27 D&H Transportation Heritage Council Meeting Minutes (10:05): Ramie provided a copy of the quarterly D&H Transportation Heritage Council meeting minutes from 4/27. The group met at the D&H Canal Historical Society's Museum and the newly opened facility Mid-Hudson Visitor Center in High Falls, NY. Ramie said that group had been working for 10 years on the historic DePuy Tavern building and raised 1.7 million for the renovation.

The DHTHC has been chartered through the New York State Education Department and has its tax identification number. Bill Merchant submitted a 501(c)3 application with a \$275 filing fee as the next step. When that designation is received, there may be a need to reorganize and meet more frequently than four times a year. Filming for the 4th chapter of the DVD series (covering the Port Jervis to Spring Glen area of the canal) has resumed. They are targeting a bus tour from Port Jervis to Spring Glen in November, when the leaves are down.

The 9th Annual Canal Festival will take place on 8/20 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the D&H Canal Park at Lock 31 on Rt. 6 between Hawley and White Mills, PA.

After three years, the National Park Service Upper Delaware is resuming their D&H Canal Days, although it's with half the number of schools they previously hosted. The dates are May 5-6 and June 2-3 at the Roebling Bridge starting at 9:30 a.m. Visitors are welcome.

D&H THC will meet next on 7/27 at the National Park Service Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River's Cowen Farm property.

4/29 NPS Annual Water Safety Partners Report (16:55): Ramie provided a detailed overview of the 4/29 NPS Annual Water Safety Partners Meeting. The NPS PowerPoint is available upon request. Keith Winslow provided these statistics to the group: there have been 74 drownings on the Upper Delaware River since 1980. Circumstances of 5 drownings in the Summer of 2021 were described; four had no PFD, one was not properly worn. They occurred while the male victims were swimming, boating, and wading. They have four Rangers to patrol the 73.4 miles of river this summer, supplemented by National Canoe Safety Patrol (NCSP) volunteers. The region has witnessed increased popularity since COVID but it's a different clientele. "The visitation has gone through the roof and the demographics are changing," Winslow said.

The National Canoe Safety Patrol (NCSP) Report was given by Commodore Larry Palmer and Vice-Commodore Jacqui Wagner. NCSP meets monthly with NPS to talk about how they can help. As a result, they've staggered their patrols to start later in the morning and expand the lengths of patrols. They have 10 new volunteers in 2022 so far. They would like to attract more local people, especially with the high gas prices. The group does extensive advertising and plans to promote NCSP at the same public events that NPS attends. They provide excellent training for a low cost. There is a Dick Rhodes Memorial Fund to defray the cost of equipment. They accept members age 16 and up. NCSP statistics were provided in the meeting minutes.

Ramie will send a letter to the NPS Water Safety Committee inquire about how the Upper Delaware's drowning statistics compare/rank with other federal waterways; clarify the legalities of using inflatable PFDs on the Upper Delaware River; express the committee's opinions about the new safety slogans for signage; and share the UDC's 4/29 Water Safety Partners meeting summary notes.

5/10 Delaware River Sojourn Steering Committee Report (28:28): Engelhardt attended a Zoom meeting on 5/10. The Delaware River Sojourn runs from June 18th to the 25th. The theme is "The river rocks". Friday 5/17 is the cleanup. As of 5/10 there had already been 356 reservations. The cleanup is maxed out at 20 people. The Upper Delaware portions have some of the highest counts so far 50 for Saturday and 58 for Sunday. The t-shirt has been finalized and merch is available on the website <https://delawareriversojourn.com/>. The Upper Delaware submitted its day plans. Day 1 Engelhardt will be participating in paddling from Ten Mile River down to the Lackawaxen Access and Sunday will be a tabling event with UDC and Delaware Highlands Conservancy. Her next committee meeting is 5/31.

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5/11 Delaware River Emergency Table Top Exercise Report (39:26): Ramie attended this meeting virtually. A lot of people were in the room at the Monroe building in Stroudsburg. The day before the meeting they released an ArcGIS map and their goal is to create these maps for EPA Regions I and III of the Delaware River that have all the infrastructure, where equipment is located, where sensitive areas are, every river access and even endangered species, cultural resources, water intakes, and high recreation activities. That was a main objective of this exercise, to get everybody looking at the maps and see what was missing or what needed to be added. They did go through the same scenario Ramie described before of a railroad mishap with a train traveling south on the #2 Railroad Bridge that partially derails into the Delaware River at Sparrowbush, carrying crude oil which also spills. Ten tanker cars derail off the bridge on the shoreline and are partially in the water. Eight cars fall off the tracks and are on their side; two cars are hanging off the bridge into the water at an angle. One railcar exploded and is fully engulfed in flames. Thick black smoke is billowing east towards Sparrowbush. One train car is actively leaking product; there's an oily sheen on the water. Ramie said there was no Sparrowbush or NY representation so the focus was shifted to Portland, PA. They plan to do an onsite full-scale drill in the fall. They would like to set up an information command center with a press conference also.

5/11 Lackawaxen River Cleanup Meeting Report (44:03): Ramie read the report provided by Hall-Bagdonas. Mike Coppala from Keep Hawley Honesdale Beautiful (KHHB), Dan Santoro of Housefly Fishing and Balthasar Harrison of Harrison Signs and Hall-Bagdonas met to discuss the June event on May 11th. You'll find an event poster in the meeting packet. Santoro expects around 50 people for the June event starting at 10 a.m. He would like the Housefly group to focus on Hawley and knows a lot of trouble sites. Harrison and Coppala will be taking kayaks from the CVS lot in Honesdale towards KMART. The Hawley Seascouts and she will focus on some trouble spots in-between. UDC will provide supplies and help with promotion. The Hopping Eagle Brewery will host an afterparty like last year and feature local band Phunk Musket. The event has been shared by Housefly, KHHB & UDC with lots of interaction. We had help from the local municipal authority last year and will be reaching out to them this year in advance for coordination. Ramie shared the event poster with the committee.

Responses to Upper Delaware River Litter Bag Station Concept (45:53): Engelhardt received a response from Keith Winslow in April that said he would discuss it with his management team. She reached back out to him and there was no final conclusion. She understands it's part of the busy season for them right now. She received a response from Paul Faucet from the PA Fish and Boat Commission and he asked for possible locations we had in mind. She suggested starting out with the Lackawaxen River access and the Narrowsburg River Access.

River Access Updates: Highland, Ten Mile River (46:44): Ramie reported regarding Highland River Access, Heather Jacksy said they're trying to rebid it because they came in too high. They are having trouble with that because their contract with the engineering firm ran out and they didn't have the funds to pay for the bid modification. Jacksy said the good news is that they might have additional funding from the State to help meet the funding gap.

Hamilton said now that the Conservation Fund has recently closed on the Ten Mile River property the Solicitor's Office is reviewing the agreement with The Conservation Fund for use of that property, and NPS has asked for a quick turnaround, hopefully by Memorial Day. Boyar asked if there is there any NPS presence there at this time? Hamilton said not at this time.

Hamilton was asked to advise NPS Maintenance about the poor condition of the Highland Access that NPS Upper Delaware co-manages with the NYS DEC due to a build-up of large logs and debris that is rendering it extremely difficult to use.

Other: None.

New Business

"Is New York's Delaware River Public or Private for Anglers?" by Beau Beasley from *FlyFishesman* (58:59): Ramie said just note that when it says editorial that translates to opinion. Peckham said he read the article and Beasley kept referencing navigable waters. It has nothing to do with ownership of the bottom of the river. A

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navigable waterway, whether it's by law or in fact, you can navigate it. You can float down it, no one can stop. You can't block it. Peckham feels Beasley was a little confused when making some points. Discussion continued.

5/20 “Wear Your PFD To Work Day”: For all interested, please participate or help promote 5/20 as “Wear Your Life Jacket at Work” Day and 5/21-27 as National Safe Boating Week.

Delaware River Flow & Storage Report: The 5/16 DRBC Hydrological Conditions Report noted combined storage is at 97.8%.

Other: Ramie was asked to write a letter to New York City DEP Chief of Staff Jennifer Garigliano inquiring about the CFS capacity of diversions from the Cannonsville and Pepacton Reservoirs ahead of the Delaware Aqueduct shutdown for repairs in October and explaining why diversions can't be made to the Rondout Reservoir. She will also extend a formal invitation to Garigliano to return to the UDC on 9/1 or 10/6 to offer a project update for the monthly presentation.

Public Comment: None.

Adjournment: A Motion by Henry seconded by Padua, to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m. was carried.

Minutes prepared by Ashley Hall-Bagdonas 6/2/2022