

Upper Delaware Council
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
Jan. 26, 2010

Committee Members Present: Harold Roeder Jr., Larry Richardson, Jack Niflot, Scott Rando
NPS Partner: S. Schultz
Staff: Douglass, Soete, Coney, Ramie
Guests: D. Keesler, F. Peckham

The Upper Delaware Council's Operations Committee met on Tuesday, Jan. 26, 2010 at the Council office on Bridge Street in Narrowsburg, NY. The meeting came to order at 6:35 p.m. A motion by Richardson seconded by Niflot to approve the Dec. 15, 2009 meeting minutes was carried. There was no public comment on the agenda.

Election of Committee Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for 2010: A motion by Richardson to nominate Roeder as Chairperson and Niflot as Vice-Chairperson of the committee was seconded by Rando. No further nominations were received. Harold Roeder Jr. was voted in as chairperson and Jack Niflot was voted in as vice-chairperson of the Operations Committee for calendar year 2010. Roeder conducted the remainder of the meeting.

PR/Fund Raising Specialist's Report: Ramie noted that the fourth Sunday in April, April 25 this year, is reserved for the Council's annual awards ceremony. The committee concurred with the date. Ramie asked for suggestions as to a venue to hold the ceremony which she received, as well as suggestions for a keynote speaker. She will make the necessary contacts. The UDC's fiscal year 2009 annual report is at the printer's and will be distributed at the Feb. 4 Council meeting as well as posted on the UDC's website.

Ramie reviewed her grants administration tasks and currently there is one active UDC grant from NYS Senator Bonacic progressing. The deadline for this grant's projects is Aug. 31, 2010. She noted that UDC orientation kits are being sent to new representatives/alternates as well as thank you to the outgoing members. Ramie staffed the Council booth at the Narrowsburg EagleFest held Jan. 16. She also participated in the Delaware River Sojourn and Pond Eddy Bridge teleconferences. UDC hosted the January meeting of the D & H Transportation Heritage Council and a planning meeting for the Upper Delaware section of the Delaware River Sojourn. Ramie and Douglass attended the PennDOT Ribbon Cutting Ceremony Jan. 21 of the new Shohola-Barryville Bridge.

Executive Director's Report: Douglass reviewed his report that was handed out. It covered the topics of the annual report, awards ceremony, staff evaluations, TAG program, Delaware River Sojourn, UDC work plans and budget for 2011, family raft trip event, annual audit, and NPS-UDC Cooperative Agreement. Richardson requested that a review of the current health insurance policy be scheduled for the Operations Committee meeting two months prior to its expiration date.

Old Business

Grants Administration Check Signing Procedure: Ramie noted that George J. Fluhr had discussed with the committee and felt that the grants administration procedure for checks should include two official signatures, as is now required for the Council's financial activities. The committee discussed this matter that had been tabled at a previous meeting. A motion by Richardson seconded by Rando to have bank signature cards completed for the checks to allow signature by at least two officials including Ramie (grants administrator), Douglass (executive director) and Roeder (UDC chairperson) was carried.

Health Plan Proposal Exec. Dir. (referred from Council): Richardson noted that the proposal received from the executive director regarding his health insurance coverage was referred to the Personnel Subcommittee from Council. However, there is only one member on that committee at this time as a result of the changes in the members' roster. Therefore, he suggested an executive session at the end of the meeting with the Operations Committee members. The committee concurred.

New Business

Summary of pending bills / financial statements: The committee reviewed the abstract of pending bills. It was explained and an informational handout was provided regarding the newly imposed annual Sullivan County Solid Waste Users Fee of \$300 for 2010. A motion by Richardson seconded by Niflot to approve the bills for payment was carried. The financial statements for period ended 12-31-2009 were provided for review. Also provided was the Council's bank balance that showed if federal operating funds were not received by the end of February, the Council office would most likely have to close its doors around March 1. Coney and Schultz reviewed the status of the funding process and the new changes that are having an impact on the Council. Further details would be provided to the committee once the procedures are finalized.

Proposal for audit/accounting services for FY 2010 from Eckersley and Ostrowski: The auditing services proposal for FY 2010 had been tabled by the committee at its Dec. 15, 2009 meeting. The committee reviewed the proposal. A motion by Richardson seconded by Niflot to recommend that the Council approve the Eckersley and Ostrowski proposal for fiscal year 2010 at the same cost as last year was carried.

Letter from NYS Assemblywoman Gunther: Douglass read aloud a letter the Council received from NYS Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther dated Jan. 19, 2010. The letter was in response to a news article regarding the election of the new UDC officers for 2010. The letter graciously offered her continued support on the issues the Council addresses and that her door is always open to anything the Council might need. The committee was appreciative of the letter.

Outgoing email (listserv) problems: Coney and Soete reviewed with the committee the issues Soete was having with his listserv issued daily on a number of categories. Given the deficit in funds, the committee asked that other sources of distributing the listserv be researched. Rando also offered his assistance. The staff will report back to the committee on this matter.

Status: NPS-UDC Cooperative Agreement Funds for FY 2010: Coney and Schultz reviewed with the committee the hold-up in federal funding to the Council. Schultz explained there had been changes in the procedure at the Regional office in how cooperative agreement funds are leveraged. New reporting forms and monthly requests for advance and reimbursement are being put in place. The Council's work plan process may also have to be changed. There will be training provided this spring on the new procedures. In the meantime, Coney is working with the NPS Regional office to get the new paperwork Region is now requiring completed in order to get the Council's funds for at least the first four months of fiscal year 2010. As has been done in the past, the process of receiving full funding in advance is no longer an acceptable method of payment per the Regional office. Details will be provided to the committee as staff receives them.

NPS Assistant Superintendent Retirement Festivities: Sandy Schultz handed out invitation to the committee for her upcoming retirement party after 37 years with the National Park Service. The RSVP date is Feb. 19.

Schultz mentioned that NPS-Upper Delaware will not be filling her position when she leaves the end of February. She also mentioned that with her retirement there will be no one on staff that has the planning background to review substantial conformance for the non-participating towns of the Council and they might sub-contract that task to the UDC. Schultz noted that the original Upper Delaware legislation mentions "in cooperation with" the various counties, states, towns, etc when the River Management Plan guidelines were being developed as to the management of the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River. While NPS has authority for condemnation of land with a clear and direct threat to the River resources it has not been necessary over the 30 years that the NPS has worked with the local and state authorities. The legislation also gave the NPS the ability to use 450 acres for its facilities with an option for another 1,000 if the River Management Plan allowed. To date NPS owns 30 acres after all these years. NPS has worked in partnership with the various government entities and other organizations to develop other protections as needed.

The committee offered that it will be a challenge in the Upper Delaware without the institutional history that Sandy takes with her when she leaves. We will miss her and certainly appreciate all she's done for the River Valley in her tenure at the Upper Delaware.

Public Comment None

Executive Session: A motion by Richardson seconded by Niflot to go into executive session at 8 p.m. including the members of the Project Review Committee that were in attendance was carried. The issue was personnel health insurance. A motion by Niflot seconded by Rando to come out of executive session at 8:20 p.m. was carried. Richardson made a motion seconded by Niflot and carried that the UDC chairperson meet with the executive director with the results of the committee's discussion. Richardson will provide Coney with draft wording for a resolution on health insurance to be brought before the full Council at its meeting on Feb. 4. He asked Coney to provide the information to the Council members prior to the meeting for their review.

Adjournment A motion by Niflot seconded by Richardson to adjourn the meeting at 8:24 p.m. was carried.

Carol Coney, Office Manager