

Upper Delaware Council
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
December 20, 2011

Committee Present: Harold Roeder, Jr., Jack Niflot, Nadia Rajsasz, Fred Peckham, George Fluhr
Committee Absent: Larry Richardson, Scott Rando
NPS Partner: Don Hamilton
Staff: Bill Douglass, Laurie Ramie, Dave Soete, Cindy Odell
Guests: Debra Conway, Tony Ritter, David Dean, Ginny Dudko, Anne Willard, Andy Boyar(at 7:03 p.m.)

The UDC's Operations Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, November 22, 2011 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Ramie noted that due to the absence of the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson, the committee would need to decide who to appoint as the temporary Chairperson for the evening. Peckham made a motion to appoint Roeder as acting Chairperson. Fluhr seconded the motion and it was carried. The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. Fluhr suggested putting the procedure for picking the acting chairperson in the minutes as it is setting a precedent.

Approval of November 22 Meeting Minutes: A motion by Peckham seconded by Niflot to approve the November 22 meeting minutes was carried. There was no public comment on the agenda

Public Relations/Fundraising Specialist's Report: Ramie presented Douglass, as it was his last meeting before his January 1 retirement, with a scrapbook of reminiscences from associates over the years, copies of every newsletter from the past 23 years of the UDC's existence, and well wishes and personal notes from people he knows. She also presented him with two resolutions. The first was from NYS Assemblyman Clifford Crouch of Delaware County and the second was from Sandra Major of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives.

Ramie referenced her written Public Relations report provided in members' packets and invited members to read it at their convenience and contact her if they had any questions.

Acting Executive Director's Report: Ramie's report highlighted some issues that have come up in the past month. She reported that the transfer of authorized signatures for the UDC bank accounts was completed and noted that it will need to be done again after the January 2012 UDC meeting.

She proposed scheduling the election of officers at the January 5, 2012 annual meeting, but deferring the swearing-in ceremony and annual group photo to February 2, 2012 to incorporate any changes in board memberships made during town and township reorganizational meetings in January. Peckham questioned if that change concurred with the By-laws. Ramie noted that the swearing-in ceremony is symbolic. She said the By-laws could be checked to see if it stated anything specific about the swearing-in ceremony.

Ramie reported that the paperwork to change to our new health insurance carrier was submitted on time. The new carrier is MVP Health Care. Switching out of Empire Blue Cross also necessitated changing our vision plan provider. Broker Nancy Yoder found a plan with comparable rates and the switch was made to VSP Vision Care Signature Plan on 11/30/11.

Ramie told members staff had been notified that individuals were having difficulties navigating through the UDC's website. She reported that our webmaster Dorene Warner of W Design investigated and determined that the site had been "hacked", although she was not able to determine if it was virus related or a malicious attempt. Warner was able to resolve the issue.

Financial issues covered in the report included the fact that the two keys for the UDC's safe deposit box at Bank of America are apparently lost; bookkeeper Mike Poska submitted the UDC's request for Partial Reimbursement from the NPS for the period 11/19-11/30 and prepared the SF 425 Federal Financial Report for 10/1/10-9/30/11; a FY 2012 UDC budget modification letter needs to be submitted to the NPS for 10% difference in audit figures and salary/benefits adjustments due to Bill's retirement; and the legal fees accrued as of 12/5/11 for the UDC's land use appeal vs. Lackawaxen Township total \$11,698.45. In reference to the safe deposit box, discussion took place as to what may be in there and Niflot suggested checking at the bank to see if there is a record of who signed to get into the box most recently. There is a charge to drill it open if all possibilities for locating the keys are exhausted.

Ramie said she received an encouraging phone call from Westfall Township Secretary Lisa Green on December 19th to say there is an individual actively interested in serving as the township's UDC representative who had contacted her. Ramie provided Green information to pass along to him.

Ramie reported that staff received two proposals for computers. The figures will enable her to prepare a grant application to the Norcross Wildlife Foundation, an organization that gives funding specifically to non-profit for equipment purposes. She said it is likely that only partial funding would be granted based on their past award amounts and noted that the office computers are in serious need of being updated.

Ramie announced to members that Sullivan County successfully secured a \$125,000 NYS Strategic Plan & Regional Projects grant for the project, "Implementing the Upper Delaware River Local Waterfront Revitalization Program" and reported that four applications were submitted to the NYS DOT by the 12/19 deadline for the FY 2012 FHWA National Scenic Byways Program. The four applicants and their projects are listed on the report she provided. Hamilton questioned if the fourth application would be for acquiring the Sparrowbush access. Ramie said that was correct. She added it is currently owned by the Patterson family and they are interested in a private-public partnership to keep the access in use for both recreation and emergency uses. Fluhr questioned if swimming would be one of the recreational uses of the access and said he has heard on numerous occasions that in 72 miles of river, there is no place to swim. A discussion took place about the probable reasons that swimming is not allowed at these areas. Ramie noted that this access is located on Hook Road and has been co-managed with the NYS DEC for a number of years but recently some issues with this arrangement have arisen.

Ramie also reviewed a January 2012 calendar and notes provided with her report.

New Business

UDC Building Update: Odell reported that she had been looking for an insured cleaning company as staff was dissatisfied with the job being done by the current company. She was referred to Dan Wagner Window Cleaning by the NPS and provided members with a copy and explanation of his bid. Peckham made a motion to enlist the services of Dan Wagner effective January 1, 2012. Niflot seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.

Odell said a letter had been sent to Symanski Electric awarding him the bid for repairing and installing new lighting in the UDC office and she is waiting for a reply. She said new letterhead had been printed with all staff names removed for better longevity.

Odell reported on the switch for the phone and internet services into a bundle package with Frontier Communications. The switch was done by December 16th to take advantage of a special savings program. Ramie said Odell found that we have been paying taxes on the Frontier telephone bill and that she faxed a tax exempt form to Frontier and is waiting to hear about a potential refund of previously paid taxes. Ramie said the Frontier tech had been in the office on December 19th to install the new modem and that after notice of our new e-mail addresses had been given, we would make the switch to Frontier DSL service. She noted a news release announcing the new e-mail addresses would be posted on the UDC website as well as distributed to e-mail recipients.

Summary of Pending Bills 12-20-11: Ramie noted a change to the summary of pending bills under the member expenses. It will be necessary to void one check and re-issue a new one to Dean. She said that \$6.66 should be deducted from the total and that Dean would receive his mileage reimbursement check next month. After a brief discussion about the fuel oil, Peckham suggested looking into pre-buy prices for next year. Financial statements as of November 30, 2011 were provided for individual review. Roeder questioned the difference in the NPS Cooperative Agreement income line between last year and this year. Ramie told him she would look into it. A motion to accept the abstract of bills, with the noted change, was made by Peckham, seconded by Fluhr and carried unanimously.

External Meetings and/or Travel Requests: Roeder wanted to comment on staff not attending the Park Service Holiday party because they would have to use their own time. Ramie noted that was the motion that was made, that if staff attended the party, they would have to use their vacation time. Roeder said he hopes that doesn't happen again as we are partners with the Park Service and it is something to think about in the future. He offered his personal apology to the staff.

Ramie said that the only currently upcoming external meeting would be for Soete to attend the Town of Hancock site plan review public hearing in Hancock on January 3, 2012. A motion to approve the travel request was made by Niflot, seconded by Peckham and carried.

Other: None

Old Business

Report on 6-23/24 Wild and Scenic Rivers Act Training Workshop: Soete said he had not had time to provide the written summary requested yet.

Other: None

Public Comment: None

A motion to go into Executive Session at 7:20 p.m. was made by Peckham seconded by Niflot.
A motion to come out of Executive Session at 7:29 p.m. was made by Peckham seconded by Niflot.
Niflot questioned if the document handed out in executive session is public record. Ramie noted it was a legal brief and suggested asking Boyar. Boyar commented that if you don't want it out, you don't hand it out or you take them back, but he didn't feel the brief was privileged information.

Adjournment: A motion by Peckham, seconded by Niflot to adjourn the meeting at 7:31 p.m. was carried unanimously.

Minutes submitted by Cindy Odell, 12/29/11