

Upper Delaware Council
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
March 24, 2009

Committee Members Present: Fluhr, Roeder, Bowers, Richardson, Wieland, Niflot, Shafer
Partner: Martinez
Staff: Soete, Coney, Ramie
Guests: D. Keesler; F. Peckham

Committee Chairperson George J. Fluhr called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. A motion by Richardson seconded by Shafer to approve the Feb. 24 meeting minutes was carried. There was no public comment on the agenda. Fluhr passed around a Get Well card for Bill Douglass.

Public Relations/Fund Raising Specialist's Report: Ramie briefly reviewed her written report that was handed out. The Spring/Summer newsletter should be in the mail April 1. This issue was the first under the new two-times a year schedule and amounted to a 12-page issue since it covered six-months of news. The Fall/Winter issue should be out Sept. 1. The newsletter is available on the Council's website as well, www.upperdelawarecouncil.org.

The Council's awards ceremony reservation forms are being distributed. The nomination deadline was March 16. The staff and Awards Subcommittee have reviewed the nominations and chosen the honorees. A press release will be issued announcing the winners. The keynote speaker will be Ed Zygmunt, Congressman Chris Carney's field representative, who deals with issues that relate to the environment and sound management of the region's natural resources. Mr. Zygmunt has been honored by various organizations for his volunteer services to local, regional, and statewide sportsmen and conservation organizations.

Grant projects are progressing and four have deadlines of Aug. 31. There are two UDC grants and the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway has nine. So far the New York State grants are not on hold due to the budget crises.

The Council's annual family raft trip will be Aug. 2. This year's River trip section will be eight miles, from Ten Mile River to Barryville. The canoe livery cooperator will be Kittatinny Canoes who has made available a discounted rate.

Old Business

FY09 Balance of Federal Funding, Status: The Omnibus Appropriations Bill was signed by President Obama March 11. On March 16, the Comptroller of the NPS Northeast Region approved releasing the balance of the fiscal year 2009 funds to the Council. Martinez added that there was a reduction in the warrant officers from 53 to 18 people and it has impacted the processing of paperwork. Martinez noted he has spoken to the Regional office to push a more timely funds transfer for the Council.

2nd Draft Letter to U.S. Dept. of Interior Secretary Ken Salazar: The committee was provided with a second draft of the Council letter that will be issued to the new U.S. Dept. of Interior Secretary Ken Salazar. The subject matter is the potential conflicts between the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 and the National Energy Policy Act of 2005, specifically National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors and the siting of major electric transmission lines. Recent news reports indicate that there is still a push to build new transmission lines all across the country and grant the federal government sole siting authority. The Council would like to know the Secretary's thoughts on the issue as it relates to the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River. A motion by Wieland seconded by Richardson to recommend full Council review and approval of the letter was carried. Copies of the letter upon approval will be sent to 28 federal and state government agencies and representatives.

Deferred from January meeting - Bookkeeping services vendor request for rate increase: The committee discussed the request from the bookkeeping services vendor for a \$50 a month rate increase. The Council is still waiting for the balance of its funding from the federal government. It's also mid-stream of the fiscal year. After discussion, a motion by Wieland seconded by Bowers to send a letter to the

bookkeeper notifying him that the committee will look into the matter of an increase during the fiscal year 2010 budget preparations and discussions was carried.

New Business

Summary of Pending Bills / Financial Statements: The committee reviewed the summary of pending bills. A motion by Wieland seconded by Bowers to approve the bills for payment was carried. The Financial Statements for period ended 2-28-09 were provided for committee review.

Wdesign Price Quote for UDC Website Maintenance: The committee was provided with a quote from Wdesign regarding website services since the grant deadline for the current project is expiring in July. Following discussion, a motion by Richardson seconded by Bowers to notify Wdesign to transfer hosting server invoice to UDC was carried. Staff is to obtain Adobe Contribute software costs and set up training sessions with Wdesign for one staff member as included in the grant. The use of a volunteer to input to the website to assist staff since their plates are full was also discussed.

Office Manager's Point of Information Report: The committee was provided with a handout from Coney that listed and explained items for the committee's information. They included: UDC Federal Funding status, IRS Taxes on Wages change, COBRA change notice from Empire Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Postage Rate Increase, UDC computer software-Microsoft phasing out, and a business insurance item.

Fluhr noted that some of these items will carry a price tag for the Council. He indicated that the government officials' liaison subcommittee hopes to discuss funding issues with the Pennsylvania elected officials. New York State officials have been able to provide grants to the Council in the past but nothing has come from Pennsylvania. The committee also discussed multi-sources of other revenue streams, such as corporate sponsors, direct solicitation letters, and grant applications. Fluhr mentioned if other revenues are not found, Council programs will have to be cut.

Martinez offered that NPS-Upper Delaware has been making the case for a base increase to the Council through its funding procedures; however, the funding process is on a competitive basis. Martinez also suggested that the Council needs to get the word out about what it does and why so that more people are familiar with the services the UDC provides under the *River Management Plan*. To clarify what and what not the UDC could legally do regarding soliciting other revenue sources, they asked Martinez to obtain the NPS Solicitor's opinion based on federal funding regulations and the cooperative agreement with NPS. Martinez said he would do that.

Public Comment None

Adjourn A motion by Bowers seconded by Roeder to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m. was carried.

Carol Coney, Office Manager