

Upper Delaware Council  
**OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**  
**March 24, 2015**

Committee Present: Alan Henry, Dave Dean, Larry Richardson, Fred Peckham, Jeff Dexter, Harold Roeder, Jr., Nadia Rajsasz, Debra Conway  
Committee Absent: None  
NPS Partner: Carla Hahn  
Staff: Laurie Ramie, Travis O'Dell, Cindy Odell  
Guests: None

The UDC's Operations Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, March 24, 2015 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Henry called the meeting to order at 8:15 p.m.

**Approval of February 24 Meeting Minutes:** A motion by Richardson seconded by Rajsasz to approve the February 24 meeting minutes was carried. There was no public comment on the agenda.

**Executive Director's Report and Monthly Calendar:** Ramie provided the balances in the federal account and the Jeff Bank. She noted the UDC received its Credit for Small Employer Health Insurance Premiums from the filing of Form 990-T. She said the IRS applied a 7.3% sequestration rate to the full claim.

Ramie reported that she logged 59.5 hours on the Spring/Summer 2015 newsletter from February 5 to March 16 on planning, contents, research, interviews, selecting and manipulating photos, layout, composition and edits. The package was mailed to Courier Printing on March 16 in advance of the March 18 deadline. Ramie said the blueline proof was received earlier today, reviewed, and returned. Delivery of the newsletter is expected on April 1<sup>st</sup> and if it is received past that date, the late fee penalty will be imposed as set forth in our new contract. T. O'Dell posted the issue on-line and C. Odell sent the updated mail program database to the printer on March 20.

In regards to the April 26<sup>th</sup> Awards Banquet to be held at the Central House Resort in Beach Lake, PA, Ramie said we have received acceptance by PA Bureau of Forestry Director Dan Devlin to serve as our keynote speaker. She said the recommended slate of awards winners was provided to the Awards Subcommittee and approved on March 11<sup>th</sup>. The press release titled, "UDC Announces Honorees for Awards Ceremony on April 26" was provided in members' packets. The invitation/reservation form has been updated and is being mailed out as well as posted to the UDC website. Reservations are due by April 17<sup>th</sup>, Ramie stated. Her written report contained a list of tasks that need to be completed prior to the banquet including composition of the souvenir program which will contain the majority of details about each person or project in order to keep the verbal presentations on the abbreviated side.

Ramie reported that two press releases were issued in the last month. Both were related to the Awards Banquet. The next press release will announce that the newsletter is out.

The arrangements for the UDC Raft Trip were finalized so that information could be included in the upcoming newsletter. The 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Family Raft Trip will be held on Sunday, August 2<sup>nd</sup> with Kittatinny Canoes as the host livery. The river section to be covered will be Barryville to Pond Eddy with a 9-10 a.m. check-in at Luke's Landing and an afternoon shuttle back from the Pond Eddy Base. The cost will be \$27 for adults 13 and up, \$17 for children 5-12. Reservations will be due by July 24<sup>th</sup>.

The application solicitation memo for the 2015 River Clean-up Grants program was sent out to the thirteen participating municipalities on March 6. Applications will be accepted through April 24<sup>th</sup>. Ramie noted there is currently \$3,000 set aside for this program, but suggests additional funding may be available. She said we have received one proposal to date from Damascus Township. The Operations Committee will review the grant applications at its April 28<sup>th</sup> meeting and make recommendations to the full Council for a vote on May 7<sup>th</sup>. The project completion date is August 21<sup>st</sup>.

Ramie reported that Sullivan County has announced a Small Grants Program. Municipalities, non-profit organizations, and community groups are eligible to request enhancement project funding with a 50% match from this new program that allocates \$10,000 to each of the nine legislative districts and \$10,000 at large. The first round of rolling applications is due by April 30<sup>th</sup>. More information is available by calling the Division of Planning and Environmental Management at 845-807-0527. Peckham questioned if the UDC was going to apply for one of these grants. After a brief discussion, members decided to have

staff obtain the guidelines for this grant and members were asked to think about potential project ideas should the UDC apply for one of these grants.

Ramie referred members to the April calendar of UDC Meetings, Activities and Deadlines. She said members could contact her if they had any questions.

### New Business

**Draft Letter to Superintendent Heister: Law Enforcement Collaboration with Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area:** Ramie noted that this draft letter was sent out on March 17<sup>th</sup> for member review. A motion to forward this letter to the full Council on April 2<sup>nd</sup> was made by Richardson and seconded by Conway. Dean noted that he appreciates the paragraph in the letter that stresses that the autonomy of the Upper Delaware NPS unit must be maintained, saying this is important. A vote was taken and the motion passed.

**Draft Letters: FY 2016 Federal Funding for the Delaware River Basin Commission:** Ramie stated that the two letters included in members' packets are identical in content, but one is to go to the House of Representatives and the other to the U.S. Senate with different courtesy copy lists. She said she worked with DRBC staff in order to get facts and figures accurate for the letters. She said the letter points out the importance of the agency and notes that the federal government has paid its apportioned fair share as required by the Compact only once since October 1, 1996. A motion to forward the letters to the full Council on April 2<sup>nd</sup> was made by Rajsz and seconded by Conway. Roeder stated that he is not opposed to the DRBC trying to get funds from the government that said they were going to fund them, but he has a big problem with the situation that the DRBC has allowed to transpire over several years. He feels that have allowed themselves to be put in a situation of no trust, alleging they have received money from special interest groups. Henry asked if the DRBC budget earmarks funding coming in from these groups. A lengthy discussion about DRBC funding took place. Dexter expressed his frustration with the DRBC "holding an entire region hostage on a temporary moratorium". Peckham stated he has a problem because the DRBC "does not have any representation or participation from anyone in the Upper Basin that he knows of". Ramie said the UDC has been asked to have a seat on the Water Resources Advisory Board. She noted Ken Najjar said they are opening up their membership because they want more Upper Delaware representation and they asked if T. O'Dell would be willing to serve. A letter is forthcoming on this, she added. A vote on the motion was taken. The motion to send the letters onto the full Council failed with three yeas and four nays. Henry questioned what becomes of the letters now. Ramie said the committee has the option to recommend a letter or not, but it doesn't necessarily mean that the rest of the Council does not get to vote on it. Henry said it is his opinion that letters should be addressed at the full Council. Richardson said he will bring the letters up at the full Council meeting under Other New Business. Members directed Ramie to contact the DRBC to request a copy of their budget indicating all outside funding sources and percentages by the April 2<sup>nd</sup> full Council meeting. If received, members asked this information be shared in advance of the meeting. Henry reiterated that it is his opinion that letters should be addressed by the full Council.

**Proposed Cooperative Agreement Renewal:** Ramie said the UDC has a Cooperative Agreement with the National Park Service which spells out what the Upper Delaware Council is responsible for doing under contract. The current agreement went into effect on October 1, 2010 and will expire on September 30 of this year. Ramie said the Statement of Work in the current Cooperative Agreement simply states that "The Upper Delaware Council will perform the tasks identified in the approved FY 2011 Annual Work Plans to support the goals in the River Management Plan" and the National Park Service will "1. Actively participate in the deliberations, activities and proceedings of the UDC and provide technical and planning staff assistance to the Council, and 2. Provide funding in the amount of \$300,000 to support the programs identified in the FY 2011 Annual Work Plans." Ramie referred to the handout listing revisions to the Cooperative Agreement that the Park Service has proposed provided in members' packets. She said staff met with Superintendent Heister to discuss these revisions. Ramie said it had been discussed that the expectations did need some clarification. T. O'Dell referred to #2 under B which states "The Council will specifically examine the pattern of actual land use changes which have occurred as compared to the Land and Water Use Guidelines and the towns' ordinances. (p.63)" He noted we have no mechanism to accomplish this and he feels uncomfortable putting something in our Work Plan that he know we can't

accomplish. O'Dell noted that the reference to p. 63 is for the pdf version of the RMP. Referring to page 47 of the RMP, he said there it states, "Most importantly, the Council should examine the pattern of actual land use changes which have occurred as compared to the Land and Water Use Guidelines and the towns' ordinances". Hahn said the River Management Plan specifically says what the UDC will do under the agreement with the NPS. Hahn explained that several years ago when the Cooperative Agreement was renewed, Statement of Work language was left out of the agreement and now it is being put back in. The timeline for having this agreement complete was discussed. Henry feels the revisions need to be looked at closer. It was decided that Ramie would circulate a copy of the current NPS/UDC Cooperative Agreement for FY 2010-2015 with the proposed revisions to the Statement of Work, as updated for the enforcement program sentence and print vs. electronic copy page references to the River Management Plan. Dean noted that he is going to look to staff to advise him if this agreement is reasonable or not. Ramie said the revisions were generated by the Park Service and given to the UDC for review. Henry asked that the rest of the Council be advised of the renewal of the Cooperative Agreement and that the proposed revisions be shared with them as well. Henry asked that staff review the agreement and revisions line by line and it was decided that this issue will be taken up again at the April Operations Committee meeting. T. O'Dell stated that the page numbers will need to be clarified as the proposed revisions refer to pdf pages and not print pages. Henry asked that the pages be referenced by both numbers listing the hard copy first and the pdf number in parenthesis. Dean questioned if these are the only proposed changes to the agreement. Ramie said they are the only ones that we've been presented with at this point.

**Budget Analysis Results:** Ramie referred members to the mid-fiscal year budget analysis provided in their packets. She provided the projected FY 2015 surplus as calculated by bookkeeper Mike Poska based on the current spending trend. Ramie reviewed each budget line offering explanations for the projected surplus or deficiency. She noted there is money allocated in an Outside Consulting Services line. She said it has been suggested the Council might consider setting up a separate bank account to start obligating funds beyond the fiscal year for contractual services to undertake the thorough evaluation of the River Management Plan. Henry recommended running that suggestion through the Administrative Officer for the Upper Delaware. Ramie continued the line by line review of the analysis. Henry asked Ramie to follow up with Bookkeeper Mike Poska to obtain clarifications to the questions raised by members and report back to them. Rajsiz presented the UDC with a donation of \$1,000 from the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway in appreciation for the use of the building and staff time. Ramie requested that members give some thought for proposed expenditures for the currently unobligated UDC budget categories or any projected surplus funds. Richardson stated that he would like to see consideration given to some sort of educational conference or presentation. Henry suggested soliciting ideas from all the Council members.

**Summary of Pending Bills/Financial Statements as of 2-28-15:** The committee was provided with an abstract of bills dated March 24 to review. A motion by Rajsiz, seconded by Roeder to pay the bills listed on the abstract was carried unanimously. Financial Statements as of February 28, 2015 were provided for individual review.

**Other:** Hahn asked when it is the members would like Heister to come in and speak about the Commercial Use Authorizations. Ramie said the April 28 Project Review Committee meeting. Roeder asked when the health insurance needs to be reviewed. He was told the current plan is in effect until the end of November. Richardson said we will need to look into projected increases for budgeting purposes. Conway questioned when staff reviews take place. Ramie told her in May typically.

**Old Business:** None

**Public Comment:** None

**Adjournment:** A motion by Rajsiz, seconded by Roeder to adjourn the meeting at 9:36 p.m. was carried unanimously.