

Upper Delaware Council
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
May 26, 2015

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

The UDC's Operations Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, May 26, 2015 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Henry called the meeting to order at 8:12 p.m.

Approval of April 28 Meeting Minutes: A motion by Rajsz seconded by Conway to approve the April 28 meeting minutes was carried. There was no public comment on the agenda.

Executive Director's Report and Monthly Calendar: Ramie referred members to her written report provided in their packets noting she would hit the highlights. She reported the Council met its May 15 deadline for submitting to the Park Service its FY 2016 Application for Federal Assistance and for submitting the documents to enable processing the renewal of the UDC's Cooperative Agreement with the Department of the Interior, National Park Service. Copies of the cover letters sent with each of the packages were provided in members' packets.

Ramie spoke of the technical difficulties she had requesting the latest transfer from the UDC's federal account. Once resolved, she was able to request the funds. She provided the balances in the federal account and the Jeff Bank accounts. Henry suggested looking into the distinctions between UDC money and federal funds, the restricted uses of federal funds, and potential options to increase UDC investment opportunities. Henry suggested also asking the NPS Administrative Officer for guidance on whether the UDC may obligate funds to contract for a particular project in one fiscal year and complete the work in the next fiscal year. A lengthy discussion regarding investments took place.

Ramie said she notified the UDC bookkeeper in a May 11th memo that the Westfall Township membership fee will be suspended as of May due to non-compliance with the UDC's Member Participation Policy, instructing him to deduct \$100 from the next quarterly payment due to the township. She noted the suspension will continue until active participation resumes. Henry questioned if Westfall Township has been contacted via telephone. Ramie said they have not. Henry made a motion that Westfall Township be contacted and encouraged to resume active participation on the UDC, with emphasis on the member fee suspension that is currently in effect. That motion was seconded by Conway. Dean recommended that Westfall be encouraged to appoint someone dedicated to show up at the meetings. The motion carried.

Ramie reported that four news releases were issued in the past month. Those were: "Upper Delaware Brochures Available", 5/4; "UDC Raft Trip to Launch Aug. 2", 5/5; "UDC Awards River Clean-up Grants", 5/11; and "Four Upper Delaware River Bridges Set for Replacement or Major Repairs", 5/14.

Ramie said that on May 19, she was allotted 30 minutes for a presentation about the UDC at the NPS orientation session for its seasonal staff and interns. She shared the message about the non-traditional nature of the Upper Delaware, respecting private property rights, a historical overview of the River Management Plan's development, and an explanation of the UDC mission, structure, and functions. Ramie said it was a group of about 16 people and she extended an invitation to attend any of our meetings.

Ramie noted that the River Clean-up release was included in members' packets so they were aware of the amount awarded to each municipality. She stated the projects must be completed by August 21 in order for applicants to be eligible for reimbursement at the specified amounts.

Ramie referred members to the June calendar of UDC Meetings, Activities and Deadlines. She noted representatives from Aqua PA will be at the June 4th full Council meeting to discuss the operation of the Masthope Mountain Community Wastewater Treatment Plant. Conway questioned the June 12 meeting of the Wayne/Pike History Roundtable. Ramie said that is a relatively new group that Shohola Alternate George Fluhr suggested the UDC get involved with. Ramie has not been able to attend a meeting yet due to conflicts so she is not sure if it will be worth the Council's time to attend. She will provide more

information once it is available. Ramie mentioned the three Upper Delaware days of the Delaware River Sojourn. They will be June 20 from Balls Eddy to Buckingham, June 21 Lordville to Hankins, and June 22 Narrowsburg to Zane Grey in Lackawaxen, PA. She added that the day plan itineraries are now available.

Henry thanked staff for meeting the May 15th deadline for submitting the required NPS paperwork.

New Business

TAG 2015-10 Berlin Township, Request for Payment, \$2,166.00: Ramie noted that Berlin expended \$2,020 of the \$2,166 awarded. A motion to pay Berlin Township upon receipt of their completed project and de-obligate \$146 was made by Rajszyk, seconded by Conway and carried.

Proposed Staff Evaluation Forms and Personnel Subcommittee Report: Conway noted that the Personnel Subcommittee decided that the current staff performance appraisal form should be updated. Provided in members' packets were proposed appraisal forms for each position. The proposed forms give the staff member the opportunity to provide a general personal appraisal. Conway asked that members and staff review them and provide any comments or recommendations by the June 23rd Operations Committee meeting. Ramie was asked to circulate the proposed forms to the full Council membership with instructions to submit any comments by June 23rd. Henry thanked Richardson for the time he took drafting the proposed forms.

Ramie referred to the handout from the Department of State Committee on Open Government regarding Open Meetings Law. She noted the UDC Bylaws state the Council follows the Open Meetings Law. A brief discussion about executive sessions took place. Henry said the law reads that citing personnel matters is not a sufficient ground for going into executive session. The motion needs to be more specific, such as a motion can be made to go into Executive Session to discuss the employment history of a particular person. The person would not have to be identified. Henry reiterated that the reason for going into Executive Session needs to be more specific going forward.

MVP Health Care Notice of Proposed Premium Rate Change: Ramie referred members to the copy of the letter received from MVP earlier in the day. The letter states that MVP is filing a request with the New York State Department of Financial Services to approve a change for the group premium rate for 2016. The percentage change requested is 21.6%. Richardson stated this is a practice of the industry, noting they aim high and typically settle on a lower percentage. Odell said this was confirmed by the Council's insurance broker Nancy Yoder. Yoder told Odell it may be a 10 -13% increase. Yoder is currently out of town, but will be following up when she returns. Ramie noted our current policy renews on December 1. She spoke of the FY 2016 budget and the money appropriated in the insurance budget line.

Outside Consulting Services Potential Projects Discussion: Ramie reported that a minimum of \$27,243.52 of FY 2015 and FY 2016 funding is available for outside consulting services. She referred to the report in members' packets that she compiled which contains a list of potential UDC projects. Those potential projects are GIS Mapping Study of Land Use Changes in the Upper Delaware River Corridor; Study the Economic Impact from the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River Designation; Substantial Conformance Reviews; Records Management Assistance; 1986 River Management Plan Evaluation; Develop a UDC Business/Fundraising Plan; and UDC Website Upgrades. Ramie said she would like to have the list reviewed and projects prioritized by what is realistic to accomplish with the available funding. Ramie reviewed the proposed projects one by one with members. Henry recommended that the report go out to all Council members. Richardson spoke of the task of the annual review of the adequacy of each town/township's enforcement program within the river corridor area. He asked O'Dell if he has received many responses to his request to the Code Enforcement Officers for building permits issued, variances granted, and any patterns of ordinances, amendments or project approvals which may have a bearing on the purposes for which the Upper Delaware was designated a Scenic and Recreational River. O'Dell reported on who has returned packages. Richardson suggested another letter be sent to the town/township supervisors. Ramie suggested the towns be asked to let O'Dell know if there were no projects in the corridor as well. Ramie was asked to circulate the "UDC Potential Projects for Outside Consulting Services" concept paper to the full Council membership to request any additional ideas,

comments, and to rank priorities for those ideas they do support and return by the June 4th UDC meeting. Dean said he did not agree with the fundraising plan idea and shared his reasoning.

Summary of Pending Bills/Financial Statements as of 4-30-15: The committee was provided with an abstract of bills dated May 26 to review. A motion by Rajs, seconded by Conway to pay the bills listed on the abstract was carried unanimously. Financial Statements as of April 30, 2015 were provided for individual review.

A lengthy discussion about spending federal monies and UDC funds took place. Ramie was asked to invite UDC auditor Dick Eckersley and UDC bookkeeper Mike Poska to attend the June Operations Committee meeting to discuss the UDC's restricted vs. unrestricted funds, how those monies are segregated, allowable uses, the procedure for how bills are paid with monthly reimbursement made from the federal funds account, the format of the current financial reports, and potential investment options for UDC unrestricted funds.

Other: Conway said a couple of discussions have come out of the recent personnel reviews. One has to do with participation with outside organizations. She asked that discussion on the task "Review the UDC's participation with outside organizations and establish a protocol for approval of non-UDC meeting attendance" that was added to the FY 2016 Work Plan be included on the June 23 Operations Committee agenda.

She noted it has also been discussed to institute some sort of incentives for staff to attend courses, undertake certain projects, or obtain credits or certifications. She asked staff to think about what some of these possibilities might be. She said the Personnel Subcommittee would like to examine some possibilities and rather than give a set percentage of increase annually, award the incentives based on performance. Robinson spoke of the bonus system set up for the insurance company of which he is a trustee. It was decided that the discussion of developing an incentives program to promote professional development, with staff providing their ideas on subject areas of interest for training, be included on the June 23 Operations Committee agenda. Richardson noted that although it is up for discussion, the thinking is that the staff would attend training on their own time; the Council would not pay them to attend, but as recognition there may be some sort of stipend approved. He noted it is a way for both the staff and Council to benefit.

Old Business:

O'Dell noted that it is open enrollment for his wife's insurance plan. He proposed that the Council pay him 50% of the cost of his individual plan monthly and he would be added to his wife's plan. He would also like to have the option to get back on the UDC insurance plan if that need should arise in the future at 100% as his contract states. Rajs asked if O'Dell leaving would affect the others. Odell said she checked with the broker today and there is no minimum number of participants for the plan. Ramie provided the current individual rate for the MVP plan. O'Dell noted that his wife's open enrollment period is only until June 1st. Robinson suggested that should O'Dell want to get back on the UDC plan in the future, he could do so at whatever rate the other employees are at. Robinson noted that what O'Dell is asking for is not a buyout. He stated that O'Dell is self-insuring himself, and the Council is underwriting the cost of that and his proposal would be a savings for the Council. Richardson stated that the proposal would require something in writing, a policy written up and approval by the full Council. Members noted the full Council meets after the open enrollment deadline. O'Dell apologized for the short notice. Conway questioned if a vote could be done via email. It was decided that could be done. After a brief discussion, O'Dell and Ramie were asked to write a proposal and a policy and mechanism to authorize a monthly buy-out of the UDC's medical insurance benefit for O'Dell to potentially leave the current MVP Health Care plan, and circulate it to the full membership for an e-mail vote by the June 1st closure of the open enrollment period to add him to an alternative family plan.

Public Comment: None

Adjournment: A motion by Rajs, seconded by Robinson to adjourn the meeting at 9:43 p.m. was carried unanimously.