

Upper Delaware Council
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
June 23, 2015

Committee Present: Alan Henry, Dave Dean, Larry Richardson, Debra Conway, Harold Roeder, Jr., Fred Peckham, Steve Adams
Committee Absent: Jeff Dexter, Nadia Rajsasz, Aaron Robinson
NPS Partner: Kris Heister, Carla Hahn
Staff: Laurie Ramie, Travis O'Dell, Cindy Odell
Guests: Dick Eckersley, Mike Poska, Susan Sullivan (7:30 p.m.)

The UDC's Operations Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, June 23, 2015 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Henry called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Discussion with Auditor Dick Eckersley and Bookkeeper Mike Poska: Ramie thanked both Eckersley and Poska for attending and stated the committee was looking for a "UDC Accounting 101" quick lesson. The discussion was motivated by concerns over how we differentiate between federal funds and UDC funds, she added. Eckersley provided copies of UDC Financial Statements from several prior years and referred to the statement of financial position for FY 2014. He noted that years ago the Council adopted "fund accounting" and explained this practice. He explained the differences between permanently restricted, temporarily restricted, and unrestricted funds. He stated that the "unrestricted" funds are what is left over after everything's been satisfied of all the restrictions on all the other monies and that is UDC money. Eckersley said those monies can be used according to non-profit requirements. He explained how the UDC accrued the monies in the unrestricted fund account, referring members to the additional financial statements he provided. Eckersley reported that back in the 1990's, the UDC would receive their entire amount of federal funding in one lump sum and money was generated by interest on investments. This interest and unrestricted funds grew annually, he added. Richardson asked that the concept of depreciation be explained. Eckersley stated that when you record on an accrual basis, you record depreciation each year as part of your expenses. Using the UDC building as an example, he explained that depreciation is calculated based on the historical cost or original cost of the building. Funds are transferred to the unrestricted column to represent that depreciation. Eckersley noted that interest is no longer generated as the UDC does not receive its funding in one lump sum. Payments are now drawn down on a monthly, reimbursement basis. He provided the amount the reserve had been up to and explained that anytime the UDC spends over the federal budget, that money comes out of that reserve. Discussion took place regarding setting up a separate account to segregate the non-federal funds. Eckersley stated that any expenditure made that is not reimbursable with federal funds, needs to be classified as such so it is taken out of UDC unrestricted funds. Heister noted that federal money can be spent on anything that is articulated in the River Management Plan as UDC responsibilities. Investing the unrestricted funds or part of those funds to generate a higher return was discussed. Poska explained that the money is currently in a low interest money market account and he transfers funds to a checking account to cover the monthly expenses. Members were asked to consider and offer any proposals for potentially appropriate investments of a portion of UDC unrestricted funds to generate a higher return. Eckersley stated that the UDC needs to follow its fiduciary responsibility to be prudent. Poska was asked if he could explore revising the format of the financial statement report to include better monthly tracking of budgetary expenditures and line item balances. He said he would look into that. Dean noted that the Council should be very cautious spending unrestricted funds. He added the Council should be very diligent about saving money and building it. Adams recommended talking with a financial planner and investing from the unrestricted funds what the Council can live without. Eckersley and Poska were thanked for their time.

Approval of May 26 Meeting Minutes: A motion by Richardson seconded by Peckham to approve the May 26 meeting minutes was carried. There was no public comment on the agenda.

Executive Director's Report and Monthly Calendar: Ramie reported that she applied for a wire transfer payment on 6/19 to be credited 6/22 for the June expenditures. She provided the balance of the federal account and noted the UDC has been informed by NPS UPDE Agreements Office Karen Henry that the

FBMS will be down from September 27 till about November 1 so sufficient funds will need to be drawn down before that date to cover the UDC's operating costs through the rest of FY 2015. Ramie's written report contained the balances of the UDC's two bank accounts.

Ramie noted that the money in the Outside Consulting budget line needs to be specifically allocated for the FY 2015 budget. A list of potential projects was circulated to members and a vote was taken at the June 4 full Council meeting to prioritize the Website Upgrade and Records Management Projects. A letter was sent to W Design requesting a cost quote for the website upgrade project. That proposal will come up under New Business. Staff will be meeting with Carla Hahn to discuss language for a Request for Proposals or advertisement for phase one of the records project which would involve the organization of the attic. Henry questioned if the attic is a safe work environment. He was told it is and is at a better temperature since it was insulated last year. Hahn stated that a Records Management schedule needs to be established. She stated an organizer would organize according to a schedule. A brief discussion regarding the attic took place.

Ramie said her report contains the steps leading up to the Personnel Policy draft amendment regarding a health insurance provision that will come up under New Business. She noted that health insurance rates are not yet available. UDC insurance broker Nancy Yoder said that 4th quarter rates by MVP Health Care should be out by the end of June. Ramie said that Yoder advised staff that employees under a group plan are not subject to the same rules as individuals regarding open enrollment, meaning that a staff member could re-join the UDC health plan "at any time".

Ramie reported that five news releases were issued between the Upper Delaware Council and the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway. Those releases are listed in her report under Public Relations.

Staff has registered to staff two UDC informational booths at upcoming events. Ramie will be at the July 18th Zane Grey Festival and Odell will be at the July 26 Narrowsburg RiverFest.

Ramie noted that the 2015 River Clean-up Grants approved for Damascus Township, the Town of Tusten, the Town of Lumberland, Lackawaxen Township, and the Town of Highland must be completed by August 21 in order to be eligible for reimbursement at the specified amounts as approved on May 7th.

Ramie reported that the 2016 TAG program is open. Applications are due by August 28th. A Special Project Review Committee meeting will take place on September 8th with the final vote scheduled for October 1st.

Ramie said she has participated in weekly consultation meetings for numerous river valley projects being developed for application to the NYS Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council for Round 5 of the competitive grants program. Applications are due by July 31st.

Regarding NYS Grants Gateway, Ramie received notice of additional information required for the UDC's Documents Vault to be pre-qualified for grants administration for New York State funding. She researched the Minority/Women-Owned Business Enterprise procurement policy required by NYS and drafted a resolution for UDC consideration. This resolution will be addressed under New Business.

Ramie noted her written report contains a list of Non-UDC meetings, Upper Delaware Scenic Byway activities, and the list of documents produced by her. She referred members to the July calendar of UDC meetings, activities, and deadlines. She reminded members that staff from the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission and NYS Department of Environmental Conservation will be in attendance at the July 2 full Council meeting to discuss Delaware River accesses. Henry asked if a date has been set by Penn DOT for their meeting regarding the Narrowsburg Bridge. Ramie said we received notification from Town of Tusten Councilman Tony Ritter that the Tusten Town Hall has been booked for July 29th for a meeting, but we have not received word officially.

New Business

FY 2015 Spending Update: Ramie referred members to the UDC Profit & Loss FYE 9/30/15 report produced by bookkeeper Mike Poska provided in their packets. The report shows where the Council stands with its spending at this moment. Ramie reviewed the variances for a number of budget lines. For the budget lines with surpluses, we will need to make decisions where to re-allocate that money, Ramie noted. Henry pointed out that the total budget for FY 2015 is \$305,275 and the funding from the NPS is \$300,000. He recommended subtracting \$5,275 from the projected surplus before deciding on how to allocate those funds.

Responsive Website Upgrade Proposal by W Design: A proposal by W Design to upgrade the current UDC website which was created and officially launched by W Design on July 4, 2008 was provided in members' packets. The proposal included a base fee of \$6,450 and list of optional services for additional fees. Dean questioned if there is a way to find out how many people visit the UDC website. O'Dell said he will inquire about accessing the visitor count statistics for the website. A brief discussion about website advertising took place. The proposal was discussed. A motion to accept the website upgrade at a maximum cost of \$7,000 was made by Adams, seconded by Richardson and carried with Dean and Peckham abstaining.

TAG 2015-04 Town of Lumberland, Request for Payment, \$2,722.00: A motion to approve payment contingent upon the approval of the project by the Project Review Committee was made by Richardson, seconded by Conway and carried.

TAG 2015-06 Damascus Township, Request for Payment, \$2,500.00: A motion to approve payment contingent upon the approval of the project by the Project Review Committee was made by Richardson, seconded by Conway and carried.

Draft Resolution 2015-12: Adopting NYS M/WBE Procurement Policy: Ramie stated this resolution was sent out in advance for review. She explained that this draft resolution is motivated by the New York State Grants Gateway program informing us that NYS now requires all of its non-profit vendors to comply with its Minority/Women-Owned Business Enterprise (M/WBE) Policy and to show evidence of that adoption in our "Document Vault" to achieve pre-qualification status. This only pertains to the UDC's ability to receive and administer any NYS grants. Ramie stated that the UDC hasn't had any NYS grants since Senator Bonacic's last economic development initiative for the river valley NY towns was secured in FY 2009-10, but feels it behooves us to remain pre-qualified. She said this would be an addition to our Employment Practices Policy. A motion to forward the resolution to the full Council for approval was made by Richardson and seconded by Conway. Peckham asked what this policy requires. Ramie said it means the UDC will take good faith action to achieve the M/WBE contract participation goals set by the State for that area in which the State-funded project is located. Ramie noted that if there aren't such companies on the list provided by the State, then we've done our due diligence. Ramie reiterated this only pertains to projects that are state-funded. Roeder spoke of the railroad crossing project in the Town of Delaware and his concern of the project costing the Town extra money in order to comply with this policy. Henry explained there is no clause in the resolution that states the Town would be obligated to use such a company, only that they use good faith to solicit bids from qualified State-certified MBEs or WBEs. Heister said she believes that all things equal, the expectation would be that you contract with the MBE or WBE, but if they are more money than all the other bids, you are under no obligation to hire them. After brief discussion, a vote to forward this resolution to the full Council was taken and carried with Dean, Roeder and Peckham voting no. Richardson ask that Ramie find out whether the UDC would be required to accept a M/WBE bid if the value was equivalent to a non-M/WBE bid for a NYS grant-funded project by the UDC.

Draft Letter of support for "Marketing the NYS Upper Delaware Scenic Byway": Ramie said this letter is to express support for an application by the UDSB to New York State Regional Economic Development Council Round V Grant Program. A motion to forward this letter to the full Council for approval was made by Conway, seconded by Richardson and carried.

Personnel Policy Draft Amendment: Medical Insurance Provision: Richardson said he drafted the suggested language provided in members' packets to become policy. He noted it mirrors the policy that was approved recently for O'Dell's medical insurance buyout and he feels this should be the policy moving forward. A motion to approve the Medical Insurance Provision was made by Richardson and seconded by Conway. Referring to the last paragraph of the policy under "Reinstatement", O'Dell suggested the language "or in the event of a life-changing event" be added to "Should any full time employee who has previously opted out of provided medical insurance choose to become reinstated or accept coverage at a later date during an open enrollment period.". Richardson read the current policy and noted the two changes being made with the proposed policy. Richardson amended his motion to include the proposed

language change. Conway seconded that motion, the vote was taken and the motion to forward this proposed policy to the full Council for approval was carried.

UDC Participation with Outside Organizations: Ramie noted that the Personnel Subcommittee had asked Ramie and O'Dell to put together reports of the meetings with outside organizations they attend regularly. They were provided in members' packets. Ramie stated that the task "Review the UDC's participation with outside organizations and establish a protocol for approval of non-UDC meeting attendance" had been added to the FY 2016 Operations Committee Work Plan. She said the meetings that are attended by staff, the UDC is either a member of; a liaison to; or staff feels is significant enough or worthwhile to participate in, noting they wouldn't attend if they didn't feel it had a benefit of some sort. Regarding the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway, Ramie reported that is the majority of her outside UDC meeting time since 2002. Members began an organization by organization review of the outside meeting participation on Ramie's list. Hahn suggested that committee members could participate in some of these outside organization meetings on behalf of the Council. Ramie stated that reports generated from each of these meetings are regularly provided at the Water Use/Resource Management Committee, as indicated in those meeting minutes, and participation in these organizations is included in the Annual Work Plans approved by the full Council. Ramie said she finds out about funding sources and programs that are available that she may not necessarily hear about if not for the outside organization participation. The organization by organization review continued. Henry commented the UDC has paid staff who are the eyes and ears of the organization. He asked if any members wanted to attend these meetings. Ramie stated that staff does not agree to go to everything they are invited to. We use our discretion and she hoped the members would trust us to make those decisions. Heister asked Ramie if she feels that everything listed in her report is important to go to. Ramie said she would like to back off from the level of involvement with the Scenic Byway, but otherwise she feels that, as listed in the conclusion of her report, many of these activities provide background information or action items for the UDC to pursue, help generate ideas for articles in "The Upper Delaware" newsletter and nominations for the UDC Awards, and offer opportunities for us to get out of the office and network with colleagues. Conway asked Ramie if involvement with any of these organizations keeps her from doing her job. Ramie said no and she has never made any such complaint. Conway feels this review is a moot point if Ramie feels these are all worthwhile. Henry discontinued the review.

Professional Development Incentives Policy: A motion to table this discussion was made by Adams, seconded by Conway and carried. Henry asked that it be put on next month's Operations Committee meeting agenda.

Summary of Pending Bills/Financial Statements as of 5-31-15: The committee was provided with an abstract of bills dated June 23 to review. A motion by Conway, seconded by Roeder to pay the bills listed on the abstract was carried unanimously. Financial Statements as of May 31, 2015 were provided for individual review.

Other: Dean shared his concern regarding staff participation in outside meetings at the direction of Council members. He noted that Ramie is the Director and she should ultimately decide if the meetings should be attended. Dean told Ramie she should not have to feel obligated to go everywhere she's requested. Ramie said she produces the monthly calendar so that members are aware of the meetings that are being attended, and who is attending. Dean reiterated that Ramie should be able to decide for herself which meetings are attended. He added that he "does not have the inclination or the time to second guess staff's decisions." Henry noted that Ramie should not feel pressured by anyone on the Council.

Old Business:

Approval of Revised Staff Performance Appraisal Forms: Henry noted the forms were circulated in advance. A motion to approve the revised forms was made by Peckham, seconded by Adams and carried.

Public Comment: None

Adjournment: A motion by Adams, seconded by Roeder to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 p.m. was carried unanimously.

Minutes submitted by Cindy Odell, 6/30/15