

Upper Delaware Council
WATER USE/RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMM. MEETING MINUTES
December 18, 2012

Committee Members Present: Tony Ritter, Andy Boyar, John McKay, Al Henry, Pat Jeffer, Nadia Rajsz
Committee Members Absent: Jay Shafer
NPS Partner: Sean McGuinness
Staff: Laurie Ramie, Cindy Odell, Travis O'Dell
Guests: Harold Roeder, Jack Niflot, Fred Peckham

The UDC's Water Use/Resource Management Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, December 18, 2012 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. The meeting was called to order at 7:38 p.m. A motion to approve the November 20 meeting minutes was made by Boyar, seconded by Henry and carried. There was no public comment on the agenda.

Old Business:

Upper Delaware Scenic Byway 11/26 Meeting Update: Ramie reported that the Byway did succeed in hiring a recording and corresponding secretary who will start in January. An orientation meeting is scheduled for January 14th.

Ramie noted that there was discussion that the Byway has been waiting to be reimbursed almost \$4600 since August of 2011 for the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) grant for the invasive plants educational campaign and community sign project. Until this second request gets paid, the Byway is unable to submit a request for the third and final payment. She said the contract expires on December 31st of this year. Repeated inquiries to the NYS DOT Scenic Byway's program which administers these federal funds have not yielded any results. Ramie said she wrote a letter asking what they are supposed to do under the circumstances and received a reply that the issue is being worked on. She said she is hoping that some requested intervention by Assemblywoman Gunther and Senator Bonacic will yield some results.

Ramie said they learned from Sullivan County Planning Commissioner Luiz Aragon that \$100,000 that had been set aside for preliminary engineering of the Scenic Byway Visitor's Center has been pulled as the result of what has been described as inactivity. Ramie said this is ironic as the Byway has not been inactive with the project. A reauthorization of the Federal Transportation bill is required to restore the funding. Ramie noted that due to the location switch from the Town of Cohecton to the Town of Tusten an Act of Congress is required. She added that Congress was not entertaining any earmarks. In March of this year a letter was sent to the House of Representatives Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman John Mica asking for intervention to move this project along. She noted that this issue could affect a \$250,000 NYS grant for capital construction secured by Senator Bonacic. Another letter has been sent to representatives at both the state and federal levels.

Ramie said that the Narrowsburg Chamber of Commerce has accepted an offer to add listings of their business members to the Scenic Byway website to help populate the business section. The business associations of the hamlets of Barryville and Callicoon previously listed their business members. The next approach will be to the Hancock Chamber of Commerce and then the Tri-State Chamber. The purpose of adding these businesses is to try and make the website more comprehensive for visitors.

Ramie noted that the Byway does not receive any steady revenue, but it does seek contributions from its member municipalities. She sent out on October 22nd, the 2013 municipal operating aid contribution letters. The Village of Hancock was the first to respond with a \$250 donation. She hopes the other participating towns and the City of Port Jervis will contribute as well.

Ramie shared with members samples of the window decals proposed as a fundraiser for the Scenic Byway. One of the decals was fashioned after the Byway's color logo and the second had UDSB as an acronym printed on it. The decals would be available on the Byway's website and through other means. She said that Nadia Rajsz is looking to see if there might be some grant money available to have these produced. Ramie believes the Byway committee decided to have both designs produced so that people would have a choice.

Ramie said final payment was received on November 23rd for NYS grant #M060091. She said it was great to be able to close this out for a lot of the beautification projects that were completed with the funding by five different Byway communities. A press release noting the projects was issued.

Ramie reported the Byway decided to cancel its December meeting because of the holiday conflict and the next regular meeting will take place on January 28th.

Delaware River Basin WaterSMART 11/27 Meeting Update: Ramie noted that the report provided in members' packets was done by T. O'Dell. She said that she and O'Dell sat in on this November 27th web meeting/conference call. O'Dell said there is a summary by Jeff Fischer, who is the Chief of Water Quality Investigations for the USGS New Jersey Science Center, at the end of the report.

Big Eddy Waterfront Revitalization Project 11/28 Meeting Update: Ritter said that he and Ramie were both in attendance at this meeting. An article from *The River Reporter* titled "Narrowsburg Waterfront Revitalization Project Unveiled; Residents Mostly Express Support" was provided in members packets. Ritter noted that this project has been entertained for over ten years and provided a brief timeline of it and talked about the funding. Ramie said she recorded that 21 individuals spoke at the November 28th public hearing for the project and noted it was said that a summary would be prepared within 30 days. Ramie said she was surprised that the majority of the comments were positive as there has been some criticism expressed previously. Henry asked where the drawings of the project are now and suggested looking into the elevations that are proposed and compare those with the NYS DEC access in order to try and eliminate any damage to the new park similar to that which the access has endured. Ritter told Henry the schematics were on display at the Delaware Valley Arts Alliance on Main Street in Narrowsburg for about a month or so prior to the public hearing so that the public had a chance to see them. He believes that they are currently with the Town Supervisor and the Planning Chairman. Henry again expressed concern about flooding. McGuinness said they are planning on building above the 100-year flood mark. Ramie said it is a visionary plan that they have. They are taking advantage of the asset there that already exists and making it better. Niflot said that he has heard that the current deck on Main Street in Narrowsburg is not in good shape. Ramie said concerns expressed about the project were parking and maintenance.

Other: Ritter wondered if any presenters for the WU/RM Committee meetings in 2013 had been finalized. Ramie said that Dennis DeMara of the PA DCNR and another staff member are scheduled to come in January to talk about their Community Conservation Partnership grants. Ramie said we will check with him again to confirm. Boyar said that he has confirmed Dr. Peter Kolesar and Jim Serio for the February 19th meeting. Ritter asked if we could advertise the presentation. Boyar feels this would be a good presentation for the full Council. Ramie noted that when C. Odell sends out the meeting notices, when there is a presentation, it is always highlighted. She said we will be sure and send the February meeting notice out to the full Council so they see this presentation is happening. Ritter thanked Boyar for setting up this presentation.

New Business:

Delaware River Flow and Storage Data Report: Ritter referenced the Delaware River Flow and Storage chart provided and noted that it looks to be above normal. Storage as of December 13 was at 74.3% and normal for this time of year is 64.8%, he added.

McGuinness asked if any members had heard that the Federal Bureau of Reclamation is about to be reveal a plan that would take water from the Missouri River and send it into a 600-mile pipeline to the Colorado River. A brief discussion took place about the project. McGuinness said that water is going to be a big issue. Ritter said it always is.

Skinnners Falls Bridge Closure: Ritter referenced a handout in members' packets. Ramie said the article provides the most information about the closure that we have found. She added the article states that the bridge is expected to be closed for six months.

Other: Ramie reported that the Delaware River Sojourn Steering Committee has decided on the 2013 dates and sections of the Delaware River that they will cover for the Sojourn. It will be held from June 22nd through the 29th. They will spend three days on the Upper Delaware. On the 22nd they will be paddling from

the Ten Mile River to the Zane Grey Access; on the 23rd they will be going from Zane Grey to Jerry's Three Rivers Campground; and on the 24th they will be paddling on the Lackawaxen River. McGuinness said that the Sojourn steering committee has asked for permission to camp at the Park Service's Margold house which is located at the other side of the Roebling Bridge in Lackawaxen. He said some issues need to be researched before he can allow them to camp there. Henry expressed concern about the Sojourners paddling on the Lackawaxen River as they have experienced some problems in the past. He said some of the sections are not good for novice paddlers. A discussion about the classes of rapids on the Lackawaxen and permits for camping took place.

Public Comment: None

Adjournment: A motion by Boyar, seconded by Henry to adjourn the meeting at 8:14 p.m. was carried.

Minutes prepared by Cindy Odell, 12/28/12