

Upper Delaware Council
WATER USE/RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMM. MEETING MINUTES
March 19, 2013

Committee Members Present: Tony Ritter, Al Henry, Pat Jeffer, Andy Boyar, John McKay
Committee Members Absent: None
NPS Partner: Don Hamilton
Staff: Laurie Ramie, Travis O'Dell, Cindy Odell
Guests: Dennis DeMara, Lorne Possinger, Jeffrey Dexter

The UDC's Water Use/Resource Management Committee held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, March 19, 2013 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Ritter called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

Ritter welcomed Dennis DeMara and Lorne Possinger of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA DCNR) who were at the meeting to present a small scale "Grant Workshop" on the basics of the Community Conservation Partnership Program, known as C2P2. DeMara said that the Community Conservation Partnership Program is an annual grant program. He said there is one electronic application. Information on the e-grant process is available at www.dcnr.state.pa.us. DeMara said that he and Possinger are with PA DCNR Northeast Regional Office with the Bureau of Recreation and Conservation. They cover 14 counties in the northeast from Berks County up to the New York border and are headquartered out of Beltzville State Park in Carbon County. DeMara reported that one of their new projects is developing a mapping tool to identify all the local parks in Pennsylvania's 67 counties. This is being accomplished with input from a lot of different partners. DeMara referenced the website www.explorepatrails.com. On this website, people can find trails of all types anywhere in Pennsylvania. They have cataloged 450 trails with over 10,000 miles. Boyar questioned if the Upper Delaware River is part of the inventory. DeMara told him the site shows land and water trails, so the Delaware River water trail should be on there. Possinger said he believes the Lower Delaware is included as well.

DeMara noted that as advisors, they help their partners find out where there are other sources of funding available. The funding guide can be accessed at <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/elibrary/resourcesta/index.htm>. DeMara spoke of funding available through the Marcellus Legacy Fund which allocates funds to the Commonwealth Financing Authority (the "Authority") for planning, acquisition, development, rehabilitation and repair of greenways, recreational trails, open space, parks and beautification projects using the Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program (GTRP). More information is available at <http://www.newpa.com/find-and-apply-for-funding/funding-and-program-finder/greenways-trails-and-recreation-program-grtp>. The application deadline for the program is July 31, 2013 and there is an application fee of \$100.

DeMara noted that water trail access is a big priority in the Rivers Conservation Plan. The PA Rivers Conservation Program has been developed to conserve and enhance river resources through preparation and accomplishment of locally initiated plans. T. O'Dell asked if the program would be available to an organization like the UDC to implement the River Management Plan. DeMara said that the Upper Delaware is listed on the river registry and as a result we can apply for funding to implement the action items listed in the plan. DeMara said they would like to see these plans implemented. DeMara spoke of the 13 land acquisition projects protecting over 15,000 acres of open space that he and Possinger worked on this last round of funding.

DeMara shared the C2P2 grant timeline with members. The application deadline is April 10th. The staff will review and rank the applications in the spring and summer. Grant announcements are typically made in the fall. Grant recipients will be subject to a three-year contract.

Possinger noted that the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards have been updated. He said that all DCNR funded projects have to be designed to meet these new standards. He shared some of these updates with members.

Possinger spoke of DCNR funding sources which include the Keystone Recreation, Park & Conservation Fund, the Environmental Stewardship Fund, the Pennsylvania Snowmobile/ATV Fund, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and the Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program, an assistance program funded through the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). He said that their matching requirements are primarily 50/50 with the exception of the Recreational Trails Program which is 80/20.

Possinger reiterated that the way to apply is on-line through their website. Go to the environmental e-grants site which is shared with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. One must register to begin the application process. All program guidelines and supporting documents are available on-line. Applicants are also required to have SAP and DUNS numbers. The SAP number is a six-digit number that the Commonwealth of PA uses to identify you as a vendor in their accounting system and the Data Universal Numbering System, abbreviated as DUNS or D-U-N-S is a system developed and regulated by Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) which assigns a unique numeric identifier to a single business entity. T. O'Dell asked what one would do if they did not have a SAP number. Possinger told him the applicant would be prompted from the application to a site to apply. Possinger said that each project requires different attachments. He recommends the applicant creates a file on their desktop to put the necessary attachments in. Once the required work is completed in this file, it can be uploaded to the DCNR's system.

Possinger said that all applications are reviewed and ranked by committee. Rankings are based on responses to questions that are in the project narrative instructions. Whoever receives the most points, gets funded first, he added. They then continue down through the list until their funding is exhausted. They typically fund 40 to 50 percent of the projects that are applied for. He reviewed some of the questions addressed in the project narrative. In summary, Possinger said they always suggest you contact your regional advisor as you develop your project for assistance. Your advisor will be your representative when your project is reviewed by committee so they need to understand it and should be able to answer any questions about it that may arise. Ramie asked if the matches can be in-kind services. Possinger said "At times it can be; it depends on the project." Henry asked if there are any examples in Pike or Wayne County where this funding has been used. Dexter said Damascus Township put in their ball field through this funding. Possinger shared a list of other projects accomplished in Wayne County with this funding. DeMara added that many projects have been accomplished in Pike County including \$94,000 to Shohola Township for Rohman Park.

T. O'Dell stated that the River Management Plan calls for substantial conformance reviews of all the participating towns and townships in the river corridor. He would like to have all reviews current. He questioned if funding for subcontracting some of this work out would be an acceptable project for the DCNR grant. DeMara said he would have to talk with O'Dell about this. He spoke of a project in Monroe County where they funded "green audits" that looked at towns zoning and land use to see if they wanted to update them to incorporate some green and conservation principles. He noted that perhaps they could use this concept with the substantial conformance. Ramie said this is a high priority project for the UDC and noted the 50/50 split might be an issue. O'Dell stated that the River Management Plan says that "The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, through a line-item appropriation and subject to the appropriation of such funds by the legislature; funds for planning purposes may be secured from the Commonwealth's Land and Water Conservation Fund allocation and made available through the Scenic Rivers Program." Ramie said the Council has never seen such funding. DeMara suggested the Council may be eligible to apply for funding under the partnership category. He said it will be highly competitive and noted the partnership applications are not necessarily 50/50. He assured O'Dell that he would help the Council through the process.

Henry asked how much funding is available. DeMara said that last year they funded 198 grants for \$26.5 million. He said the grants that were funded are listed on their website. Henry asked if river clean-ups are funded. DeMara said they are not funded directly, but are through state-wide organizations such as The Northeast Pennsylvania Environmental Council and Pennsylvania Organization for Watersheds and Rivers, or POWR.

A motion by Boyar seconded by Henry to approve the February 19 meeting minutes was carried. There was no public comment on the agenda.

Old Business:

River Gage Funding: Ramie noted that this issue had come up last month when the question was raised if any gages were at risk of being defunded. She said that Don Hamilton offered to look into this and did get back to us. Hamilton said he received information from the United States Geological Survey (U.S.G.S.) New York Water Science Center. He said that at-risk gages include one on the East Branch of the Delaware River at Roxbury, one on the West Branch of the Delaware River at Hobart, and one on Town Brook southeast of Hobart, NY. Hamilton believes these gages are all above the NYC reservoirs. Boyar said he

had received a copy of a press release earlier in the day from Senator Schumer's office announcing that dozens of gages in the Susquehanna River Basin will remain up-and-running this year. Ramie said it was good to learn that there were no gages on the main stem of the Delaware River that would be impacted. Hamilton added "or any of our tributaries." Boyar asked if there was any hope of restoring any of the gages that have gone off-line such as the one at Cooks Falls and on the Beaverkill. Hamilton said he has not heard any news of those being restored. Ritter said he believes that height gage at Cooks Falls is working; it is the temperature that is not. Ritter said it has been suggested to have the temperature available from the Cooks Falls gage. Boyar spoke of a fishing ban near Horton, NY. Hamilton noted that two other threatened gages are on the Neversink River. One is on the East Branch northeast of Denning, NY and the other is on the West Branch near Frost Valley, NY.

Upper Delaware Scenic Byway 2/25 Meeting Update: Ramie noted the Byway had hired a recording and corresponding secretary. The individual attended one meeting and has since resigned from the position so Ramie is handling those duties again.

Ramie said that Heather Jacksy will be Sullivan County's representative to the Byway since Luiz Aragon resigned. Aragon left his position as the Sullivan County Commissioner of Planning and Environmental Management to take a new position as city planner for New Rochelle.

Ramie reported that the Treasurer's revised 2013 budget was discussed and approved. A decision was made to re-advertise the Recording and Corresponding Secretary position. Applications are due March 20th. 2012 tax filings for the Byway were prepared and filed as well as NYS Charities Bureau Form 500 that must be submitted by May 15.

Ramie said that an inquiry had been made by the owners of The Roebling Inn in Lackawaxen, PA about whether the Byway had any plans to start a signage program to promote businesses located off the main byway route. It was discussed that the Barryville Chamber of Commerce had initiated a business signage program but did not get permission from the NYS DOT to proceed with it so it never materialized. The Byway would like to consider re-starting the consideration for that program as they feel it is important to send people into the communities along the Byway. Boyar agrees that signage is very important. The discussion will continue at next month's Byway meeting, Ramie said.

Ramie noted that UDC Resource Specialist T. O'Dell had contacted Larry Richardson to advise him that a historic marker had been knocked down due to an accident along Route 97 in the Town of Cohecton. Richardson contacted the NYS DOT and he was told that although the sign does not belong to the department, a crew will retrieve and re-install it when time permits. Richardson thinks it would be a good idea to conduct an inventory of the historic markers and assess what condition they are in and to seek funding to restore historic signage along the byway. The historic signage inventory is now on the Byway's work plan, Ramie stated.

Further discussion about UDSB window decals as a fundraiser took place, Ramie said. The Byway will seek funding from the Sullivan County Historical and Cultural Assistance Program (HCAP). The logo stickers would be offered for sale through the UDSB website.

Ramie reported that both Rajsz and Richardson separately attended an open house reception for Congressman Chris Gibson and each approached him about the UDSB Visitor Center federal funding de-authorization issue. Rajsz said that his office called that same day pledging that he will investigate it. Richardson confirmed that he was advised the same. Rajsz said she would next like to meet with newly-elected Congressman Sean Patrick Maloney to inform him about this subject.

A question was raised about the Pond Eddy Bridge replacement. Rajsz noted that we are past due for the six-month period after the June 27 meeting when it was stated that interested parties to the Pond Eddy Bridge replacement proposal would convene again to discuss the status of deliberations between NYS and PA. The NYS Commissioner had indicated that the replacement was on hold until she could discuss this further with her counterpart in PA. The Byway opted to send a letter to Senator Bonacic to inquire whether there is any new information to share.

Ramie reported that the next meeting of the Byway will be March 25th.

Ritter said it is his opinion that the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway needs a slogan in addition to a visual graphic. It should be something with a little "punch", he added.

Other: None

New Business:

PennDOT 3/13 Bridges Meeting Report: Ramie said the Park Service had a meeting with Penn DOT and the contractor, Leeward Construction of Honesdale, that's been hired to do the repairs on the Skinners Falls Bridge. She and O'Dell were invited to sit in on the meeting. They reviewed their Aid to Navigation Plan as the contractor has started to mobilize their equipment. The plan is to begin repairs in a couple of weeks. Ramie noted that the bridge has been closed since December 15th with a detour in place. The contract states that the work is to be completed by May 1st. The replacement of about 12 steel stringer beams is the work being done on the bridge, Ramie said. Work on the Pond Eddy Bridge has begun and is due to be done by April 1st. That work is being done by contractor Fahs Rolston. The Narrowsburg Bridge was built in 1954. As a result of an in depth inspection in the fall, it was found that the steel grate deck has many problems. The plan is to replace the deck one side at a time. The job is currently out for bid, Ramie noted. The bridge will be left to a single lane until at least May of 2015 at which time permanent repairs will begin. O'Dell said he believes the weight limit will be restored once the repairs are made. Ramie stated she was glad that she and O'Dell had been invited to this meeting as we have had our difficulties getting information from PennDOT.

Delaware River Flow and Storage Data Report: Ritter reported that Cannonsville Reservoir is currently at 90.6% and Pepacton is at 86.9%. Total NYC storage right now is 87.8%. Ritter said they are releasing 700 cfs, but is not sure why. He noted that release had been at 225 cfs. Ritter spoke about snow pack and said he believes the reservoir will spill in the next two weeks.

Other: Ritter asked committee members who they would like to have as a guest speaker at April's meeting. Suggestions included Marie Stewart, Deputy Delaware River Master, U.S. Geological Survey and Thomas Murphy, P.E. Division Chief, Bureau of Water Supply Water Systems Operations, NYC Environmental Protection. Ramie noted that Stewart had previously offered to come and speak with us once a vacant position in her office was filled. Ramie said she and T. O'Dell met her at the "Water Water Everywhere" conference in the fall. Henry would like to have the proposed hydroelectric plant at Cannonsville Reservoir addressed. After lengthy discussion a motion by McKay, seconded by Ritter to extend invitations to Stewart to speak at the April WU/RM Committee meeting and Murphy at a full Council meeting was carried.

Public Comment: None

Adjournment: A motion by Boyar seconded by Henry to adjourn the meeting at 8:41 p.m. was carried.

Minutes prepared by Cindy Odell, 3/22/13