

Upper Delaware Council
WATER USE/RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMM. MEETING MINUTES
April 21, 2015

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

The UDC's Water Use/Resource Management Committee held its monthly meeting on Thursday, April 21, 2015 at the Council office in Narrowsburg, NY. Chairperson Ritter called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

A motion by Henry seconded by Ritter to approve the March 17 meeting minutes was carried. There was no public comment on the agenda.

Old Business:

Upper Delaware Scenic Byway 3/23 Meeting Update: Ramie reported that all the municipal contributions for 2015 have been received.

The nominating committee reported that the three current officers – Chairperson Nadia Rajsz; Vice-chair Ed Boyer; and Secretary-Treasurer Larry Richardson – have graciously offered to serve another year. Nominations may be opened up to the floor at the annual election which will take place on April 27.

Ramie said ideas for expending the \$5,000 marketing earmark were shared. Producing a video was discussed. Ramie was asked to invite videographer Isaac Green Diebboll, or other videographers if he wasn't available, to the April 27th meeting to provide some tips.

The Byway has opted to go with North Country Brochure Distribution Service in order to get their brochures out of this area. They chose a one-time, mid-June distribution to two U.S. Interstate route areas. Those routes are I-81 from Syracuse south to Binghamton, and I-88 from Albany southwest to Binghamton.

Ramie noted that the Upper Delaware River Valley Eagle Express was discussed. The four-weekend trial run of a commercial bus service from Manhattan to the river valley with stops in Lumberland, Barryville, Narrowsburg, and Callicoon will begin the weekend of June 26-28. It was decided that the Byway would issue a press release expressing support for the concept and to promote it further. Richardson said he'd like the Byway website to link to the reservation portal at www.scva.net/eagleexpress when it is activated.

A letter to the NYS Department of Transportation Regions 8 & 9 inquiring about their 2015 maintenance schedule regarding mowing, paving, and vegetative control was approved.

The committee continued with their UDSB Enhancement Concept Plan Review. The Plan contains a six-page excerpt which includes Points of Interest. The committee is interested in exploring if these points are still valid and looking to update the list. It was noted that a brochure could be developed from this list of historic sites and views alone.

Ramie reported that the Byway's Annual Meeting and election of officers will take place on Monday, April 27th.

NPS Water Safety Campaign 3/23 Meeting Update: C. Odell reported that the water safety goals for the upcoming season were discussed. Getting the Wear It! banners and lawn signs back out will be encouraged.

Kevin Reish reported that he has been asked to provide interpretive canoe training to Delaware Water Gap staff at the beginning of the season.

The Commercial Use Authorization (CUA) safety talk check sheet has been approved. Laminated copies will be handed out at the Spring Water Safety Partners Meeting. This sheet will also be available digitally.

The public service announcements (PSAs) done last year will be "unveiled" at the spring meeting. These PSAs will be linked to various webpages and social media with hopes of getting the Wear It! message far reaching.

Water safety give-away items were discussed.

Discussion took place about replacing the signs for visitor information on Route 97 at both ends of the UDSRR corridor with the WearIt! logo. Pricing to accomplish this is being explored.

Odell said that Ingrid Peterec will be writing an article on the topic of safety and rescue for the November 2015 issue of Connections Magazine.

The next meeting of the committee is scheduled for Monday, April 27th at 12:30 and the pre-season meeting for livery and camp owners/operators will be held on Friday, May 1 at Konrad's Kitchen in Yulan.

Ritter suggested that signage for the WearIt! campaign should contain a hashtag. Ramie noted that next Tuesday at the Project Review Committee, a presentation will be given by the Park Service regarding the Commercial Use Authorizations. Henry said he won't be in attendance, but noted that there is language in the Commercial Use Authorization that states the holder will adhere to all state laws and regulations. He asked that the livery operation in Barryville be questioned as he believes the property they are operating on is state property. Ramie said that operation will be brought up. O'Dell provided some history on the operation. Henry reiterated that a Commercial Use Authorization does not allow the holder to set up a commercial enterprise unless they have specific authorization from the state.

Western Orange County Trails Forum 3/26 Meeting Update: Ramie said she attended this meeting in Huguenot, NY at the Deerpark Town Hall. She shared a map that was produced to show all the trail systems in Orange County. The purpose of the meeting hosted by the Orange County Citizens Foundation and Orange Pathways was to collect information on what sort of needs there are for trails, what connection opportunities are available, and recruit volunteers for various committees. Ramie noted that Orange County regards trails as transportation networks and eligible for funding due to this designation. Orange County has a non-motorized trail plan in place, Ramie added. A presentation was given by the Commissioner of Orange Department of Parks, Recreation & Conservation on the six county trails that they have and their expansion intentions for the O&W Railroad and the D&H Trails. They'd like to extend their Heritage Trail all the way through Middletown eventually. Those in attendance at the meeting broke out into small groups and marked up large maps with information regarding trails. Ramie said she gave a short talk on the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway as it is considered a motorized trail. Hamilton asked if the trails are paved. Ramie said she believes they are in all different conditions.

Long Eddy River Access 3/26 Meeting Update: T. O'Dell reported this meeting was primarily to engage the river guides and liveries with the local business owners in Long Eddy to see how they can work together. The meeting was attended by 22 people. O'Dell noted that the sale of the Ferry Street property has not been completed yet, but they remain optimistic that it will happen. He added that planning and design of the access will be discussed at a meeting at a future date. O'Dell shared some of the differing views on the proposed access, noting that overall it was a good meeting. Ritter stated that "everyone being kept in the loop is the most important thing."

April 2 Upper Delaware River Roundtable Meeting Update: T. O'Dell noted the focus of this meeting was agriculture with an emphasis on local food production and distribution. It began with a large group brainstorming session with small group breakouts following focusing on a food film series, aggregation, and mapping. A presentation was given by Jen Flad of the Sullivan County IDA regarding a food distribution center in the planning stages for outside Monticello.

O'Dell stated that a future agenda item for the Roundtable is the state of health in Sullivan County and surrounding area.

Ritter asked if the topic of the Narrowsburg School came up at the meeting. He noted he read an article in the April 14 edition of the *Sullivan County Democrat* which stated that the potential buyers of the school have applied for assistance from the Sullivan County Industrial Development Agency (IDA). Ritter asked O'Dell if he could attend the public hearing scheduled for April 30th at 10:00 a.m. at the Tusten Town Hall regarding this request. O'Dell told Ritter the Narrowsburg School was not discussed at the Roundtable meeting and told him he could attend the hearing.

Common Waters 4/9 Meeting Update: Ramie reported that she attended this meeting with Jessica Newbern of the National Park Service and referred members to her written notes provided in their packets. She said an update on the William Penn Foundation Pocono-Kittatinny Cluster was offered as they are one year into this project.

Ramie noted that a new funding source has been identified through the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service. A proposal was submitted for the Delaware River Basin requesting \$16 million. What was approved was \$835,000 for the Common Waters geography in New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. Landowners can apply for assistance for such projects as riparian buffer planting, stream fencing and animal crossing projects, and habitat work. The agreement needs to be finalized and meetings set up in each state, but it is hoped that they will be ready to disseminate information this fall and coordinate outreach to potential participants.

A Power Point presentation was given by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) on the Neversink River Floodplain Restoration Project. The site is a 550-acre preserve in Cuddebackville that the TNC declared one of the "Last Great Places" in the 1900s, only 100 of which exist in the nation, for its intact floodplain forests, large fallow fields, and extensive wetlands. The objectives for this restoration are to expand the intact 200+ acre floodplain forest by planting trees to speed up natural regeneration and provide habitat to key species. They want to reconnect a portion of the river that is separated from the floodplain by a .25 mile long earthen berm. The removal of that berm may also assist with Port Jervis flooding problems. Some of that dirt may contain Native American artifacts.

Ramie referred to the "Building Resilience in the Upper Delaware River Region" booklet provided in members' packets. She noted that Dorene Warner of W Design in Barryville was the graphic designer of this guide. This booklet serves as a summary of the plan, "Changing Climate: Risks & Opportunities for the Upper Delaware River Region". The booklet is not a dissertation on the cause of climate change but instead provides an overview with lots of images, bullet points, and facts to lead people to the plan. That publication is currently available at www.pinchot.org/adapt.

Ramie stated the rest of the meeting consisted of roundtable sharing. Her written report contains highlights of selected speakers. She said Grant LaRouche spoke of the Delaware River Basin Conservation Act. It would bring \$5 million for watershed protection to the watershed under the administration of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and bring a partnership of federal agencies, regional groups, and non-government organizations together to work on a comprehensive plan for the Delaware. He is unsure of the chances of this legislation passing.

Henry questioned the monitoring of the removal of the earthen berm, one of the objectives of the Neversink River Floodplain Restoration Project.

Ritter noted the Delaware River Basin Conservation Act has already gone through Congress a couple of times and failed in the past. He questioned why LaRouche is unsure of the legislation passing. Ramie said he did not explain his reason for saying that. She noted it seems to have more wide spread support than it has in the past two Congresses. Henry said he, as well as others, wonder how this legislation will benefit the area. Ritter said it is hoped to get someone in to speak to Council members about this legislation and provide answers to such questions. A brief discussion took place about the lack of funds available in the Upper Delaware region. Henry suggested that O'Dell try and get the legislative support document that accompanies the legislation. It is a public document. Ramie said staff will check on the availability of a speaker or speakers to explain the objectives and implications of the Delaware River Basin Conservation Act of 2015 at an upcoming UDC meeting. Ritter said that information on the Act can be found by searching #allaboutthatbasin.

Eastern Shale 4/13 Teleconference Update: T. O'Dell said he participated in the teleconference and noted there was not much information that applied to our area. Pennsylvania Chapter 78 Regulations were discussed. The Council provided comments on the proposed regulations in a March 6, 2014 letter to the Environmental Quality Board. Also discussed during the teleconference were cracker plants and pipelines.

Sullivan County Trail Committee 4/14 Meeting Update: Ramie said she attended this monthly meeting. Funding opportunities through Sullivan County and state grant programs were discussed. The committee is looking to apply to New York State through the Consolidated Funding Application program for funding to develop a Sullivan County Trails Plan. The Plan would include an inventory of all the public trails and information pertaining to them and a directory of trail development organizations. Ramie noted that all of this information is available, but is currently not in one documented resource. The committee would like to bring in speakers in the future to provide focus and come up with some more specific projects. Individuals from the Smallwood Forest Preserve are scheduled to speak at the May 12th meeting.

Other: Ritter questioned the Regulated Flow Advisory Committee (RFAC) information provided in the packets. Ramie said we were unable to attend this April 17 meeting, but the agenda and minutes from the last meeting held March 18, 2103 were provided for members' information. She noted that the infrequency of these meetings has been a concern to conservation groups.

New Business:

Review of FY 2016 Draft Work Plan: Ramie noted this document was sent out in advance. She stated that we have been advised by the Park Service that we no longer need to include the functional allocation section. The Work Plan does address all of the WU/RM committee responsibilities, Ramie added. Henry said he had two comments regarding the draft. On page 9 under "Pollution Control and Abatement", he recommended adding monitoring of the Mast Hope Mountain Community Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) in Lackawaxen Township. On page 5, #10 under Water Resources Management, Henry suggested that the word "degradation" be substituted for the word "impairments". A motion to recommend the FY 2016 Work Plan with the two suggested changes to the full Council was made by Henry, seconded by McKay and carried.

Letter from Westfall Township: Noise Pollution Issue at Hawk's Nest: Ramie referred to the letter from the Westfall Township Board of Supervisors provided in members' packets. Henry suggested the Westfall Township supervisors meet with the Town of Deepark elected officials to address this matter. After a brief discussion, it was decided that the UDC would send a reply letter to Westfall regarding their Hawk's Nest noise issue, referring them to the Town of Deepark and Upper Delaware Scenic Byway, Inc., with a copy to UDC Town of Deepark Representative Dave Dean.

Delaware River Flow and Storage Report: Ritter referred to the handout in members' packets. He noted that combined total NYC Reservoir storage is currently at 95.4% with Cannonsville at 97.7% and Pepacton at 92.2%. Normal for this date is 98.3%. He added that Cannonsville release has been around 95 cfs and water temperature is between 49 and 51 degrees. Ritter reported that on April 2nd, Cannonsville was at 59% capacity and today it is at 97.7%. He noted that is a lot of water that has come into the reservoir.

Other: Ramie reminded members of the UDC Awards Banquet taking place at the Central House on Sunday, April 26th.

Public Comment: None

Adjournment: A motion by Henry seconded by McKay to adjourn the meeting at 8:18 p.m. was carried.

Minutes prepared by Cindy Odell, 4/28/15