

Upper Delaware Scenic Byway, Inc.

March 26, 2012 Meeting Minutes

Attendance:

Voting members:

Nadia Rajs, Town of Lumberland representative, Chairperson
Ed Boyer, Town of Tusten representative, Vice-chairperson
Larry H. Richardson, Town of Cochecon rep., Secretary-Treasurer
Cliff Johnston, Village of Hancock rep.
Ginny Dudko, Town of Deerpark rep.
Rosie DeCristofaro, Town of Delaware rep.
Dan Van Kleeck, City of Port Jervis rep.
Carol Roig, Town of Highland alt.

Non-voting members:

Loren Goering, National Park Service Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River
Glenn Pontier, Sullivan Renaissance
Laurie Ramie, Upper Delaware Council

Guests:

none



Call to Order: Chairperson Nadia Rajs called the meeting held at the Upper Delaware Council office in Narrowsburg to order at 7:01 p.m.

Acceptance of Minutes: On a motion by Van Kleeck, seconded by Dudko, minutes from the Feb. 27, 2012 meeting were approved, with all in favor.

Correspondence Report:

Ramie noted that asterisks on this written report indicate handouts or action items.

Incoming Correspondence:

1. From Debra Conway, 2/27: Upcoming Renaissance project at Fort Delaware; potential opportunity for UDSB Visitors' Center promotion.
2. From Catskill Hudson Bank, 3/2: NYS Grant TM08104 account statement, \$6,250 as of 2/29/12.
3. From Catskill Hudson Bank, 3/2: NYS Grant TM07083 account statement, \$6,250 as of 2/29/12.
4. From Catskill Hudson Bank, 3/2: NYS Grant M060091 account statement, \$639 as of 2/29/12.
5. * From Delaware County Chamber of Commerce, 3/2: Membership renewal invoice, \$125 due.
6. From Sullivan County Visitors Association, 3/5: Thank you for your recent membership renewal, 2012 decal enclosed.
7. From Jeff Bank, 3/5: UDSB, Inc. non-profit account statement, \$8,477.12 of as 2/29/12.
8. From Burt Thelander, 3/5: Forward of correspondence between Orange County Legislator Dennis Simmons and Planning Commissioner David Church: the \$1,500 from the county was just approved, will take 2-3 weeks to process.
9. From Heather Jacksy, 3/15: Cancelled check from studio d'ARC provided. What other information do you need to get the grant funds?
10. * From Orange County, 3/15: Check for \$1,500 as Orange County 2011 contribution to UDSB, Inc. signage project for Town of Deerpark and City of Port Jervis.
11. * From Town of Tusten, 3/16: Check for \$1,000 as 2012 municipal contribution to UDSB, Inc.
12. * From Frontier, 3/19: Monthly invoice of \$70.76 due by 4/9/12.
13. * From Congressman Maurice D. Hinchey, Jr., 3/21: Letter to NYS DOT Commissioner Joan McDonald on the Pond Eddy Bridge.
14. * From Sean J. McGuinness, NPS, 3/22: Response letter to UDSB comments on Pond Eddy Bridge.

Outgoing Correspondence:

1. To UDSB Committee, 3/1: Summary of Action Items from 2/27/12 UDSB, Inc. Meeting.
2. To Larry Richardson, 3/1: Reminder of due date for Callicoon Cooperative Insurance bill. Reply: check sent.
3. To Nadia Rajs, 3/1: Appointment of a Nominating Committee, must present slate at March meeting.
4. To UDSB Distribution List, 3/2: UDSB, Inc. Feb. 27, 2012 Meeting Minutes.
5. * To Sean J. McGuinness, superintendent, NPS Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River, 3/7: UDSB, Inc. comment letter on Pond Eddy Bridge project, issued with Rajs signature on 3/9. Mailed to major Upper Delaware outfitters on 3/15.

6. To Dan Van Kleeck, 3/14, from Dorene Warner: Administration information for UDSB Facebook page, as originally sent to Dan and Glenn Pontier on 3/6.
7. To Supervisor Carol Wingert, 3/14: Invoice with reminder that the Town of Tusten has not submitted any contribution to UDSB, Inc. for 2012.
8. To UDSB Committee, 3/14: Details from Laurie Ramie about the renewed project and traffic impacts from NYS DOT work at the NYS Route 97 Hawk's Nest based on discussion with engineer-in-charge Dan Edzenga.
9. To Heather Jacksy, 3/15: To process Grant TM07083 reimbursement, need an invoice from studio d'ARC outlining services performed and a copy of the county's contract.
10. To Nancy Canfield, NYS Department of Economic Development, re: FY 2007-08 NYS Grant Agreement TM07083, final reimbursement requested for UDSB Visitors' Center Feasibility Study and Concept Design at Sullivan County's Fort Delaware Museum of Colonial History in Narrowsburg.
11. To Heather Jacksy, 3/16: Confirmation from Laurie that the Grant TM07083 package was submitted this morning. Text for project narrative attached.
12. To Carol Wingert and Tusten Town Board, 3/16: Appreciation for Tusten's municipal contribution.
13. * To City of Port Jervis, Towns of Delaware, Tusten, Highland, and Lumberland, and Village of Hancock, 3/16: reminder memo, NYS Grant M060091 Projects – Due Date: Aug. 1, 2012.
14. To UDSB Distribution List, 3/21: Agenda for March 26 UDSB, Inc. meeting.
15. * To Chris White, aide to Congressman Hinchey, 3/26: Draft UDSB, Inc. letter to U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on UDSB Visitors' Center federal earmark issue, for review and guidance.

Ramie noted that the Town of Tusten's contribution of \$1,000 on Mar. 16 completed the 2012 donations from local member municipalities, although she said she would inquire again about the status of Sullivan County's 2012 budgeted allocation.

Treasurer's Report:

Richardson said he was pleased to see all the support that came in from the municipal members. He reported that he had written the \$3,000 donation check to the Upper Delaware Council, but was unable to present it due to the UDC's cancellation of its March meeting. He will do so in April. Richardson highlighted his written report of transactions made from Feb. 28 to Mar. 25. The Jeff Bank account balance is \$7,277.14, the NYS Grant TM07083 account balance is \$6,250, the NYS Grant M060091 account balance is \$638.93, and there is \$22.48 in the PayPal account. Ramie questioned the check for \$100 to Terry Whitt for tax preparation services, noting that Whitt had charged \$50. Richardson said that he will look into correcting the balance. He reviewed new bills received for payment, which include \$100 due to W Design for March website maintenance, \$70.76 due to Frontier for phone service, and \$125 due to the Delaware County Chamber of Commerce for 2012 dues. On a **motion** by Van Kleeck, seconded by Johnston, the Treasurer's Report was accepted and the new bills were approved for payment, with all in favor.

New Business:

- a) **Nominating Committee Report** – Rajsz noted that she had asked Richardson, DeCristofaro and Dudko to serve on the Nominating Committee, although DeCristofaro was unavailable. Dudko reported that she had attempted to get in touch with all of the board members to inquire about their interest in filling any of the officer positions. She was not able to reach Johnston due to an incorrect area code on the members' list. Ramie said she would update that. Dudko concluded that all three officers are willing to serve another term: Nadia Rajsz as chairperson; Ed Boyer as vice-chair; and Larry Richardson as secretary-treasurer. The slate will therefore be the same when presented for a vote at the April 23 annual meeting.
- b) **Other** – Richardson said that it has been difficult for Ramie to put the same amount of time into the UDSB coordination activities due to her Acting Executive Director role at the Upper Delaware Council. When this organization was conceived, it wasn't envisioned that it would meet monthly, he said. Richardson asked whether the monthly schedule needs to continue or can we delegate some responsibilities to committees to handle outside of regular meetings? UDSB, Inc. does not have the money to hire a staff person. It is hoped that UDSB will have a steady source of income some day to make that possible. UDSB, Inc. gets a lot of mileage out of its annual donation to the UDC. Rajsz asked the board if they felt revising the meeting schedule to every other month or quarterly would work. Van Kleeck said that special meetings could be called when necessary. Pontier said that staffing issues shouldn't drive this discussion. The question should be, do monthly meetings serve a purpose? We get a lot done and the members show up. Pontier said he thinks that changing the meeting schedule would change our effectiveness. The impetus for changing the meeting schedule should be that we don't have enough business to conduct. If staffing is the issue, deal with that. If Ramie didn't have the responsibility of taking the notes and transcribing them, that would take

off a burden. Dudko said that she feels we would lose energy and momentum to only meet quarterly. Richardson said that Ramie's time on UDSB is taken up by a lot more than doing the minutes. It's all the coordination and correspondence in between meetings. Rajszejczyk suggested putting this item on next month's agenda for further discussion.

Old Business:

- a) **Pond Eddy Bridge Update** – Ramie reviewed the handouts on this subject, which included a Mar. 7 letter from UDSB to NPS Superintendent Sean McGuinness; minutes from the Feb. 14 meeting of the Pond Eddy Bridge Design Advisory Committee (DAC); a Mar. 19 reply to UDSB from McGuinness; Congressman Hinchey's Mar. 21 letter to NYS Department of Transportation Commissioner Joan McDonald; and Glenn Pontier's Mar. 27 letter of resignation from the Pond Eddy Bridge DAC. Pontier said that this body can either appoint someone to replace him or accept his reasons for quitting the committee. Since the DOT agencies are not going along with this group's objective to keep the old bridge, he can't fulfill this role. Rajszejczyk said she doesn't agree with Pontier's decision to vacate the DAC. Walking away doesn't help the situation. There is force in numbers to stay. Richardson agreed that Pontier could put his objections on the record if he remained on the committee. Pontier said that the DOTs are pushing for the least objectionable of the replacement alternatives. You have to be a very squeaky wheel in a resistant room. He feels there's more integrity to not be a part of a process with which he doesn't agree. His letter hints at legal action. He has done a lot of research on this. It's Pennsylvania's policy that any bridge that can't be brought up to modern standards must be replaced. Nothing we say at this meeting is going to save that old bridge. Rajszejczyk said she's disappointed that Pontier is going to resign. She knows that Assemblywoman Gunther is looking into this and we have the National Park Service's influence. Goering said that if this is not a permanent obstruction or damage to the river, he's not sure Section 7 could be used to object to the bridge's replacement. Pontier said he thinks we win by bottling up PennDOT and New York withdrawing its funds. Relying on someone else to save us is not a good strategy. Eventually somebody will have to file a lawsuit, which is going to be expensive. He will be sending his letter to local newspapers to publish. Boyer commented that there are a lot of Delaware River bridges that aren't up to modern standards. Is it in our interest to have some kind of policy that bridges must meet safety needs but be pleasing to us? How would we apply this measure all along the Delaware? Rajszejczyk said Pond Eddy is one of only four Petit Truss bridges left. Most other bridges go from major road to major road, while this one goes to a dead end. It's a special bridge which adds to our river valley's character. Finally, why should NYS spend approximately \$4 million on this bridge? It's an important means of transportation for the people on the PA side but it does nothing for the Lumberland side. They're proposing to replace a historic structure with a mega-bridge. Pontier said that Skinners Falls is an example of a bridge that doesn't meet modern standard. If we can't save a bridge that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places in an area that is a National Wild and Scenic River, we're pretty weak. This construction is going to wreak havoc with boat and Route 97 traffic. All of the equipment and materials will need to be brought in by road. It will be a disaster on and out of the river. Rajszejczyk said another proposal that has been dismissed was to rehabilitate this to a walking bridge and build a road on the PA side to serve those residents. Roig asked why PennDOT gets to make an arbitrary decision on a historic bridge across the Delaware. Boyer asked again if we should have a policy about bridges on this highway. Most bridges tend to get old and something has to be done. Pontier said that's a wonderful idea to pass a policy that UDSB, Inc. wants to preserve historic bridges. This is a scenic byway, not an interstate. He's not going to tolerate the frustration of going to the final DAC meeting on Mar. 29. Richardson said he appreciates Pontier's stand but believes this organization should be at the meeting. We shouldn't pout and take our ball from the court. Pontier noted that the Interstate Bridge Commission owns the bridge. PennDOT has authority over it as they do over the five southern bridges in the Upper Delaware. A lawsuit would likely be an Article 78 filed against the Interstate Bridge Commission and the DOT. We could chain ourselves to the bridge but, in the end, if they want to replace it, they will. We shouldn't let our heritage go, Pontier said. Rajszejczyk said we made a dent by writing letters and making higher authorities aware of the situation. Richardson said we haven't seen an estimate of what a bridge rehabilitation would cost. New York would have to pay half of that too. Goering said he believes they did have cost estimates for rehab. Pontier replied that a 2009 report said \$10 million-plus, but it didn't tie that figure to anything. Pontier said the bridge was designed for 18 tons originally. The causeway will cost millions of dollars for that temporary bridge. It will allow water to go through but not necessarily boaters. Raising the level of the causeway adds to the cost. Rajszejczyk thanked Pontier for his service and asked Roig if she would be able and willing to take over. Roig said she could try to change her schedule and attend the Mar. 29 meeting. On a

motion by Richardson, seconded by Dudko, the UDSB, Inc. board appointed Carol Roig as the UDSB representative to the Pond Eddy Bridge Design Advisory Committee, with all in favor. Ramie will write a cover letter to Pontier's letter announcing the new appointment.

- b) **Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan for the Upper Delaware River Corridor** – At the Mar. 12 meeting, the advisory committee opted to contract with Synthesis/LaBerge Group of Schenectady to coordinate the regional charette and compile the LWR Plan.
- c) **UDSB Visitor Center Update** – Ramie referenced a draft letter to Hon. John L. Mica, chair of the U.S. House of Representatives' Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, on the UDSB's requested modification of the 2005 SAFETEA-LU allocation for the design and construction of a UDSB Visitor Center. She said that Chris White, aide to Congressman Maurice Hinchey who had sponsored the funding, had agreed to review the letter to provide any suggested changes. Richardson said that we have nothing to lose by sending this letter. The funding has already been earmarked for this project. It's not a new initiative, just a change in location from Cochection to Tusten. Van Kleeck suggested adding Congresswoman Nan Hayworth to the list of courtesy copies. Ramie said she would wait to hear back from White before issuing the letter.
- d) **Status of Current Grants** – Active grants under administration include: 1) 2011 Orange County Funding (Port Jervis and Deerpark signs) – payment of \$1,500 was received on Mar. 15. 2) FY07 FHWA grant (\$12,400 award plus \$3,540 local match for the Invasive Plant Species Educational Campaign and Interpretive Signage Project) – UDSB awaits payment of \$4,557.83 from its second reimbursement request submitted Aug. 12. The contract for this grant ends on June 1, 2012. 3) NYS Grant M060091 (originally \$50,000, now an approximately \$18,750 balance) - The six beautification projects must be completed by Aug. 15, 2012. Ramie issued a memo to the project sponsors on Mar. 16 requesting submission of their project documentation by Aug. 1. A copy of the memo was provided. 4) NYS Grant TM07083 (\$25,000 for UDSB Visitor Center Feasibility Study) – This project has concluded in advance of the Aug. 15, 2012 contract deadline. A copy of the cover letter for Ramie's reimbursement request package dated Mar. 16 was provided. 5) NYS Grant TM08104 (\$25,000 for a UDSB Marketing Matching Funds Campaign) – Contract expires 8/31/12. UDSB awaits receipt of documentation from Sullivan County Visitors Association in order to file for reimbursement.
- e) **Other** – 1) Van Kleeck said that he should be able to arrange a presentation on the Port Jervis Whitewater Park proposal for the Apr. 23 meeting. He will let Ramie know two weeks in advance whether it's confirmed. 2) Ramie reported that UDSB webmaster Dorene Warner of W Design had e-mailed her that 43 people now "like" UDSB on Facebook. DeCristofaro said she had gone to the page and was very disappointed in what she saw. Pontier said that somebody else put up an Upper Delaware Scenic Byway Facebook page that is inadequate, but urged her to look again at the official page that Warner created. 3) DeCristofaro said that we should plan ahead on making a funding request for the UDSB Visitor Center when the next round of Federal Highway Administration National Scenic Byways Program grants opens. The LWRP could form the basis for another grant application by identifying needs and then putting a price tag on them. 4) Ramie called attention to the invitation for the Upper Delaware Council's 24th Annual Awards Ceremony taking place on April 22 at The Carriage House in Barryville, noting that the reservation deadline is Apr. 13 and tickets are \$25. 5) Pontier provided a flyer for a Sullivan Renaissance Spring Gardening Seminar taking place on Apr. 4 at 7 p.m. at the CVI Building in Ferndale.

Public Comment – None

Next Meeting Date – Monday, April 23, 2012

Adjourn – On a motion by Van Kleeck, seconded by Boyer, the UDSB, Inc. meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Laurie Ramie, 4/20/12