

Upper Delaware Scenic Byway, Inc.

February 27, 2012 Meeting Minutes

Attendance:

Voting members:

Nadia Rajsz, Town of Lumberland representative, Chairperson
Larry H. Richardson, Town of Cochection rep., Secretary-Treasurer
Cliff Johnston, Village of Hancock rep.
Ginny Dudko, Town of Deerpark rep.
Rosie DeCristofaro, Town of Delaware rep.
Amanda Scully, Town of Highland rep.
Dan Van Kleeck, City of Port Jervis rep.
Carol Roig, Town of Highland alt.
Rose Fredricks, Town of Tusten alternate

Non-voting members:

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

Guests:

Dorene Warner, W Design

Call to Order: Chairperson Nadia Rajsz called the meeting held at the Upper Delaware Council office in Narrowsburg to order at 7:02 p.m.

Acceptance of Minutes: On a motion by Van Kleeck, seconded by DeCristofaro, minutes from the January 23, 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 Town of Lumberland, 1/27: 2012 municipal donation of \$1,500 to UDSB, Inc.
2. From Earth Day Shirts, 1/30: Solicitation postcard for Earth Day t-shirt offer, expires 2/23/12.
3. From Terry L. Whitt, CPA, 1/30: Annual electronic filing of Form 990-N with IRS is completed. Copy of receipt, one-page CHAR 500 filing for NYS requiring a signature, and invoice for \$50 enclosed.
4. From Susan Hawvermale, Orange County Tourism, 1/30: Forward of a brochure request from individual residing in Toronto, Ontario, Canada: "Some time ago on my travels through the NE US I picked up the 'Upper Delaware Scenic Byway' booklet. I was wondering if you have, in the same format, any more of such publications? If you do, I would appreciate receiving them at the above mailing address."
5. From Dan Van Kleeck, 2/1: Have already made arrangements with the Port Jervis Whitewater Committee to have a representative come give a presentation to UDSB, Inc. in April or May.
6. From Catskill Hudson Bank, 2/2: NYS Grant M060091 Account Statement as of 1/31/12, \$638 balance.
7. From Catskill Hudson Bank, 2/2: NYS Grant TM07083 Account Statement as of 1/31/12, \$6,250 balance.
8. * From Callicoon Cooperative Insurance Co., 2/3: Premium notice, \$429 due to Special Multi-Peril Policy renewal by 3/2/12.
9. * From Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther, 2/6: Response letter regarding maintenance of Route 97.
10. From Jeff Bank, 2/6: UDSB Account Statement as of 1/31/12, \$7,212.74.
11. * From Nancy Canfield, NYS Dept. of Economic Development, 2/8: Executed contract for NYS Grant TM08104, for duties and services performed April 1, 2011-August 31, 2012 in an amount not to exceed \$25,000.
12. From Herb Clark, SCVA, 2/8: Great news. Short-staffed this week but should be able to supply you with most of the advertising bills by next week for NYS Grant TM08104.
13. From Town of Deerpark, 2/9: 2012 municipal donation of \$1,000 to UDSB, Inc.
14. * From Sullivan County Visitors Association, 2/9: Invoice for annual membership dues, \$100.
15. From Patty Cullen, Delaware County Tourism, 2/9: Introduce you to Carol O'Beirne, leading efforts to designate the Central Catskills Scenic Byway. You might be a good resource if she has questions.
16. From Patty Cullen, 2/10: Finalizing the Greater Catskills Recreation Guide brochure and realized that we need new artwork for the UDSB's increased ad size ASAP, 4.75" w. x 9.85" h.

17. From NYS Department of Transportation, 2/13: Fact sheet on "Critical Statewide Financial Management System Vendor Impacts".
18. * From Supervisor Andrew Boyar, Town of Highland, 2/13: Town of Highland's letter to NYS legislators re: Planned Replacement of the Pond Eddy Bridge in the Town of Lumberland, Sullivan County, NY.
19. From Frontier Communications, 2/14: Eligible to upgrade to a Frontier Premium IT Services package free for one year by signing up for Business High-Speed Internet for \$35/month.
20. From City of Port Jervis, 2/15: 2012 municipal donation of \$500 to UDSB, Inc.
21. * From State of New York, 2/15: Check for \$6,250 as advance deposit for NYS Grant TM08104. Requires resolution to open a dedicated bank account.
22. From Mike Preis Insurance, 2/15: Directors and Officers Policy, with renewal certification.
23. * From Frontier, 2/12: Invoice for monthly telephone services, \$70.98 due by 3/12/12.
24. * From Doreen Hanson, Town Clark, 2/23: On Feb. 14, 2012, the Town of Highland designated Carol Roig as the alternate representative to the UDSB.
25. From Burt Thelander, 2/23: Card: "Dear Laurie (and all UDSB colleagues), Thank you so much for your kind and generous 1/27/12 note. I am and will be interested in your work, and will stay in touch. Be resolute in your endeavors. Warm regards, Burt."

Outgoing Correspondence:

1. To Mike Preis Insurance, 1/24: Special Multi-Peril Policy, signed forms returned to process renewal.
2. To Terry L. Whitt, CPA, 1/24: Retain services to prepare the 2011 IRS Form 990 and NYS Charities Bureau Form CHAR 500 annual filings, with financial statements enclosed.
3. To Greater Barryville Chamber of Commerce, 1/24: Invoice for \$154 to place 44 GBCC member basic text listings on the UDSB website for a one-year period.
4. To Fritz Mayer, *The River Reporter*, 1/27: Correction requested to 1/26 article, "Upper Delaware Scenic Byway Visitor Center to Feature Roof with a View".
5. To Supervisor Nadia Rajs and Lumberland Town Board, 1/27: Appreciation for \$1,500 municipal donation to UDSB, Inc.
6. To Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther, 1/27: Exchange of correspondence with NYS DOT Region 9 regarding maintenance guidelines for Route 97.
7. To Burt Thelander, Godeffroy, NY, 1/27: Appreciation letter for valuable service as the Town of Deerpark's UDSB co-representative since July 19, 2004.
8. To UDSB Committee, 1/31: Summary of Action Items, 1/23/12 UDSB, Inc. Meeting.
9. To Mike Preis Insurance, 2/2: \$950 payment and signed forms enclosed for Directors & Officers Policy renewal.
10. To New York State Charities Bureau, 2/3: 2011 Annual Filing for Charitable Organizations, signed by chairperson and treasurer.
11. To Nadia Rajs and Glenn Pontier, from Laurie Ramie, 2/6: Draft letter for review, Pond Eddy Bridge Project.
12. To Roberta Byron Lockwood and Herb Clark, Sullivan County Visitors Association, 2/8: Notice that the NYS Grant TM08104 contract for the \$25,000 marketing campaign has been received. Request to submit invoices and cancelled checks to seek reimbursement.
13. * To Ruth Pierpont, director, NYS Division for Historic Preservation, 2/10: UDSB, Inc. letter and resolution on Pond Eddy Bridge Project.
14. To Anne Dubrovsky, Fisher Mears Associates, 2/10: Need to re-size UDSB ad for Delaware County publication from the original file.
15. To Frederic Harris, Aleph Co, 2/14: Re-designed UDSB ad for 2012 which incorporates the QR code for insertion in the Delaware County brochure.
16. To SCVA, 2/15: Notice that UDSB has received the \$6,250 advance deposit for NYS Grant TM08104.
17. To Nancy Canfield, NYS Dept. of Economic Development, 2/16: Notarized Authorization of Opening of Dedicated Bank Account for NYS Grant TM08104.
18. To UDSB Distribution List, 2/16: UDSB, Inc. Jan. 23, 2012 Meeting Minutes.
19. To Supervisor Karl Brabenec and Deerpark Town Board, 2/16: Appreciation for \$1,000 municipal donation to UDSB, Inc.
20. To Mayor Russell Potter and City of Port Jervis Common Council, 2/16: Appreciation for \$500 municipal donation to UDSB, Inc.
21. To Carol Roig, 2/23: Request for mailing and phone contact information as new Town of Highland UDSB alternate, and copies of the bylaws, January minutes, and February agenda.

Ramie pointed out that the Highland Town Board had appointed Carol Roig as its alternate, replacing Scott Hallock, at its Feb. 14 meeting. Introductions were made around the table.

Treasurer's Report:

Richardson highlighted his written report of transactions made from Jan. 23 to Feb. 18. He noted the latest 2012 municipal donations received from the Towns of Delaware, Lumberland, Deerpark, and City of Port Jervis. All of the local municipalities have now made contributions except the Town of Tusten. The Jeff Bank account balance is

\$8,441.88, 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. He reviewed new bills received for payment, which include \$100 due to W Design for website maintenance, \$70.98 due to Frontier for phone service, \$100 due to the Sullivan County Visitors Association for 2012 dues, and \$429 due to Callicoon Cooperative Insurance Co. for renewal of the liability policy. Richardson reiterated that, as approved during adoption of the 2012 budget in January, he will be issuing a check for \$3,000 as a donation to the Upper Delaware Council at the UDC's March 1 meeting. On a **motion** by Van Kleeck, seconded by DeCristofaro, the Treasurer's Report was accepted and the new bills were approved for payment, with all in favor.

Quarterly Website Report:

Dorene Warner acknowledged the receipt of corrections made by DeCristofaro to the UDSB QR code mobile landing page and said she would make those changes. Warner presented statistical reports for February showing that visitation is up 10% from last month. December visitation had been the lowest month of the year, which is not unusual. Pages that have been most frequented since Feb. 2011-2012 are: 1. home page; 2. overview; 3. attractions-hiking; 4. attractions-river; 5. sections-middle; 6. sections-lower; 7. sections-upper; 8. sections-south; 9. sections-north; and 10. attractions-eagle. She continues to track the number of website visitors who access it through mobile devices. There were over 200 this month. This is useful information to have, particularly in light of the grant application that UDSB, Inc. submitted to update the website for mobile devices and Google maps. Google is the top search engine that visitors are using to find the UDSB website. Rajsz asked about the status of UDSB's Facebook page. Pontier said that UDSB has approximately 31 friends. He goes on it approximately once a week to add a comment and Warner occasionally posts as well. Pontier said it hasn't caught on as a big success, but it's alive and current. DeCristofaro asked what the distinction is between liking the UDSB's Facebook page and liking the website. Which is preferable? Pontier said those are two separate venues. Facebook is a free network, unlike the website, on which you can put as much or little information as you want and can keep it open or restricted. There is no spam on Facebook, unlike a website. One out of every eight people on the planet has a Facebook page. Warner replied that if you have a Facebook page as a business or individual, it's good to post quite often. It's a social network to essentially provide free advertising to draw traffic to a website. Goering explained that Facebook is more interactive than a website and offers the opportunity to make targeted announcements to those who "like" them. He stressed that UDSB should be making an effort to reach out by including a Facebook logo on its print ads, liking other byways and visitor associations, and regularly monitoring the page. Van Kleeck said he would volunteer to monitor it. Warner and Pontier also have administrative access. Ramie asked Warner whether the Greater Barryville Chamber of Commerce has acted on the invoice that UDSB sent on Jan. 24 to add its member listings to the UDSB website. Warner said that payment is pending. She added that GBCC will host its annual Mid-Winter Warm-up on Saturday, Mar. 3, from 5:30-9:30 p.m. at The Carriage House in Barryville. This event raises funds for community scholarships and beautification projects. There will also be an awards ceremony, silent auction, and live music. She noted that Roig is an award finalist. Tickets are \$40. Warner departed the meeting at 7:34 p.m.

New Business:

- a) **Pond Eddy Bridge Update** – Ramie referenced handouts which included: the UDSB's Feb. 10 letter to the New York State Historic Preservation Office with Resolution 2012-01: Pond Eddy Bridge Project enclosed; a Feb. 10 letter from the Town of Highland; and an article from the Feb. 19 *Times Herald-Record*, "Tiny Bridge Leads to Big Debate" which featured an interview with Pontier expressing the UDSB's concerns. Pontier offered a report from the Feb. 14 meeting of the Pond Eddy Bridge Design Advisory Committee. Nine different designs were presented, all of which were 40 tons and 30-feet wide. The supports for all of these bridges are above the structure, which he sees as a significant design flaw. All bridges have to be above the 100-year flood mark. His sense is that the 2006 flood would have taken out a bridge built to these specifications. The designs ranged from concrete, which was the least expensive option with no fancy features, to nicer designs with arches and trusses. They will need to build a causeway to work on the new bridge while traffic continues on the existing bridge. The height of that causeway could be an issue. They propose to build it low so that only water and fish can go through it. Boaters would have to portage around it for two construction seasons. Pontier said he still thinks that Pennsylvania should build a road to serve its Pond Eddy residents. Right now, PennDOT is on a course for proceeding with one of these 9 bridges. The existing bridge is deteriorating and a decision was made back in the 1970s to replace it. PennDOT specializes in building generic highway bridges that are easy to repair. That's not reassuring when UDSB's position is to advocate to restore the old bridge or to keep the bridge for pedestrian use and build a road on the PA side. He foresees two areas of influence that could stop this project: 1) If NY cuts off the funding

that PA needs; and 2) If the National Park Service is emboldened to deny this project the required permit. Pontier said his slogan has become, "Save the bridge. Save the money. Save the river." Goering commented that NPS wants a bridge that maintains the character of the river valley. He foresees objections to a two-year portage requirement and anticipates that NPS would negotiate against a low causeway. That causeway could influence the overall cost for the bridge design. Fredricks asked what happened to a previous proposal to build the new bridge downstream. Pontier said there was a hydrology issue. They're not allowed to hinder the flow of the river. It has to either be maintained or improved at current levels. Fredricks said that a lot of dirt has accumulated at the base of the middle pier that should be removed. Pontier said that DOT does not specialize in restoring historic bridges or designing scenic ones. We should urge getting an estimate for an expert to provide an independent evaluation of options since he feels the DOT's 2009 analysis report was lacking. Pontier reiterated that UDSB should stand firm on its call to rehabilitate the existing bridge to the 15 tons for which it was designed. Otherwise, we will lose part of our heritage, there will be damage to the river, and it will cost more to build a new bridge. The PA road can't support a 40-ton vehicle for size or turnarounds. If each UDSB municipality was to write a letter similar to the Town of Highland's directed to our state legislators, that would help. Ramie noted that the DAC meetings are open to the public. The next session, which organizers intended to be the final meeting at which the new bridge design is selected, will be on Thursday, March 29, from 6-9 p.m. at Shohola Township Municipal Building.

- b) **Gunther Response on Route 97 Maintenance** – Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther sent a letter dated Feb. 3 which stated, "Dear Nadia, Thank you for forwarding your concerns about the maintenance of Route 97. I have taken the liberty of discussing this issue with the New York State Department of Transportation to get a better understanding of the issue. While I understand the importance of the UDSB, I am also aware of the financial constraints of the NYSDOT. Considering this, I would like to suggest that the UDSB discuss the implementation of an Adopt-a-Highway Program with NYSDOT. This would continue NYSDOT maintenance of the highway per New York State Maintenance guidelines, but allow the UDSB to supplement those efforts. I would be happy to facilitate this discussion if you feel it would be helpful. Please feel free to contact me to further discuss this issue." Rajs reported that she received a call from Dean Smith, the DOT assistant resident engineer for Sullivan County, who apologized for not having enough resources and manpower to address Route 97 maintenance more frequently. This year, the DOT is buying a mower that will go over the guardrails. They intend to start mowing in Lumberland and proceed north along Route 97. Pontier wondered whether UDSB could use this letter as an opening to say, if NYS doesn't have enough money to maintain the highway, it should not be spending money to build a bridge to nowhere. Rajs added that she also discussed the use of brown, rustic rails with Smith. He said those guardrails had been used in state park areas but were discontinued because of how quickly they rusted.
- c) **NYS Grant TM08104 Account** – Ramie reported that the NYS Department of Economic Development had sent the executed contract for Grant TM08104 on Feb. 7 based on UDSB's submission of its draft agreement last June, and a \$6,250 check representing a 25% advance on the \$25,000 award was received on Feb. 15. Ramie has notified the Sullivan County Visitors Association that they may now submit proof of expenditures for the ad placements in this marketing campaign so that Ramie can apply to the state for reimbursement. On a **motion** by Scully, seconded by Van Kleeck, the UDSB board approved the opening of a dedicated account at Catskill Hudson Bank with UDSB Grants Coordinator Laurie Ramie as signatory, with all in favor.
- d) **LWRP Meeting Report** – Heather Jacksy of Sullivan County Planning had convened a meeting of the advisory committee for the Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan for the Upper Delaware River Corridor on Feb. 24 at the Highland Town Hall in Eldred. Rajs, Pontier, and Ramie were among those present. Ramie reported that four bids were received in response to the county's Request for Proposals by entities interested in organizing a regional charette and finalizing the plan document. The committee reviewed them and opted to request interviews with two of the candidates. A tentative meeting was set up on March 9 at 9 a.m., same location. Ramie said this work will wrap up phase one of the LWRP effort. The county received a follow-up state grant for \$125,000 to pursue design of new or improved river accesses and water trail-type signage from Hancock to Port Jervis.
- e) **"Sullivan Planners Seek to Upgrade Technology"** – A copy of this article from the Feb. 15 *Times Herald-Record* was handed out for review. Ramie pointed out that Sullivan County has included a Route 97 pilot area as part of this project to have engineering firms submit design idea bids to extend broadband and cell phone service.

- f) **Other** – Ramie displayed a certificate that *The River Reporter* had delivered today to commemorate Route 97 being voted as “Most Scenic Drive” in the newspaper’s 2011 “Best Of” contest. Pontier announced that the Sullivan Renaissance Annual Conference and Expo will take place on March 10 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the CVI building in Ferndale. Applications for the 2012 round of Sullivan Renaissance grants are due by March 21. For more information, call (845) 295-2445 or visit www.sullivanrenaissance.org.

Old Business:

- a) **UDSB Visitor Center Strategies** – Ramie reported that Sullivan County Planning Commissioner Luiz Aragon had been in touch with Congressman Hinchey’s office to ascertain the likelihood of UDSB, Inc. being able to change the location of the visitor center from Cochection to Narrowsburg in the Federal Transportation Funding bill. Aragon said he was assured that federal funding for the project remains secure but new legislation will be required to make that change. Congress is not currently entertaining any earmarks however. Pontier suggested that UDSB should investigate who is the chair of the committee that oversees earmarks. Richardson agreed that this organization should write a letter explaining the situation. Rajsz said she would ask Hinchey aide Chris White for the appropriate contact person.
- b) **IRS and State Filings** – UDSB, Inc. received proof of its Form 990 filing with the IRS and sent in the signed Form 500 to New York State Charities Bureau based on Hancock accountant Terry Whitt’s quick preparation.
- c) **Status of Current Grants** – Active grants under administration include: 1) 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. 2) NYS Grant M060091 (originally \$50,000, now an approximately \$18,750 balance) - The six beautification projects must be completed by Aug. 15, 2012. 3) NYS Grant TM07083 (\$25,000 for UDSB Visitor Center Feasibility Study) – This project has concluded in advance of the Aug. 15, 2012 contract deadline. Reimbursement can be sought once Sullivan County pays the contractor. 4) NYS Grant TM08104 (\$25,000 for a UDSB Marketing Matching Funds Campaign) – previously reported on; contract expires 8/31/12. Ramie added that the \$1,500 reimbursement from Orange County for the outdoor panels in Deerpark and Port Jervis is pending based on her Jan. 6 submission.
- d) **Other** – Pontier reintroduced the topic of the Pond Eddy Bridge. He proposed that UDSB write a letter to the National Park Service asking them to maintain the recreational value of the river. Rajsz said she doesn’t think we can segment our concerns like that. If they can’t upgrade the existing bridge, we want them to make it a pedestrian bridge and to build a road for the PA residents. That’s our recommendation. Pontier replied that this letter would address the potential closure of that section of the river to boating. Richardson said that the bridge construction would very likely dissuade people from using the river. Goering asked whether the major liveries are aware of this potential impact. Pontier said they could be copied on the letter. If they shut down that part of the river, you may as well put up a “closed” sign on this river valley. Goering agreed that there would be an economic impact all up and down the river from this activity. Richardson said he doesn’t think we should tie the river usage to the bridge design. The bottom line is, we don’t want them to close the river down. Goering said that Pond Eddy is in a recreational segment of a Wild and Scenic River. This project would impact its main value. Pontier said he pleaded with them to follow the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, noting that both states had signed on to the River Management Plan and have a responsibility to protect this river. The other issue here is ecology. You can’t put an obstruction in a river that floods and ices up. The shad, eel, and spawning fish may find this causeway to be an obstacle. Goering said that Section 7 of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act requires that very type of review. This project differs from other bridge replacements since they had two-lane bridges available to keep traffic moving while the new bridge was constructed. Pond Eddy Bridge is only one lane. Rajsz said that this project will have a severe, negative impact on the river. The Town of Lumberland is working on a letter expressing its issues. On a **motion** by Richardson, seconded by Scully, the UDSB, Inc. board agreed to write a letter to the National Park Service expressing its concerns for recreational impacts from construction of a new Pond Eddy Bridge, with all in favor. In other business, DeCristofaro asked Van Kleeck about the status of arranging a presentation on the Port Jervis Whitewater Park proposal for the UDSB committee. Van Kleeck replied that he is trying to set that up for April or May. Approximately \$8 million has already been invested in the whitewater park project and they would not want to see any complications caused by the Pond Eddy Bridge construction.

Public Comment – None

Next Meeting Date – Monday, March 26, 2012

Adjourn – On a motion by Dudko, seconded by Johnston, the UDSB, Inc. meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Laurie Ramie, 3/1/12