

# Upper Delaware Scenic Byway, Inc.

## February 24, 2020 Meeting Minutes

### Attendance:

#### *Voting members:*

**Glenn Pontier**, Town of Highland rep., Chairperson

**Larry Richardson**, Town of Cochection rep., Secretary-Treasurer

**Ginny Dudko**, Town of Deerpark rep.

**Teresa Spradling**, City of Port Jervis rep.

**Heather Jacksy**, Sullivan County rep.

**Jane Luchsinger**, Town of Tusten rep.

**John Pizzolato**, Town of Highland alt.

**Bill Dudko**, Town of Deerpark alt.

#### *Non-voting members:*

**Carmela Hugel**, Sullivan Renaissance

**Susie Kaspar**, National Park Service Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River

**Laurie Ramie**, Upper Delaware Council

#### *Guests:*

**Tom Faggione**, Orange County Legislature

**Jessica Weinman**, Acting Superintendent, NPS Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River

**Dan Paparella**, Upper Delaware Recreation Project

**Call to Order:** Chairperson Pontier called the meeting held at the Upper Delaware Council office in Narrowsburg to order at 7:00 p.m.

### Business Items:

- a.) **Visit by Orange County Legislator Thomas Faggione:** Bill Dudko introduced Faggione, and committee members and guests introduced themselves to him. Ginny Dudko noted that Orange County has little mileage on the scenic byway but those miles do include the “crown jewel” of the byway, the Hawk’s Nest. Faggione said he was born in Queens and lives in Cuddebackville. As an Orange County legislator, he represents the City of Port Jervis, Town of Deerpark, and Town of Mount Hope. B. Dudko had spoken about Orange County funding for UDSB. Faggione said since that would be the taxpayers’ money, he feels obligated to come and see for himself what this organization is all about. He advised Orange County Tourism Director Amanda Dana and the County Executive’s office that he was coming to this meeting. Faggione said there will be \$210,000 in grants available for the Legislature’s 21 districts. He understands how important tourism is. He’s a small business guy. The first UDSB sign is located right near his embroidery shop at 264 East Main St. He also recognizes with the development of the Rt. 17 corridor from the Resort World Catskills casino and Legoland, they will have millions of visitors. Pontier explained that the UDSB is made up of the municipalities along Rt. 97 and Rt. 6, connecting I-84 to I-86. Our mandate is to speak for the road. One part of that is to keep it scenic and protect scenic values. Another part is to promote tourism. We don’t see those goals as being at odds. At any given point, we want to get ahead of any conflicts and head them off before people choose sides. We advocate for the road’s safety, protection, and enhancement. Pontier told Faggione that UDSB, Inc. offers three grant programs to protect the habitat of Monarch butterflies, open up scenic vistas to create windows to the river as one rides along the highway, and upgrade signage to be in character with the scenic byway. UDSB, Inc. is funded by the municipalities through voluntary contributions for operating expenses. Sullivan County has been very generous, this year increasing their grant to \$25,000. There are many other things we could do with that funding. There are constantly safety issues that we lobby the NYS Department of Transportation to

address. There are cultural and environmental issues. We are cooperating with a litter cleanup this spring. We also do promotion and advertising. Richardson said UDSB, Inc. would like to see a bike trail developed along Rt. 97. We've had some success with convincing the DOT to widen shoulders as they've done repaving projects. B. Dudko said we're still waiting for progress on repairing the Hawk's Nest wall. Pontier said that Rt. 97 is the artery that sustains us. The National Park Service counts approximately 275,000 visitors a year. We really don't need to steal people from Legoland and the casino. We're part of a national park unit here that is already attracting its own visitors. Ramie reported that Faggione's business, T-Bone Designs, joined the UDSB as a Bronze member today through the website store. He also brought brochures he wanted to introduce. Faggione referenced copies of the two brochures from the Outdoor Club of Port Jervis: Port Jervis Watershed Trails and Port Jervis Pump Track. The first shows 46 miles of watershed trails on a map that the non-profit Club maintains. The pump track is located at 81 King St. and is free to use. The track is a continuous loop of asphalt, mounds and curves to allow adults and kids to work on their bike skills and provide a healthy workout. Faggione said they've seen a growth of tourism for outdoor events. People want to escape the city and seek wilderness as well as to explore. Faggione said he noticed that the Elks Brox Park is listed on the UDSB website. The Outdoor Club is the steward of that park. Spradling said that the Club, through its president Mike Ward, took a commercial spot during the byway's 1010 WINS campaign.

b.) **Approval of January 27, 2020 Meeting Minutes:** On a **motion** by Dudko, seconded by Spradling, the meeting minutes were approved, with all in favor.

c.) **Correspondence Report, Membership Update, Vice-chair Resignation Letter:**

Ramie presented the following report of correspondence received and sent since the last meeting:

*Outgoing Correspondence:*

1. To Town of Highland, 1/27: Appreciation for \$500 municipal donation for UDSB.
2. To Kris Gilbert, NYS DOT, 1/28: Committee response to herbicide spraying and over-the-rail mowing proposal for Town of Highland Rt. 17 section.
3. To Christine Colley and Kris Gilbert, NYS DOT, 1/28: Decision by UDSB, Inc. to not pursue National Scenic Byway or All-American Road designation at this time, with reasons.
4. To UDSB Committee, 1/31: Summary of Action Items from Jan. 27, 2020 UDSB, Inc. Meeting.
5. \* To UDSB Committee, 1/31: Joint Position Statement on the Skinners Falls Bridge from Wayne County, PA Commissioners for endorsement consideration by 2/29.
6. To UDSB Contact List, 2/1: Draft minutes from Jan. 27, 2020 UDSB, Inc. Meeting.
7. To UDSB Marketing Committee, 2/3: Confirmation of 2/10 meeting at Peppino's in Callicoon at 12:30 p.m.: topics, \$15K advertising/marketing budget; motorcycle touring map; North County Brochure Distribution; 1010 WINS; Other. (subsequently cancelled).
8. To Sullivan County Department of Law, 2/13: Three original 2020 Agreements signed by UDSB Chairperson Glenn Pontier with Certificate of Insurance information.
9. To Norma Schadt, 2/13: Clarifying whether she has retired from UDSB board as Town of Deerpark alternate. (Reply, yes, the trip to Narrowsburg at night was becoming difficult at times. Give my best to everyone.)
10. To UDSB Contact List, 2/20: Preliminary draft agenda for 2/24 UDSB, Inc. meeting.
11. To UDSB Committee, 2/20: Draft letter by Glenn to National Geographic Books for advance review.
12. To Alyvia Lewter, committee clerk, Office of NYS Senator Jen Metzger, 2/23: From Larry Richardson, re: Reaching out to Senator Metzger to see if she could have any influence on the decision-making process for the future of the Milanville-Skinners Falls Bridge. Offer of a short tour of the bridge during a Meet & Greet event in early March at the Cocheton Town Hall.

*Incoming Correspondence:*

1. From Delaware County Chamber of Commerce, weekly: News from Your Chamber online newsletter.
2. From Christine Colley, NYS DOT, 1/28: Asked FHWA about dated corridor management plans and inquired if byways needed to update them before applying for National Scenic Byway designation and the answer was yes.
3. \*From North Country Brochure Distribution, Plattsburgh, NY, 1/29: 2020 program booklet and contract. (Also received electronically on 2/1).

4. \* From Sullivan County Division of Planning, Community Development and Real Property, 1/29: All 2020 Community Development Funding Programs guidelines and applications are now live. Round 1 applications for Plans & Progress, Business-Friendly Zoning, and Remove Unsafe Structures are due by 3/6.
5. From PayPal, 2/3: Changes to our legal agreement, no action needed.
6. \* From Callicoon Cooperative Insurance Co., 2/3: Premium notice for Special Multi-Peril Policy, \$429 due by 3/2/20.
7. From Christine Colley, 2/4: FHWA webinar on National Scenic Byways FY 2020 Nominations Overview, 2/26, 2-3:30 p.m. with participation details.
8. \* From Shannon Cilento, Sullivan County Planning, 2/5: Answers to Laurie's questions about whether Plans & Progress Grant would be appropriate for an update of the UDSB Enhancement Concept. Awards and contracts would be authorized by the Legislature on 4/16; regional applications for service beyond Sullivan County are feasible for the committee's consideration.
9. From Christine Colley, 2/5: Portal for National Scenic Byway applications opens on 2/13 and closes on 5/15. Byways must notify NYS DOT if they intend to apply by 3/4 and submit application by 4/10.
10. From Sullivan County Attorney Cheryl McCausland, 2/7: Three original Agreements enclosed for UDSB chair's signature, to return all with an updated Certificate of Insurance. (Laurie notified Glenn.)
11. \* From Glenn Pontier, 2/9: draft letter to National Geographic concerning the omission of the UDSB from the "Best 300 Drives in the U.S." book. Please place this on the February meeting agenda.
12. From Sullivan Catskills Visitors Association, 2/10: Thank you for renewing your membership.
13. From Jeff Bank, 2/10: UDSB, Inc. statement ending 1/31/20 with \$34,103.50 balance.
14. From Mike Preis Inc. Insurance Agency, 2/10: 3/6 renewal of Directors & Officers Liability Insurance policy enclosed.
15. From Christine Colley, 2/11: National Scenic Byway Foundation members-only opportunity to participate in the IPW travel trade show 5/30-6/4 in Las Vegas. \$450 for individual byways.
16. From Linda Dexter, president, Damascus Manor Community Center Board, 2/12: Thank you to UDSB for providing 500 UDSB placemats to our pancake breakfasts that coincide with Recycle Saturdays on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturdays of the month from May through October, as well as on 3/21 for the Northeastern Maple Syrup Growers Tour.
17. From Ginny Dudko, 2/14: Email address for Bill Dudko as Deerpark UDSB alternate pending an ISP change: [wdudko@frontiernet.net](mailto:wdudko@frontiernet.net).
18. \* From John Erik Karkula, chair, Callicoon Beautification Committee, 2/17: The Monarch Butterfly Garden on Rt. 97 that the UDSB funded two years ago is being expanded. New owners of the property are doing some work that will require digging up the flower bed and removing the sign, but they have agreed to save the plants and add to the garden space when it's restored.
19. From National Scenic Byway Foundation, 2/18: Launch of new website at nsbfoundation.com and webinar on "RV Readiness for your Byway" on 2/19.
20. From Ginny Dudko, 2/19: Orange County Legislator Tom Faggione plans to attend the 2/24 UDSB meeting based on discussing the byway with Ginny and Bill.
21. \* From Christine Colley, NYS DOT has contracted with ESRI to create a series of applications for internal and external customers. A list of all attractions along your scenic byway are needed by 3/6 for the mapping project. See example app for "Delaware Scenic Byway Program".
22. \* From Nancy Furdock, 2/20: Resignation from position as Village of Hancock Representative and Vice-Chair of UDSB Committee effective immediately. (See letter in packets).
23. \* From Terry Whitt, CPA, 2/20: NYS Charities Bureau return with need for \$50 payment, e-filing of IRS Form 990, and \$500 invoice for services rendered. Signatures needed by chair and treasurer.
24. \* From Jane Luchsinger, 2/20: Suggested edits to Glenn's National Geographic Books draft letter.
25. \* From Freda Eisenberg, 2/20: "FYI for the DOT attraction list, Shannon is compiling the list of historic sites along the byway, including historical markers (she recently completed an inventory.)"
26. From PayPal, 2/24: Notification of \$50.00 payment through website for Bronze Membership by T-Bone Designs, 264 E. Main St., Port Jervis.
27. From Thomas Faggione, 2/24: "Thanks for the opportunity to become a member. I am a man of few hats, a couple of which exist on East Main Street in Port Jervis. Proud to support the beauty and tourism opportunities in our region. I look forward to being part of the success." (Laurie sent an acknowledgement of the membership sign-up and a thank you.)
28. \* From Delaware County Chamber of Commerce, 2/24: Invoice for UDSB annual membership, \$99 due for 3/1/20-2/28/21 term. Member Profile enclosed to complete and return.
29. \* From Kris Gilbert, NYS DOT, 2/24: Written report for tonight's meeting.

Ramie noted that the Correspondence Report also includes brochure and information requests received through the website, book sales and inventory, and the updated list of appointments and contributions from the municipal members. For 2020, all municipalities have sent in operational donations with the exception of the Towns of Tusten and Deerpark. The organization also received copies of a letter dated

Feb. 20, 2020 from Nancy Furdock resigning her position as Village of Hancock representative to and vice-chair of the UDSB Committee, effective immediately. Pontier summarized that Furdock said she will be moving back to the Syracuse area near her hometown to build a house with her husband-to-be. She has already informed the Village of her decision and they are in the process of identifying a replacement. Furdock wrote, "I am more than happy to continue basic maintenance of the UDSB website at no charge – minor edits, adding new businesses, etc. included – for the foreseeable future. If you wish to transfer responsibility for the site to a new, local provider, you will have my full cooperation facilitating that as well." She added that it has been "an absolute honor, privilege, and pleasure to serve with this organization. I'm proud of what we've accomplished over the last several years, and I know even greater things are to come for the Byway." B. Dudko said that was a nice offer to continue taking care of the website. Pizzolato said we should probably pay someone to update the site. G. Dudko suggested having Ramie write a letter of appreciation to Furdock. Pontier pointed out the press release in the meeting packets for the Upper Delaware Council's 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Awards Banquet, for which nominations are due by March 16. He suggested nominating Furdock for a Volunteer Award. On a **motion** by Pontier, seconded by Luchsinger, the committee accepted Nancy Furdock's resignation with regret and agreed to submit a nomination for the UDC's Volunteer Award, with all in favor. Noting that Furdock had also chaired the UDSB Marketing Committee, Pontier asked if anyone else is willing to join. Current members are Pizzolato, DeCristofaro, and Spradling. Pizzolato said that Ramie also attends when she's available. Pontier said that he hopes the new Hancock person will be interested in that to assure that there is representation for the northern end of the byway. Jacksy asked whether the Marketing Committee would accept participation from anyone on the outside. Pontier said as far as he is concerned, all broad perspectives are welcome. He suggested that committee members talk to people in their chambers or organizations who have marketing skills to see if they're interested in helping.

**d.) Appoint a Nominating Committee to Develop a Slate for Annual Election of Officers on 4/27:** Ramie reviewed that the bylaws state that a Nominating Committee will be established two months ahead of the annual meeting in April to develop nominations for chairperson, vice-chairperson, and secretary-treasurer. The Nominating Committee consists of the current chair and two others. Officers can be representatives or alternates since the voting members are their municipalities. Pontier said that a new chairperson will be needed since he feels it's healthy for an organization to have new leadership. He asked if there were any volunteers to join him on the Nominating Committee. Jacksy and G. Dudko agreed to serve. Pontier encouraged anyone interested in fulfilling any of the offices to let them know. Pizzolato asked Ramie whether we had received news of a new appointment by the Town of Lumberland since he understood they had filled their representative vacancy. She replied no but said she will check with the town. On the membership list included in the packets, B. Dudko noted a further update that he and Ginny have new email addresses.

**e.) Treasurer's Report, Sullivan County Contracts Returned 2/13; Tax Filings Received 2/20:** Richardson reviewed transactions reflected on his written report. The current balance is \$33,715.62. He received a check tonight for \$250 from the Greater Barryville Chamber of Commerce for their 1010 WINS commercial that he will deposit. Richardson introduced new bills: Special Multi-Peril Policy renewal, \$429; Terry Whitt, \$500 for CPA services; Delaware County Chamber of Commerce, \$99 for 2020 membership dues; and NYS Department of Law, \$50 fee for the Charities Bureau filing prepared by Whitt. On a **motion** by Luchsinger, seconded by G. Dudko, the financial report was accepted and authorization was given to pay those bills, with all in favor. Luchsinger asked about the status of the budget. Pontier said that UDSB had allocated \$5,000 for each of its three grant programs again in 2020, increased the advertising allocation to \$15,000, and is prepared to spend in all categories whether there is any carryover or not. He said he knows Luchsinger wasn't present at the January meeting when the budget was adopted and Ramie will send her a copy.

f.) **Callicoon Cooperative Insurance Special Multi-Peril Policy Renewal** – The approval for liability insurance renewal as due by 3/2 was handled under the Financial Report.

g.) **Grants: Butterfly Promotion; Business & Non-profit Signs; Vista Enhancement:**

No applications were received this month. Ramie will send a news release promoting the availability of these programs in 2020. Ramie pointed out, as noted on #18 from the Correspondence Report, that Callicoon Beautification Committee President John Erik Karkula had notified UDSB, Inc. not to be concerned about seeing heavy machinery taking down the pollinator garden and welcome sign on Rt. 97 that a UDSB grant funded two years ago. New owners of the property are upgrading that site but will preserve the flowers and plants, and actually plan to expand the garden space when it's restored. Luchsinger said it doesn't appear we have had many applicants for the grant programs. Richardson said that the signage and vistas programs haven't taken off yet but the butterfly grants are popular. Luchsinger suggested hiring someone to knock on doors of property owners who may have sites for vista clearing. Pizzolato said that the committee had identified an area within the Town of Highland as in need of attention for which that program funding could be used. Pontier added that those sites are owned by the DOT and NPS primarily. Kris Gilbert has offered to arrange for a DOT crew to do some mowing and invasive plant control. That was the purpose of a site visit that the DOT and UDSB Committee took in November. Luchsinger said she is aware of a spot along Rt. 97 where a professional arborist could top the trees and make a big improvement. Pontier said that was done most successfully in the Town of Delaware through DeCristofaro's arrangements with the property owner. Richardson said that project to thin out the tree tops has lasted for several years now. G. Dudko encouraged Luchsinger to make contacts for the property she has in mind. Luchsinger said has ideas of locations but hasn't had the time to pursue them. Pontier said the committee has approached this from a variety of ways, including hiring a planner to coordinate it who identified sites but got no traction when he approached property owners. Pontier said there is a constituency out there against cutting on the basis that trees provide a buffer from seeing the highway when on the river. There is also the ecological effect to consider. For example, the DOT has offered to spray vegetation with herbicide which is not exactly what we had in mind. Debra Conway is trying to connect the walking path from the Park Service's Towpath Trail to the Barbara Yeaman Eagle Observatory in the Town of Highland. We've offered funds to the town, DOT, and NPS to help. G. Dudko said this project hits on all the points of cultural, historic, and scenic. Jacksy suggested taking before and after photos of this work to show as an example of the benefits of selective vista clearing.

**Public Comment:** None

**Discussion Items:**

- a) **Upper Delaware Watershed Litter Clean-up** – Paparella referenced an Upper Delaware Council news release promoting a March 4 meeting with two sessions at 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. at the UDC office to plan the first-ever, coordinated litter cleanup centered on land surrounding the bi-state Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River. The article outlines how people and organizations can contribute to the April 22-25 event. Paparella invites anyone who can add input to attend, and would appreciate people forwarding his email message with additional details and resources. He has also set up a Facebook page. Hugel said that Sullivan Renaissance wants to be involved in the cleanup. G. Dudko asked if people will be able to find out at the March 4 meeting how they can get bags. Paparella said yes. He has been working on those plans as well as safety issues and the entertainment value. Pizzolato has been working with him on the wrap-up event on April 25. They're talking about a 5-7 p.m. reception at the Narrowsburg Union with two speakers about turning recyclables into thread and making art from recycled plastic. They're also talking about hosting a community screening for a film that will be airing on Discovery Channel on Earth Day. That could perhaps be shown on a loop. Committee members discussed the schedule. Richardson noted that the landfill transfer stations close at 2:45 and he considers a 5 p.m. start time to be late. Pontier suggested starting the event at 3 with the movie

followed by the speakers at 4. He noted that UDSB has funding for this through its Training Program budget. For our last educational session with national planning consultant Ed McMahon, it cost \$250 to rent the Narrowsburg Union although the NPS funded that. We could provide an honorarium to the speakers. Pizzolato said he had offered to comp lodging for them at Stickett Inn. Pontier said additional costs would be for healthy snacks and beverages, something sustainable. Hugel said in order to provide an incentive for people to attend, we need to provide some enticements. The speakers may do that. She suggested 4-7 p.m. for the hours. Pizzolato raised the idea of having a cocktail party. He anticipates it would be possible to get alcohol donated. The Union has experience with running a cash bar to cover expenses. Pontier said that could be a draw, but then we would have to police it. Paparella said a certified bartender could be hired. B. Dudko said tickets could be given out for two beers, for example, as a way to keep control. Asked if the NPS would have an issue with alcohol being served, Weinman said that is not a barrier for their participation because it's not happening on their property. Richardson said offering recognition to the clean-up volunteers is a big incentive. Pontier suggested having a dumpster stationed at the Narrowsburg Union. That gives them a reason to go there to drop off their litter. Others remarked that would be an expensive proposition. Richardson said the DOT will pick up trash along state road if the clean-up is registered with them in advance. Pontier said he foresees an event budget of approximately \$1,000 - \$250 for the venue rental, \$200 honorarium for the speakers, and \$500 for the food/water. There should also be some kind of recognition prize given. He proposed asking businesses to contribute to the budget. Luchsinger said in the Town of Tusten, they have been collecting soft plastics. For every 500 lbs. they gather every six months, Trex provides a bench. Pontier said we should have exhibit tables to share information like that. Paparella said he would like to receive a map of culverts, meaning drainage ditches that cross under roads. Jacksy said she can ask the Division of Public Works for that. On a **motion** by Richardson, seconded by Jacksy, the committee agreed that the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway, Inc. will serve as a prime sponsor for the Upper Delaware Watershed Cleanup Event on April 25 at the Narrowsburg Union that will include speakers, film(s), treats, a recognition ceremony, and informational tables/exhibits, with all in favor. By next month, details and firm costs will be shared.

- b) **2002 Enhancement Concept Plan Update** – After the committee decided against pursuing National Scenic Byway designation but discovered that a disqualifying factor would have been the age of the corridor management plan, they opted to put on the next agenda consideration of updating the 18-year-old “An Enhancement Concept for the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway”. Ramie noted that Sullivan County is accepting applications until 4 p.m. on March 6 for its Plans & Progress Grants. She looked into it for this purpose. The maximum request is \$10,000 and a 50% match is required. There will be two additional rounds in 2020 if funding remains available. Ramie had inquired of Shannon Cilento whether UDSB would be eligible to apply since its membership extends beyond Sullivan into Delaware and Orange Counties. Cilento said yes, although Planning Commissioner Freda Eisenberg cautioned that the organization's status as a current county funding recipient is a factor that is considered in the award determinations. Luchsinger said it's understandable that the county doesn't want its own money to be used as the match. Members discussed reaching out to planners to get price estimates. Asked whether the original consultant for the plan is still in business, Ramie said she could check if Carol Truppi from HRG Consultants remains active. Pizzolato suggested finding out whether Truppi is willing to work with the committee on an update. Pontier said we will need to have a cost estimate or could just apply for the full \$10,000, realizing we may not get it on the first try. Spradling noted that we should not rush this to meet the 3/6 deadline. On a **motion** by Richardson, seconded by Luchsinger, the committee agreed to explore whether the original planner is available and if it would be feasible for Ramie to put together an application for the Plans & Progress Grant by the 3/6 deadline, with 3 voting yes, 2 voting no, and one abstention from Jacksy.

- c) **List of UDSB Tourist Attractions Needed for NYS DOT App Creation by 3/6** – NYS Scenic Byways Coordinator Christine Colley from the DOT notified byways on Feb. 20 that NYS DOT has contracted with ESRI to create a series of applications for internal (NYS DOT staff) and external (public) customers. DOT doesn't produce paper maps, so staff has been going into Google maps to send routes to callers requesting information on state byways listed on the DOT website. They have requested a list of all the attractions along the byway route for the mapping app. The question is, what would tourists like to see along the byway? Colley sent an example of the map stories that ESRI created for byways in the State of Delaware. She requests the names and latitude/longitude coordinates for the attractions, along with photos and descriptions by March 6. The main goal for the app is to help the public navigate to the NYS byways. Customers will be able to generate a map that will get them to their chosen destinations. Please send all lists and comments to [Christine.Colley@dot.ny.gov](mailto:Christine.Colley@dot.ny.gov) and [Jianxin.Dai@dot.ny.gov](mailto:Jianxin.Dai@dot.ny.gov). Ramie noted that Kris Gilbert had sent a list of historic markers along the byway that they had collected, and Sullivan County through Shannon Cilento has a listing of historic attractions. Jacksy said she believes this information will be readily accessible through the Sullivan Catskills Visitors Association, as well as through the UDSB brochure which lists the highlights from each municipality. Also mentioned were museums, river accesses, D&H Canal sites, and other tourist features. It was recommended to consult the National Geographic Scenic Wild Delaware River geotourism site which maps unique attractions using GPS coordinates. While some said the Mar. 6 deadline does not seem realistic, Jacksy said she thinks we can make it and will reach out to Colley.
- d) **Vote on Endorsing Skinners Falls, NY-Milanville, PA Bridge Position Statement, due by 2/29** – Ramie sent out the Wayne County, PA Commissioners' position statement urging the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation to preserve the Skinners Falls-Milanville Bridge, offering justifications on the topics of emergency response usage, economic importance, historical value, roadway connections, and a discussion of future options. Recommendations are that engineering expertise will be needed to evaluate the bridge condition and make recommendations that align with preservation of the bridge, having a definitive recommendation made before the May 2020 annual meeting of the NY-PA Joint Interstate Bridge Commission, and to seek Section 7 review through the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act early to assure that any federal funding or permits are pursued expeditiously. Ramie said that Wayne County Planning Director Craig Rickard is seeking signatories for this statement by Feb. 29. On a **motion** by Richardson, seconded by G. Dukdo, the committee agreed that the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway, Inc. will endorse the Skinners Falls-Milanville Bridge Position Statement, with all in favor. Richardson said he received an email response back from Senator Metzger's office asking for more information on his request that the senator could visit the bridge when she has an upcoming meet & greet planned at the Cochection Firehouse restaurant on Mar. 8. Richardson explained that UDSB, Inc. was seeking support from the senator for any influence she could bring to bear to preserve this bridge that connects the Town of Cochection to Damascus Township. Richardson said he will continue this effort to engage the senator. Ramie will advise Rickard of the UDSB endorsement. On another bridge topic, Richardson said that the NYS DOT has arranged an invitation-only meeting on Wednesday to discuss rehabilitation of the Cochection, NY-Damascus, PA Bridge. There has been a suggestion of closing it entirely and having an off-site detour rather than keeping one lane open as occurred in Narrowsburg. The town is not happy about that idea. It would not be good for anybody. Construction is planned for 2021. UDSB, Inc. may wish to take a position on this. Ramie will attend next week's meeting for the Upper Delaware Council and can report back. Luchsinger said that the Narrowsburg Bridge work lasted a prolonged time with a controlled single lane but did provide allowances for emergency vehicles.

- e) **Vote on Draft Letter: “Guide to Scenic Highways & Byways: The 300 Best Drives in the U.S.”** – Pontier’s draft of a letter to the National Geographic books division inquiring about the omission of the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway from its list of the 300 best drives, and a version with edits suggested by Luchsinger, were both handed out for review. Jacksy said that she had comments on the letter which had been circulated in advance by Freda Eisenberg. She recommended using the active voice and asking when their next guide would be published. Pontier said he believes the next guide will be out in 2021. He asked Jacksy if she could make specific edits to the draft letter and we will deal with it next month on the agenda. Jacksy said she would mark it up.
- f) **Other** - None

**Follow-up Actions and Committee Reports:**

- a) **NYS DOT Report and NPS Position on Herbicide Use** – Kris Gilbert provided a written report which was handed out. She offered a suggestion regarding the request to mow an area in Highland adjacent to the river from Route Marker 1139 to 1141 prior to the litter clean-up. She said it has been her experience that litter pick-up can be more difficult after mowing since trash often ends up shredded and scattered by the mowers. If mown early in the growing season, the brush could re-grow by the summer. On the other hand, if the area were mown in the middle of the growing season, then views would be cleared during the tourist season and would remain clearer for a few weeks or perhaps months. If mowing could be scheduled to occur at the end of June, this stretch would be more open from then through the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend and for some time beyond. The committee agreed with Gilbert’s recommendation to schedule the mowing toward the end of June. Gilbert’s report also included an update of DOT capital projects along Rt. 97: guiderail work in the Towns of Delaware and Cohecton; tree-cutting work anticipated by a contractor with exact locations pending; Bridge work in Cohecton (2021) and Callicoon (2-3 years away); Slope stabilization in the Towns of Fremont and Delaware; long-term restoration work in the Town of Tusten RM 9602 1180-1240; and Harsh Winter Paving on Rt. 97 in Delaware County from John Deck Road to Lordville Road. G. Dudko pointed out to Faggione that UDSB, Inc. doesn’t get these same reports regularly for DOT Region 8 in Orange County. Regarding the NPS position on the use of herbicides along Rt. 97 which she was requested to investigate last month, Susie Kaspar sent a report on 2/25: “The NPS does not presently have an issue with the use of herbicides by NYS DOT employees along Rt. 97. It takes multiple years and hundreds of dollars to become a licensed applicator in New York State. Additionally, NY DOT would have to report and have their work approved similar to how the National Park Service uses the Pesticide Use Proposal System. New York State is very restrictive about which herbicides can be used near water bodies, especially when it is their employee applying the herbicide.”
- b) **Callicoon Train Depot Project Update** – Depot Committee Chairperson Nicole Vallance sent a written report: “I spoke to Melanie at the railroad and all is going well. We are going to tweak the usage to be more general and allow more flexibility. Regardless of the lease details, they won’t be comfortable signing until they’ve seen the report from the Phase I Environmental Impact Study. We have been approved for one through the Sullivan County Brownfields Program. There seems to be some confusion over whether the county has the correct access agreement. (The Railroad’s attorney seems to think they have signed all the paperwork, but the county thought they were missing their access agreement.) Freda is going to check on it and if we still need another access agreement, I’ll get it to them this week. Once the paperwork is in, Freda said it would be approximately 4-6 weeks to do it. In the meantime, we are drafting the Architecture and Design Request for Proposals. Also, we had the opportunity to have Senator Jen Metzger tour the Train Depot with us last Friday. She seemed very supportive and we will be contacting her office’s



grant specialist, Mandy, to discuss any programs that we can access or should be aware of if there are any other opportunities to work with them. I also spoke to Lyle Mencheff (Center for Workforce Development Youth Coordinator) who is interested in discussing how his students (paid by Sullivan County) could work with us on the restoration and construction to help supplement our budget and provide training and hours to his students. We will be setting up something with him in the coming weeks.”

- c) **Reschedule Marketing Committee Meeting** – Pizzolato said members will discuss setting a date when DeCristofaro has returned from vacation, potentially on March 14 or 21.
- d) **Other** – Ramie inquired whether the committee would like to discuss changing the time for UDSB meetings to an earlier start than 7 p.m. so that they would end sooner than the typical 9 p.m. It was agreed to consider that question along with the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday date for monthly meetings on the agenda for the UDSB’s Annual Meeting on April 27.

**Next Meeting Date:** 4<sup>th</sup> Monday, March 23, 2020

**Adjourn:** On a **motion** by Spradling, seconded by Pontier, the February 24, 2020 UDSB meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

*Minutes prepared by Laurie Ramie, 3/1/20*