



**Sent:** Monday, July 9, 2018 5:26 PM

**To:** [secretary@universitybargeclub.com](mailto:secretary@universitybargeclub.com)

**Subject:** Re: FOR SN CLUB AND TENANT DISTRIBUTION: STATUS OF SCHUYLKILLRIVER DREDGING

>>> Schuylkill Navy <[schuylkillnavyofphiladelphia@gmail.com](mailto:schuylkillnavyofphiladelphia@gmail.com)> 7/9/2018 10:25 AM >>>

**Schuylkill Navy Delegates and Presidents (with additional cc to Captains, SN Chairs, etc):**

Please find below (and attached) a comprehensive update on the status of Schuylkill River Dredging. Thanks in advance for working together (Delegates and Presidents with help from club secretaries) to ensure that 100% of all club members, tenant programs (minimally coaches and Athletic Directors (with ask that they in turn forward to parents/alums/etc),) etc. receive the update, since it contains important information regarding the now-needed pivot to "Plan B Private Funding for Restorative Dredging" as well as re-affirmation of the need for Maintenance/ Decennial Dredging to maintain the River's depth and viable use for recreation. We are all in this together, and we need our collective community to be fully up to speed as we take next steps.

As always, the Schuylkill Navy's River Restoration Committee will meet this upcoming 3rd Monday of the month (July 16) at 6:00 pm. For questions or additional information, please reach out to River Restoration Committee Chair Paul Laskow at [pjlaskow@gmail.com](mailto:pjlaskow@gmail.com)

Best,  
Bonnie  
Vice Commodore  
215-815-0599

***July 9, 2018. FOR IMMEDIATE INTERNAL DISTRIBUTION TO ALL SCHUYLKILL NAVY CLUB MEMBERS AND TENANT PROGRAMS.***

**STATUS OF SCHUYLKILL RIVER DREDGING**

### **Executive Summary:**

- Despite significant support from all needed municipal and federal political figures as well as the local US Army Corps of Engineers (US ACE Philadelphia District Office), there is no funding for dredging at Boathouse Row nor the National Course on the Schuylkill River in the US ACE 2019 Work Plan.
- Per direct feedback from the Philadelphia District Office of the US ACE (US ACE PDO), no federal funding for dredging Boathouse Row and the National Course (the Project) will be available because the US ACE PDO will not include the Project going forward after three rejections by US ACE HQ. This reality forces a pivot to “Plan B” for funding of restorative dredging. “Plan B” requires private funding of the restorative dredging.
- As a first step in execution of Plan B, we have communicated with the local universities with rowing programs, and we are working with the City of Philadelphia in setting up a meeting with each Athletic Director and other university representatives. In January 2018, the university Presidents co-signed a letter with Mayor Kenney as major stakeholders in the future state of the Schuylkill, and the combination of their professional expertise and access to an existing donor base positions them as likely leaders in the Plan B execution.
- Per below and all previous communications, an ongoing investment in River infrastructure *by all River users* is a new reality for all those who aim to recreate on the Schuylkill River. Concurrent with securing funding for Big Dig “restorative dredging,” we must work together on the needed plan for Decennial Dredging to maintain the River’s depth and viable use for recreation. All River users will need to contribute to funding for this work and should be planning accordingly.

### **No Federal Funding Available for Dredging of the Schuylkill River at Boathouse Row or the National Course**

On June 11th, we received word from the US ACE PDO that the US ACE Headquarters in Washington, DC had released its 2019 Work Plan. Although the Work Plan includes funding for a commercial project near Girard Point Bridge on the Lower Schuylkill, the US ACE PDO confirmed that ***there will be no Federal funding of the restorative dredging project on Boathouse Row or the National Course now or, according to the US ACE PDO, in the future.***

As we have advised many times over the last 4 years, there is no other governmental agency that is required to fund the restorative dredging (the “Big Dig”) or expressed any interest whatsoever in stepping into the shoes of the Federal government.

As all Delegates and Presidents of Schuylkill Navy clubs know, the City of Philadelphia is in discussions with the Schuylkill Navy about a longer-term solution to siltation (what we had called maintenance dredging and now called Decennial Dredging) and is not a candidate for funding the Big Dig. Those discussions have progressed and are very promising, but the City remains a very unlikely source of Big Dig funding.

The Big Dig will be privately funded.

### **Engagement of University Stakeholders**

In the fall, we raised all of this with the collegiate coaches because we believe that an essential source of private funding is the university collegiate programs.

The City Six (Jefferson, LaSalle, St. Joseph’s, Drexel, Temple and Penn) accepted that they are the major stakeholders of the Schuylkill and co-signed a letter with Mayor Kenney and the Schuylkill Navy to the US ACE HQ. Villanova University expressed and remains an engaged participant in discussions as well.

We concluded that there was little utility in the SN approaching other private funding sources because these would quickly get to the point of asking “what are the major stakeholders

contributing.” Indeed, most, if not all, private funding sources will look to significant participation by the major stakeholders as the answer to that question.

We also observe that the City Six, while enjoying very different financial circumstances, all have professional development staff with the expertise and knowledge of their donor base that no one else has. We do not think it would be effective or good for the collegiate programs for the Schuylkill Navy to go “over the heads” of the collegiate programs in an attempt to tap their donor base, even if we could.

We reinforced all of this and more to the university athletic directors and government affairs staff again in the spring when we were launching our last, best effort to convince the US ACE HQ of the merits of Federal funding of the Big Dig.

Now, the final decision of US ACE HQ makes the hypothetical Plan “B” (private funding led by the collegiate programs) a reality.

Over the last two weeks, we have given both the coaches and shortly thereafter the athletic directors a written report and advising on this pivot to private funding. We advised that they should expect an invitation to them and their university leadership to meet with the City of Philadelphia and the Schuylkill Navy to have an initial discussion of the roles of the City Six in the solution to funding the Big Dig. Based upon our consultation with the City, we expect that invitation be sent to the ADs and university leaders sometime in the next two weeks

Finally, we gave the university Athletic Directors and their Government Affairs teams a fuller briefing on discussions with the City on Monday, July 2, when the City Six and Villanova convened to consider the implications of Plan B. We also followed up on a request that they support a grant application by the Schuylkill Navy to the William Penn Foundation for a grant to cover the cost of a work plan for Decennial Dredging.

**A New Reality for All Recreational Users of the Schuylkill River**

**It is critical for all River-users to recognize a new, shared reality: No one who is a River-user can expect to get a free pass on helping to maintain the infrastructure of the River.**

Accordingly, the Schuylkill Navy has encouraged and will continue to emphasize the importance for all users to prepare for this reality when planning budgets, membership and event fees, etc. The City Six – possibly with additional private donors – will receive a big ask for the Big Dig up front, but the City and all River users will need to be a part of the solution by participating in the funding of Decennial Dredging. It is this commitment to Decennial Dredging that assures the City Six that this is not the first of many Big Digs they will be asked to pay for.

The commitment to reach a collaborative agreement with the City by the other River users is key to getting the collegiate programs to consider leading the private funding of the Big Dig. We are hopeful that the City will be able to make a compelling case to the ADs and university leadership on this very important point.

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Please feel free to contact Paul Laskow as Chair of the Schuylkill Navy River Restoration Committee directly to get clarification or details. Paul can be reached at [pjlaskow@gmail.com](mailto:pjlaskow@gmail.com).