

1 GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

2  
3 ADMINISTRATIVE/BUDGET COMMITTEE

4  
5 Hilton Baton Rouge Baton Rouge, Louisiana

6  
7 January 30, 2023

8  
9 **VOTING MEMBERS**

10 Joe Spraggins.....Mississippi  
11 Phil Dyskow.....Florida  
12 Dave Donaldson.....GSMFC  
13 Jonathan Dugas.....Louisiana  
14 Dakus Geeslin (designee for Robin Riechers).....Texas  
15 Bob Gill.....Florida  
16 Bob Shipp.....Alabama  
17 C.J. Sweetman (designee for Jessica McCawley).....Florida

18  
19 **NON-VOTING MEMBERS**

20 Kevin Anson (designee for Scott Bannon).....Alabama  
21 Susan Boggs.....Alabama  
22 Billy Broussard.....Louisiana  
23 Dale Diaz.....Mississippi  
24 Michael McDermott.....Mississippi  
25 Tom Frazer.....Florida  
26 Chris Schieble (designee for Patrick Banks).....Louisiana  
27 Andy Strelcheck.....NMFS  
28 Greg Stunz.....Texas  
29 Troy Williamson.....Texas

30  
31 **STAFF**

32 Assane Diagne.....Economist  
33 Zeenatul Basher.....Coral and Habitat Biologist  
34 John Froeschke.....Deputy Director  
35 Beth Hager.....Administrative Officer  
36 Lisa Hollensead.....Fishery Biologist  
37 Ava Lasseter.....Anthropologist  
38 Mary Levy.....NOAA General Counsel  
39 Natasha Mendez-Ferrer.....Fishery Biologist  
40 Emily Muehlstein.....Public Information Officer  
41 Ryan Rindone.....Lead Fishery Biologist/SEDAR Liaison  
42 Bernadine Roy.....Office Manager  
43 Charlotte Schiaffo....Administrative & Human Resources Assistant  
44 Carrie Simmons.....Executive Director  
45 Carly Somerset.....Fisheries Outreach Specialist

46  
47 **OTHER PARTICIPANTS**

48 Kerry Marhefka.....SAFMC

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PAGE 15: Motion that the council approve modifications to sections 4.8 and 4.8.1 of the council SOPPs. The motion carried on page 16.

PAGE 16: Motion that Anti-harassment training should be completed at the time of appointment or reappointment of council members, SSC members, and AP members. State directors and their designees should complete anti-harassment training every three years and at the time of appointment. The motion carried on page 18.

PAGE 19: Motion that the council approve modifications to the SOPPs as recommended by the LETC and proposed in Tab G, Number 4(c). The motion carried on page 19.

PAGE 25: Motion to recommend approval of the proposed EFH contract as presented. The motion carried on page 25.

PAGE 28: Motion that the council approve a \$5,000 increase in funding in 2023 for the state and commission liaison contracts. The motion carried on page 30.

PAGE 31: Motion that the council advertise to re-populate the CMP AP only. The motion carried on page 31.

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1 The Administrative/Budget Committee of the Gulf of Mexico  
2 Fishery Management Council convened at The Hilton Baton Rouge in  
3 Baton Rouge, Louisiana on Monday morning, January 30, 2023, and  
4 was called to order by Chairman Joe Spraggins.  
5

6 **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**  
7 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**  
8 **ACTION GUIDE AND NEXT STEPS**  
9

10 **CHAIRMAN JOE SPRAGGINS:** I would like to call this committee to  
11 order, and we have the members are myself, and Mr. Dyskow is the  
12 vice chair, Mr. Donaldson, Dugas, Gill, McCawley, Geeslin, and  
13 then Shipp. The first thing up on the agenda is Adoption of the  
14 Agenda, and I would like to see if we could get a motion. Yes,  
15 sir, Mr. Gill.  
16

17 **MR. BOB GILL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I could, I would  
18 like to add an item for Other Business.  
19

20 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Is it something we're working on,  
21 Mr. Gill? Is it something that we're trying to solve?  
22

23 **MR. GILL:** Not at the moment. It's something different, and the  
24 title is Public Comment.  
25

26 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. All right, and so can we add Public  
27 Comment in Item VII, with Other Business? Any objections to  
28 that? Okay. Can I get a motion to accept the agenda as  
29 modified?  
30

31 **MR. GILL:** So moved.  
32

33 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Mr. Gill and Mr. Geeslin. All right. Any  
34 opposed? All right. It passes. Approval of the August 2022  
35 Minutes, could I get a motion, or is there any questions about  
36 the August 2022 minutes? Could I get a motion to approve it?  
37 We have a motion. Is there a second? Second by Mr. Dugas. All  
38 right. Any questions? All in favor -- If you say anything --  
39 If you're against it, say aye. Otherwise, it passes. All  
40 right. Action Guide and Next Steps, and I'm going to turn it  
41 over to Dr. Simmons.  
42

43 **DISCUSSION OF MODIFICATIONS TO COUNCIL SOPPs**  
44 **INTEGRATION OF HARASSMENT POLICIES**  
45

46 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CARRIE SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good  
47 morning, everyone, and so my suggestion is that we take these  
48 agenda-item-by-agenda-item, if that's okay, Mr. Chair, and so

1 we'll start with a discussion of modifications to the council  
2 SOPPs.

3  
4 We have two primary considerations for the council in the SOPPs  
5 for changes. The first one deals with the antiharassment  
6 policies, and so, during the October 2022 Council Coordination  
7 Committee meeting, NOAA provided draft policies on  
8 antiharassment for council employees and also process  
9 participants, other than council employees, and they also  
10 provided an opportunity for interactive training opportunities  
11 for each of the regional councils.

12  
13 It was recommended, during that meeting, that all councils  
14 consider implementing these policies to address allegations of  
15 harassment for process participants, which is what we're going  
16 to focus on today, and a separate policy for council employees,  
17 which will be in our handbook, and we'll be addressing that at a  
18 later time.

19  
20 What we're tried to do is take that final policy provided by  
21 NOAA and try to integrate it, as best we could, into our SOPPs  
22 for the committee's consideration, and so that's the first item  
23 under the SOPPs.

24  
25 The second item was discussed during the October 2022 council  
26 meeting, and what it was was the Law Enforcement Technical  
27 Committee got together, and they looked at the changes to the  
28 fishing violations relative to the appointments for the advisory  
29 panel meeting members, and they provided some feedback there  
30 regarding the appeal process being different for federal versus  
31 state, and so they've just provided some recommended changes  
32 there to that in the SOPPs for consideration by the committee.  
33 Mr. Chair, do you want me to go right into those two items?  
34 Okay. Bernie, could you please pull up Tab G, Number 4(a)?

35  
36 Folks have pointed out some typos and such, and so it's probably  
37 best to pull up the Word version, so we can try to get those  
38 addressed in committee today, if possible.

39  
40 Again, this is for council process participants, which is  
41 council members, SSC members, advisory panel members, AP  
42 members, and it does not consider council staff, and it also, in  
43 the periphery, talks, at the end, about the federal staff  
44 members, and so what we tried to do is take our current -- It  
45 said "General Antiharassment Policy", and you can see where we  
46 have tried to weave in NOAA's draft policy to our SOPPs.

47  
48 The blue is our proposed language, and then the red is struck

1 through, where we're making suggestions to change, and the black  
2 is what is currently in the council SOPPs, and so if we could go  
3 down some, please. It defines what "harassment" is, and it  
4 talks about that it's everyone's responsibility, and then, if we  
5 keep going down, it defines what the "council process  
6 participant" is, and it provides links to our handbook for our  
7 council employees. It talks about a reporting process and then  
8 how we would respond and then what the agency's role is and then  
9 the related processes.

10  
11 We also put in here, in bold, just for consideration, so we  
12 brought it to your attention, how often this training should be  
13 taken, and we're assuming that it's going to be our  
14 responsibility every year, or every other year, or at the time  
15 of appointment, to come up with this training in the future, and  
16 we don't know for sure if it will be provided by NOAA, and so we  
17 are looking into that. We don't think it's going to be a  
18 significant cost to the council, but we just need to kind of  
19 make that decision and make sure that it's well-defined in the  
20 SOPPs, and so, Mr. Chair, I will stop there and see if there's  
21 some questions and feedback.

22  
23 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Does anybody have any corrections or  
24 anything that might need to be made to this? Go ahead, Mr.  
25 Gill.

26  
27 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and so I have one -- Well, I  
28 have several recommendations, but the first one is, in the first  
29 paragraph of 4.8, and I would suggest that that's a pretty  
30 lengthy sentence, and that we put a period after "equality" and  
31 start the second sentence with "Every individual".

32  
33 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. I am trying to locate that. 4.8?

34  
35 **MR. GILL:** Yes, sir.

36  
37 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** That whole sentence you're talking about,  
38 the first one?

39  
40 **MR. GILL:** Yes, sir, and just, equivalently, making it two  
41 sentences, instead of one big, heavy sentence.

42  
43 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Any questions with that? Staff and  
44 everybody, are you good? Okay. We can do that. Yes, sir.

45  
46 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The other question I've  
47 got, down on the third paragraph, in the second sentence, is we  
48 talk about council members, including chairs and vice chairs,

1 and I assume, from the way that's written, although it's not  
2 explicit, that that's referring to committee chairs, but it  
3 doesn't say that specifically, and so it could be interpreted as  
4 council chairs and vice chairs throughout time, and so I'm  
5 looking for some clarification, and, if we're in agreement, that  
6 we get that clarified as to what intent really is. Thank you,  
7 Mr. Chairman.

8  
9 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Any questions on that? All right.  
10 Is there any others? Dr. Simmons.

11  
12 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and so I  
13 think, because this was, again, a draft policy through NOAA that  
14 we were trying to weave into our policy, I believe they were  
15 trying to say all regional council chairs and vice chairs, and  
16 so, if you want us to say committee chairs, I think that would  
17 be slightly different than what the original intent was, but,  
18 still, it's all the same that it's everyone's responsibility to  
19 include this, and so we can reword it how you like, but I would  
20 say, if there is a concern issue, a report, then the chair and  
21 vice chair would have a lot more responsibility, with the  
22 Executive Director, to report and determine how we're going to  
23 respond.

24  
25 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Yes, sir, Mr. Gill.

26  
27 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and so I don't think it's a  
28 big point, and depending on how it's worded, but I just wish it  
29 was clarified as to what it really means, and I'm good either  
30 way. You know, effectively, to me, chairs and vice chairs are  
31 included in the council member side, and so it doesn't need to  
32 be reiterated, but, if the intent is to have the chair and vice  
33 chair position for this council, and I don't care about the  
34 other ones, we ought to say council chair and vice chair, and  
35 probably singular, right, and so that would be my suggestion on  
36 how we modify that.

37  
38 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Dr. Simmons.

39  
40 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Mr. Chair, I think that is a good  
41 suggestion, and so let's make sure we get that where we're  
42 saying council members, including council chair and vice chair,  
43 and is that -- Hold positions of trust and responsibility, and  
44 it is incumbent upon them, together with the Executive Director.

45  
46 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** All right. Any other -- Yes, sir.

47  
48 **DR. C.J. SWEETMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just kind of a

1 general question, and I'm thinking that maybe this could be  
2 incorporated into Section 4.8.1, but I don't see anything in  
3 here about confidentiality, or kind of a no-retaliation policy,  
4 as it relates to this antiharassment policy, and I'm just  
5 curious of the thoughts of the council, potentially, for  
6 inclusion of something along those lines within that section.

7

8 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Dr. Simmons.

9

10 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think that  
11 is a good point, and we did add -- If you go up to the 4.8  
12 section, Bernie, that first paragraph, the council has a zero-  
13 tolerance policy for harassment, and it will not tolerate  
14 retaliation against those who report harassment, and then you're  
15 saying, under the reporting section, we should say  
16 confidentiality?

17

18 We did talk about that a little bit, on the planning calls with  
19 this, and we generally would do that, as much as practicable,  
20 but, if there is actually an investigation, it could -- We can  
21 generally put it there.

22

23 **DR. SWEETMAN:** Okay. Thanks, Dr. Simmons.

24

25 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** All right. Is there anyone else? I do  
26 have -- Yes.

27

28 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Can we make sure, Mr. Chair, that  
29 we get that in the right place, and could we go down to the  
30 reporting section? So "may confidentially report incidents",  
31 and is that where we would put that, or do you have a specific  
32 suggestion, or would you like us to come back at Full Council?

33

34 **DR. SWEETMAN:** No, and I think that could work, Dr. Simmons.

35

36 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Mara.

37

38 **MS. MARA LEVY:** Well, maybe we want to think about that for a  
39 little bit, because, I mean, "may confidentially report", and, I  
40 mean, if someone is going to report, at least lower down, it  
41 says that the council has to tell the Regional Administrator,  
42 right, and so, I mean, to that extent, it's not going to -- Like  
43 you indicated, Carrie, it's not going to be confidential in the  
44 sense that, if there's an obligation to notify others, or an  
45 investigation, and it just sort of means that you won't  
46 broadcast it, I guess, but we might want to think a little bit  
47 more carefully about how to word that, so it doesn't give people  
48 an unreasonable expectation, but also indicates kind of, you



1 know, what you're trying to say.

2  
3 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. All right. Anyone else? I do have  
4 a couple of -- Go ahead, Mr. Gill.

5  
6 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, General, and so, relative to Section  
7 4.8.1, this refers to council process participants, which means  
8 everybody who participates and not just council members and  
9 council staff and AP members, SSC members, but also the general  
10 public, and so those that are here physically, or virtually, and  
11 they're part of that process, and they're a participant.

12  
13 I mention that because, if I was sitting out in the audience, I  
14 don't think that I would consider this applying to me, and it  
15 does, the way it's written, or at least that's how I read it,  
16 and I think we need to highlight that, for the record and for  
17 the folks that are participating in this process. Thank you.

18  
19 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Any questions of that? All right.  
20 I've got a couple of -- Go ahead, Dr. Simmons. I'm sorry. I  
21 couldn't see you.

22  
23 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and so I  
24 think we're trying to get everyone as comfortable with this as  
25 we can, and so could we -- Do you have suggested wording there,  
26 because, if you go above the reporting section, it says that  
27 council process participants include all individuals present  
28 under the context of council business, regardless of location,  
29 and meaning it could be virtual as well, whether at a council  
30 office, at a council meeting, or at offsite meetings, hearings,  
31 workshops, and outreach events sponsored by a council.

32  
33 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay.

34  
35 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and so I think the rewording  
36 of that last sentence is good, but what I don't think is  
37 recognized is that the public acknowledges that it applies to  
38 them, and I'm not sure we can improve on it any, and I don't  
39 have any improvement, but I just wanted to highlight that, you  
40 know, they're involved too, even though they may not know it.

41  
42 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. All right. Once again, I've got a  
43 couple of -- I've lost my point here, but a couple of small  
44 things. Where it says, on page 2, the footnote to the first  
45 sentence, I would like to delete the words that covers "a", and  
46 we don't need "a harassment", and we need "harassment", and  
47 then, also, in the footnote, to suggest deleting the word  
48 "older", and there's a couple of us that don't like that, but

1 just delete the word "older age" and just put "age", or whatever  
2 you want to put in there at that point.

3  
4 Also, in page 2, the third paragraph, the second sentence of the  
5 third paragraph, I think "process" should be capitalized there,  
6 just in the way it is in the other parts of it. The same thing  
7 goes for G-4(a)(i), with the same changes, and so -- Then, also,  
8 on G-4(a)(i), page 2, the first full paragraph, the first  
9 sentence, the second line, delete the word "to", and I don't  
10 think we need the word "to" following "should". Dr. Simmons.

11  
12 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can you slow  
13 down just a little bit? You lost us, I believe, and so I think  
14 this other policy was just the policy that was given to us by  
15 NOAA, and so I don't think we should make any changes to that,  
16 and I think we should try to focus on ours, which is in the Tab  
17 G-4(a).

18  
19 I guess, regarding deleting "older", I don't like it either,  
20 because I'm older than forty, but that is actually how the class  
21 is defined, and, since we're defining harassment here, I believe  
22 that is somewhat of a legal definition, but I will defer to Mara  
23 on that and how important that is to keep "older" in there, for  
24 the definition.

25  
26 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** I mean, I don't consider these people at  
27 forty old. Well, I mean, the only thing I was looking at,  
28 really, and I will be honest with you, that this came straight  
29 out of my lawyer, and that's where it came from, and so, if you  
30 think we don't need it, take the age out. If we need to leave  
31 the "older age" -- Dr. Simmons. Mara.

32  
33 **MS. LEVY:** I am going to caveat this with I'm not an expert in  
34 harassment law, but I believe that age-forty comes from the law,  
35 and so, at forty and up, you're a protected class, essentially,  
36 and so it is important to keep the "forty" in there.

37  
38 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Yes, and I understand the forty, but, I  
39 mean, do we need to leave the word "older" in there?

40  
41 **MS. LEVY:** I mean, if it's in NOAA's policy, I guess I would  
42 just leave the verbiage the way they have it, because they  
43 probably have it there for a particular reason.

44  
45 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Then one other note that we have in  
46 the Footnote 2, and it's part of the second and third sentence  
47 that's including Footnote 1 of G-4(a)(i), and it's not included  
48 in the footnote for -- The last two sentences, and, if you go to

1 (a), to the first one, the first footnote, and I'm not finding  
2 it, and I can't get it to come up on my computer.

3  
4 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Mr. Chair, I think you're referring  
5 to the one that we got from NOAA. Like I said, I'm not sure  
6 that we need to make changes to that one, because we're just  
7 taking what they gave us and deciding what we want to use and  
8 what we don't want to use.

9  
10 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** I'm not sure what it is, and I can't find  
11 it on my computer, and so I can't see what she's looking at, but  
12 okay, and let's just scratch that, and we'll go with that. All  
13 right. Any other questions? Yes, sir, Mr. Dugas.

14  
15 **MR. J.D. DUGAS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. A question. In the  
16 event that someone violates any of this, what's the  
17 consequences?

18  
19 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Dr. Simmons.

20  
21 **DR. SIMMONS:** I'll take a shot at it, and so it depends on the  
22 type of harassment and the type of allegation and whether it  
23 needs to go directly to law enforcement. It might be an assault  
24 or that kind of stuff, which is laid out in here, versus just a  
25 verbal interaction.

26  
27 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Any other questions? Yes, sir,  
28 Andy.

29  
30 **MR. ANDY STRELCHECK:** I guess a point of clarity. It says, "in  
31 the NMFS role, any council that receives a report of harassment  
32 against or by a council member must inform the NMFS Regional  
33 Administrator". In the section above that, it says that the  
34 response team will determine an appropriate follow-up, including  
35 whether to engage the NMFS Regional Administrator, and so I'm  
36 questioning whether or not that should be more definitive, in  
37 terms of informing me, from the response team standpoint,  
38 recognizing that the accusations could be broader than those  
39 just coming in from a council member.

40  
41 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Dr. Simmons, do you have any --

42  
43 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** I think the difference there is  
44 whether it's a council member, versus like an advisory panel  
45 member or an SSC member or another public participant that may  
46 be involved in the process, a consultant or something like that,  
47 and so I think that's the difference. We could try to make that  
48 more clear, if that causes consternation.

1  
2 **MR. STRELCHECK:** No, and that's the way that I'm understanding  
3 it. I guess, from having dealt with several harassment cases  
4 over the years, there's a lot of resources available to the  
5 council, within the National Marine Fisheries Service, right,  
6 and so I would encourage you to report any form of harassment,  
7 regardless of who it involves, and then we can provide those  
8 resources to help you with that, and so I just want to be clear  
9 there, and, you know, certainly it's up to you to decide, you  
10 know, when you want to report it to me, but I think that would  
11 be helpful, in these instances, to go ahead and report it, in  
12 any case that you might have.

13  
14 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Any other questions on the policy?  
15 Go ahead, sir.

16  
17 **MR. KEVIN ANSON:** I'm not on your committee, and so thank you,  
18 but I just wanted to circle back to a comment, or a change, that  
19 you wanted, General, and that was in Footnote Number 2, and I  
20 don't think your deletion was fully captured.

21  
22 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay.

23  
24 **MR. ANSON:** I think you wanted "covers" to be deleted as well.

25  
26 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Right, and I'm trying to read it, and I  
27 can't -- For some reason, I can't get this thing to come up, and  
28 she was talking about the last two sentences that was in  
29 Footnote 1, and her statement was why are the second and third  
30 sentences that are included in Footnote 1 of G-4(a)(i), below,  
31 not included in the footnote?

32  
33 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Bernie, can we delete "covers"?

34  
35 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Mara, go ahead. Mara, did you have --

36  
37 **MS. LEVY:** Well, just that I think that footnote -- "For the  
38 purposes of this policy, harassment includes --"

39  
40 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** All right. If I could it to pull up where  
41 I could read it, it would be different. Okay.

42  
43 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Is that language okay, Mr. Chair?  
44 I don't know if we need a comma after "policy".

45  
46 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** For the purposes of this policy --

47  
48 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** There we go. My grammar people,

1 check me.  
2  
3 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** All right. If we don't take "older" out,  
4 we need to take it the same spot there too, or we're going to be  
5 older, and I don't care.  
6  
7 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Mr. Chair, does that reflect the  
8 committee's feedback now, on the footnote?  
9  
10 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Any other questions? Do we need to  
11 make a motion on this, to accept these changes?  
12  
13 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Yes, Mr. Chair. That would be  
14 great, but, before we do that, we probably should have some  
15 discussion about how often we would like to require any type of  
16 training for council members and participants.  
17  
18 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Go ahead, Mr. Gill.  
19  
20 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I think that that should  
21 be for new council members, as they come onboard, or are  
22 reappointed, but no more frequently.  
23  
24 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Okay. What about the state folks?  
25  
26 **MR. DAKUS GEESLIN:** Speaking from a state perspective, we're  
27 required to take these on a biannual basis, and I think that  
28 frequency is more than reasonable for this type of training for  
29 this body.  
30  
31 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Yes, sir, Mr. Gill.  
32  
33 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** If we scroll down, it's written  
34 above 4.8.1, in bold.  
35  
36 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Dr. Simmons.  
37  
38 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and so a  
39 couple of things. We did have our SSC members take this  
40 training. The chair and vice chair of the SSC took supervisory  
41 training, just like we had the council chair and vice chair take  
42 supervisory training, and our leadership took supervisory  
43 training, and we did not require the advisory panels to take  
44 this training. Other councils have required that, and so I  
45 don't know how explicit we need to be here or if we just leave  
46 it kind of open, so we can determine the type of training and  
47 when we want to require it, but I think it would be good to have  
48 a placeholder that defines it, Mr. Gill, if you want to move

1 forward with that, and then the same thing with the SSC. When  
2 they're appointed, we could ask them to take training, and every  
3 three years.

4

5 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Mr. Gill.

6

7 **MR. GILL:** So, relative to Dakus' comment about the state, and  
8 Florida apparently does it annually, and I assume that every  
9 state does it on some kind of periodic basis, right, so that we  
10 don't have to specify separately for state directors, and is  
11 that correct?

12

13 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Dr. Simmons.

14

15 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** That is a council decision, and  
16 that's up for debate, but we did ask our state directors and  
17 designees to take the training, so that we were taking  
18 consistent training.

19

20 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** You know, if I could make a comment, I  
21 think that it's -- You know, I know that each one of our states  
22 do something individually, and I understand that, but I think,  
23 as a council here, we need to be one, and I would -- You know, I  
24 think we need to have a way to where we do the same thing, as  
25 far as our policy here, and, if we want to set it to once a  
26 year, if we want to set it to whatever you think we need to be  
27 at, that's fine, but I think that each one of us should do that,  
28 as being a part of this, and it shows the unity of this council  
29 of how we are following the policy of what we're doing. I would  
30 suggest that, you know, if you think we need to do this once a  
31 year, Dr. Simmons, and I think that would be a good idea, but is  
32 that what you're looking at?

33

34 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** I guess that's what I'm asking you  
35 all, but, if you don't want to take it once a year, we think, at  
36 appointment time -- I think that's fine as well, but I would  
37 prefer the state folks, and the designees, to take the same  
38 training as the other council members, just so we have  
39 consistency, and I'm sorry if it's duplication, but, like you  
40 said, I feel that shows unity, and I think that would be helpful  
41 when we get in leadership roles.

42

43 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Mr. Geeslin.

44

45 **MR. GEESLIN:** Dr. Simmons, do we know what the estimated cost of  
46 this training is? Certainly there is a cost associated with so  
47 many, X number, of people taking the training.

48

1 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** I do not know the cost of the  
2 training. We have looked into it, and we think ADP can cover it  
3 for a nominal cost, which we use for other training. I mean, if  
4 we don't like this training, we can always look at other things.  
5

6 **MR. GEESLIN:** I want to speak in support of the training and  
7 state directors taking the same exact training, but I would  
8 propose a one-every-two-year interval for the training.  
9

10 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. You know, after I got thinking about  
11 that more, maybe, you know, state directors, obviously, may not  
12 be replaced every three years, like the other committee members  
13 may, and that maybe we just do a set number that we can utilize  
14 and say that, if you take it every so many years, that the state  
15 director -- Also, that each committee member redo it when  
16 they're reappointed or when they're appointed, and would that be  
17 something we could look at?  
18

19 All right, and I would like to put in a motion that the state  
20 directors take it at least every three years, or when  
21 reappointed, and, you know, a new state director is brought in,  
22 or a representative, and each committee member take it at -- If  
23 they're reappointed, they would take it at their reappointment,  
24 or any new committee member coming in would take it at that  
25 point. Mr. Gill.  
26

27 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would suggest that we do  
28 that as two separate motions, because there may be some  
29 discussion and consideration of what the frequency ought to be  
30 and how we go about it. **With that in mind, I move that we**  
31 **approve Tab G, Number 4(a), as modified.**  
32

33 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** All right. Let me see that. I am looking  
34 for the modified.  
35

36 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Mr. Chair, would it just be easier  
37 to modify the language that's drafted, since we haven't actually  
38 officially adopted this into our SOPPs?  
39

40 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Mr. Gill.  
41

42 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and so that's one way to do  
43 it, and I was thinking that, as a committee, we give the  
44 tentative approval, and then we could bring back a modified  
45 document at Full Council, effectively the same kind of thing.  
46

47 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Do we have a second? All right.  
48 We're moving on to something else then. All right, and so we

1 don't have a second to that, and so I guess it dies. All right.  
2 Is there any other discussion on what we need to do with this?  
3 I am looking at it, and I will tell you what, but I'm getting  
4 confused now. Dr. Simmons.

5  
6 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Mr. Chair, let me make sure that we  
7 understand here, and so you're saying that you want to go ahead  
8 and approve what we've proposed so far, but we're coming back  
9 with additional clarification on the frequency of the training  
10 for the Full Council to consider? Okay. Thanks.

11  
12 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Mr. Dugas.

13  
14 **MR. DUGAS:** I was just going to ask to slow down a little bit,  
15 so we can catch up, but I think Dr. Simmons did that, and I will  
16 second it.

17  
18 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. The initial motion was seconded.  
19 Any questions? **Any objection?** All right. **The motion carries.**  
20 Mr. Gill, did you want to make a secondary motion?

21  
22 **MR. GILL:** It's a primary motion, Mr. Chairman. **I move that**  
23 **harassment training be performed on appointment or reappointment**  
24 **for council members, SSC members, and AP members, and every two**  
25 **years for state directors.** I probably missed something, Carrie,  
26 and so if you could fill in the blanks.

27  
28 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** **We probably need "antiharassment**  
29 **training".**

30  
31 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** All right. The only question I've got is,  
32 when you say every two years as a state director, "or when a new  
33 state director is appointed", and you might need to put that in  
34 there. Every time a new governor comes in, we can always look  
35 at that.

36  
37 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Mr. Gill, one more time.

38  
39 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Mr. Gill.

40  
41 **MR. GILL:** **On appointment or reappointment, and so one of the**  
42 **"on appointment" can be deleted.**

43  
44 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Have we got a second on appointment?

45  
46 **MR. GILL:** **The reappointment of council members, SSC members, AP**  
47 **members.** Did I miss somebody, Carrie?

48



1 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Did we get staff on the first part? Okay.  
2  
3 **MR. GILL:** Insert an "and" before "AP".  
4  
5 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** All right. Did you say two years or three  
6 years? Two years is what you're asking for? If you could,  
7 change that to two years, rather than three years, for the state  
8 directors. My question is why do state directors take it more  
9 often than the committee members, because they're three-year  
10 appointments, right?  
11  
12 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Correct.  
13  
14 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** So could we change that to three and make  
15 it coincide with the others? Okay. If you could move that to  
16 three. Dr. Simmons.  
17  
18 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a  
19 friendly suggestion, and so "antiharassment training should be  
20 completed at the time of appointment or reappointment".  
21  
22 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** When you say, "at the time of", I mean --  
23  
24 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** "Time of appointment or  
25 reappointment".  
26  
27 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay.  
28  
29 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Thank you.  
30  
31 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** All right. When you say though, are the  
32 state directors part of it? You've got to put something in  
33 there about a new state director, and so, instead of saying  
34 "every three years or upon reappointment", and I guess that  
35 "reappointment" wouldn't be that person, and it would be a new  
36 state director, and is that correct? Yes.  
37  
38 **MR. GILL:** So how are folks like designees handled?  
39  
40 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Yes, ma'am.  
41  
42 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** I will give it a shot, and so we  
43 get a letter from the state, a designee letter, an official  
44 designee letter, and so we could say "state directors, and their  
45 designees, should complete this training at the time of  
46 appointment" and remove "reappointment".  
47  
48 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Good. Just something to clarify

1 that. That keeps us in line, anyway. I like that with the  
2 "designee" in there. All right. Is that it? Mr. Gill, do you  
3 agree with that?  
4

5 **MR. GILL:** I am good, Mr. Chairman.  
6

7 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Can I get a second on this motion?  
8

9 **MR. GEESLIN:** Second.  
10

11 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** I've got a second. We're modifying here.  
12 Hang on. Okay. Once again, we've got a motion and a second on  
13 this one, as it stands, and is there any questions? Any  
14 discussion? Yes, Mr. Gill.  
15

16 **MR. GILL:** So this is for Dr. Simmons, and you just added the  
17 "and prevention", because that's not mentioned in the policy  
18 anywhere, and so why are we deviating from that?  
19

20 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** We will take that out. I think  
21 there was a little confusion with staff. Sorry about that.  
22 Maybe, Mr. Chair, just read the motion, so everyone is clear.  
23

24 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. We have a modified motion now. Is  
25 that still good with you? All right. Is the second still good?  
26 Okay. Any discussion? **If not, any opposed?** Mr. Gill.  
27

28 **MR. GILL:** For the record, I think it would be good to read the  
29 motion as it stands, for the record.  
30

31 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Any questions? **The motion carries.**  
32 All right. We got through that. Now where are we at? We're  
33 back to the agenda items. I think, Dr. Simmons, we're back to  
34 the final model fishery management council policy, and is --  
35

36 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** I think we're done with that  
37 policy, and so staff will bring back some suggested track  
38 changes, based on the motion, for Full Council, regarding the  
39 frequency of training, and then, if we want to go to Tab G,  
40 Number 4(b) and go through the LETC comments on the SOPPs, and  
41 then that would complete our changes on sections to the SOPPs.  
42

43 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Mr. Dugas.  
44

45 **MR. DUGAS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to make a  
46 statement, before we move on, that, in my time on the council, I  
47 haven't witnessed any harassment around this table, but surely  
48 I've heard of some out in this room, and I think that's the

1 process participants, and so I just wanted to say that to the  
2 public, that I think the issue lies more outside the room than  
3 inside the room.

4  
5 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** I agree with you 100 percent, and I think  
6 that, as a member of this council, it applies to you the whole  
7 time, and that it's not implemented that it's just inside of  
8 this room, but, at any time that you're representing this  
9 council, that you are following this policy, and, Dr. Simmons, I  
10 believe that we have a zero tolerance, right? That's been in  
11 effect since day-one, but, yes, I do appreciate that. Okay, Dr.  
12 Simmons. Would you like to go forward?

13  
14 **CONSIDERATION OF FISHING VIOLATIONS RECOMMENDATIONS FROM LETC**

15  
16 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Yes, and thank you, Mr. Chair.  
17 Bernie, could we pull up Tab G, Number 4(b)? Okay, and so  
18 you'll recall that our Law Enforcement Technical Committee met  
19 in October of last year, and they took a look at the SOPPs, this  
20 particular section of the SOPPs where we're talking about  
21 fishing violations, and they made some recommendations there to  
22 the SOPPs, pretty minor recommendations, but what they wanted to  
23 make clear is the difference between the state and federal  
24 written warnings process.

25  
26 The federal written warning includes a process for contesting  
27 the violation, an appeal process, but there's no due process for  
28 the state written warnings, and so they asked that we make those  
29 changes to the SOPPs.

30  
31 Consistent with that, you can see -- You made a motion, in  
32 October, for us to bring this back to the Admin/Budget  
33 Committee, and so it's here before you, and you can see, in the  
34 blue text, that is the suggestion that the technical committee  
35 is asking to make to the SOPPs to reflect the difference in this  
36 process for contesting the violation or the appeals process.

37  
38 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Any discussion? Yes, Mr. Gill.

39  
40 **MR. GILL:** I assume we have to make a motion, and I make the  
41 motion proffered by the LETC.

42  
43 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. We have a motion. Do we have a  
44 second? It's seconded by Mr. Sweetman. Any questions? Any  
45 issues? **Anyone against it? The motion carries.** Dr. Simmons.

46  
47 **REVIEW AND APPROVE PROPOSED 2023 ACTIVITIES AND CONTRACT**

48

1 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Okay, Mr. Chair, and so let's --  
2 Can we go to Item Number V, and so we're going to review and  
3 approve the proposed activities, and we have a draft contract  
4 for you to consider.

5  
6 Here, and we're going to go through some of the budget changes  
7 as well, but we are looking at an essential fish habitat  
8 contract, which we have a maximum amount of \$85,000 for the  
9 committee's consideration, that we would like to make  
10 competitive, to do some work, and I will go through that  
11 contract, and then I have some proposed 2023 activities to get  
12 the committee's feedback on for the final funded budget, which  
13 we will bring back to the council at a later date, and so this  
14 is just draft activities, draft budget, and a draft contract.  
15 Could we go to -- We will start with Tab G, Number 5(a), please.

16  
17 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Yes, Dr. Simmons.

18  
19 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** This will look very similar to what  
20 you saw last year regarding the number of council meetings. As  
21 was already discussed by Chairman Diaz, the big difference this  
22 year is that we'll be hosting the Council Coordinating Committee  
23 meeting in May and June. May is the larger meeting for us to  
24 host, and that is in Key West this year, and then the fall one -  
25 - We'll set the agenda, and NOAA typically sets up the hotel and  
26 things like that for the fall meeting, and so we don't get any  
27 additional funding for those meetings, and so that will -- You  
28 will see an impact to the budget, and so that's the big change  
29 that we have in 2023.

30  
31 We are also happy to host a working group of the CCC, which is  
32 the Communications Working Group, and we have that meeting set  
33 up for February, and that's going to be in Clearwater, and then  
34 that group, since they're meeting in-person, and they will have  
35 a big agenda, will be reporting-out to the larger CCC in May.

36  
37 You'll see on here that we have several trainings, and we  
38 typically have a regional and national training for council  
39 members, and we're anticipating new council members in August,  
40 and then you will see the number of SSC meetings, and we're  
41 trying to anticipate the number of special SSCs that we'll be  
42 convening, and the dates we anticipate that.

43  
44 If you go down to the advisory panels, we went ahead and planned  
45 for two meetings of the Ad Hoc Red Snapper IFQ AP and Tilefish  
46 AP. Again, we're not sure that we'll get that done, but we know  
47 that we have several activities with the IFQ programs in the  
48 coming year, and so we went ahead and planned for two meetings,

1 one for Coral, one for Data Collection, one for Mackerel, two  
2 for Reef Fish, two for Shrimp, one for Spiny, and then some  
3 other meetings that are unanticipated. What we've tried to do,  
4 for planning purposes, is put some months in here when we think  
5 we're going to plan those AP meetings, to try to give folks a  
6 better heads-up.

7  
8 Technical committees, we have three technical committees, and  
9 we're anticipating convening them two times, and the Law  
10 Enforcement Committee will be virtual in March and in-person in  
11 October. We're also going to host a shrimp effort estimation  
12 working group style workshop, and we'll have SSC members and  
13 advisory panel members involved, and that will be in our office  
14 in February, as well as, obviously, the Regional Office staff  
15 and the Science Center staff.

16  
17 This is a carryover of some working groups we had that were not  
18 able to complete their work during COVID, and so this is an in-  
19 person meeting, and it's an important meeting for us to get  
20 ready for, with the red snapper review workshop coming up, as  
21 well as many other stock assessments where this comes into play.

22  
23 Summits and other meetings, we were tasked with looking at  
24 research set-asides, and we're looking at doing two of those,  
25 probably in April and August right now, and attendance of a  
26 council member at the Highly Migratory Species Advisory Panel,  
27 and that's typically the chair of the HMS Committee, and then,  
28 this year, we are not going to attend the ICCAT meeting, the  
29 International Commission meeting, and we're going to be  
30 responsible for that in 2024, and the Mid-Atlantic Council is  
31 going to do that this year.

32  
33 For SEDAR, you can see that we have several meetings planned,  
34 and some of them are webinars, and the big one is the red  
35 snapper review workshop, and, right now, that's anticipated to  
36 occur in late July or early August, based on the letter we  
37 received from Dr. Porch, and we'll be working with the State of  
38 Florida for the mutton snapper SEDAR 79 data workshop and review  
39 workshop and assessment webinars.

40  
41 Then we're probably a little bit ambitious here on the public  
42 hearings, but we went ahead and planned to hold this many public  
43 hearings. Whether we're able to accomplish all of these, we  
44 shall see, but we've gone ahead and budgeted for them, and then,  
45 under our outreach efforts, you will hear, in our Education and  
46 Outreach Committee, that we're going to shift our efforts  
47 towards more fishing clubs and speaking engagements, for that  
48 committee to take a look at, and less tournaments, and so we'll

1 plan for one in each state, right now. Mr. Chair, we're looking  
2 for feedback, if anybody has any suggestions.

3  
4 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Any questions on the -- Mr. Geeslin.

5  
6 **MR. GEESLIN:** Thank you, Dr. Simmons. To your last point, you  
7 said meetings in each of the states, and could you describe  
8 that?

9  
10 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Yes, sir, and so we have a plan  
11 that we want to roll out to the Education and Outreach Committee  
12 regarding these engagements and some feedback we got from the  
13 Technical Committee, but, right now -- That can impact any  
14 changes we make to our final budget, but, right now, Ms.  
15 Somerset has a plan for us to walk through regarding what those  
16 engagements will be, for that committee to provide feedback on  
17 and then the Full Council.

18  
19 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Thank you.

20  
21 **MR. GEESLIN:** In line with the placement of those meetings, has  
22 there been any consideration for placing, or hosting, some of  
23 the SSC and advisory panel meetings in the western Gulf?

24  
25 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** We have received some feedback, and  
26 especially I'm looking at the chair there of the SSC, Dr. Nance,  
27 regarding trying to have an SSC meeting at a different location.  
28 The thing is we've got to plan that way in advance, and, right  
29 now, one of the problems we're having is hotels don't really  
30 want to mess with this, with a government contract, and we're  
31 having a little bit of an issue, because we want large spaces  
32 for meeting rooms, and we want government rate for hotel rooms,  
33 and so it sounds a little bit easier than it really is, plus the  
34 cost of us taking all of our equipment, additional staff time to  
35 set those up, and so we've talked about it, and discussed it,  
36 but, right now, we don't have a plan for that. If you have a  
37 suggestion, if you like us to bring something back with that to  
38 Full Council, we certainly can, but it does add additional costs  
39 and staff time to our budget.

40  
41 **MR. GEESLIN:** Thank you, Dr. Simmons, and I certainly understand  
42 the budget constraints and the costs associated with hosting  
43 those meetings outside of the headquarters there. We would like  
44 to see, from a state perspective in the western Gulf, maybe at  
45 least one of those meetings, per year, out in the western Gulf,  
46 and we would certainly be willing to think about budget  
47 increases to facilitate those meetings.

48

1 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Dr. Simmons.  
2  
3 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. For  
4 clarification, you mean one SSC meeting and any particular AP  
5 meeting, or it just depends on the agenda items that you would  
6 like us to consider?  
7  
8 **MR. GEESLIN:** Reef Fish would be ideal.  
9  
10 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Reef Fish.  
11  
12 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Mr. Chairman.  
13  
14 **MR. DALE DIAZ:** This is a question for Dr. Simmons. On the data  
15 workshops, how many council members are you all budgeting to  
16 attend those, and the reason I ask is, for council members that  
17 haven't been to these data review workshops, it is a great  
18 learning opportunity, and I think it's very worthwhile, for  
19 folks that haven't been to them, to go, when we can budget for  
20 it. Dr. Simmons.  
21  
22 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and so you're  
23 referring to like the mutton snapper data workshop? I think we  
24 only have one council member budgeted for that, and I believe  
25 two for the review workshop, but I might look to Ms. Hager.  
26 She's saying yes.  
27  
28 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Any other discussion? Yes, sir, Mr.  
29 Anson.  
30  
31 **MR. KEVIN ANSON:** I'm not on your committee, and thanks for  
32 allowing me to speak. Dr. Simmons, just a clarification on the  
33 public hearings, and that's in-person, council staff in-person,  
34 correct, all of those?  
35  
36 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Yes, sir, that is. We're going to  
37 talk, during Data Collection, about what to do with the joint  
38 amendment for electronic reporting, and what we would like to do  
39 is a mailout there, and then a webinar, because we've had it in  
40 front of so many of our advisory panels, but that's going to be  
41 discussed by the Data Collection Committee.  
42  
43 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Is there any other discussion? Yes,  
44 Mr. Strelcheck.  
45  
46 **MR. STRELCHECK:** Not to add to the list today, but we certainly,  
47 I think, are seeing a need to have some more interactions with  
48 the for-hire fishermen, with regard to the logbook program, and

1 I know that council staff played an important role in the  
2 rollout outreach with that, and so I just mention that, and I  
3 think it's a further discussion between you and I, Carrie, in  
4 terms of opportunities there and what we could do more to work  
5 directly with the for-hire industry on the logbook program.  
6 Thanks.

7  
8 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Any other discussion? Do we need a  
9 motion to accept this?

10  
11 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Mr. Chair, I don't think we need a  
12 motion, but just any feedback, by Full Council, is appreciated,  
13 and you've given me quite a bit for the committee report and the  
14 record. Thank you.

15  
16 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. All right. We're moving now to  
17 5(b).

18  
19 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Yes.

20  
21 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Dr. Simmons.

22  
23 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and so staff  
24 put together a draft scope of work with some project  
25 deliverables, an anticipated contract period, and then a maximum  
26 monetary request regarding our essential fish habitat work, and  
27 so this has been presented, several times, to our SSCs, and  
28 we've been trying to work on this with the Regional Office, but  
29 we're just really not finding the staff resources to do what we  
30 would like to do, and so you can see what we need to do, by law,  
31 is we need to look at these descriptions and update them, as  
32 best we can, but the SSC has provided quite a bit of feedback  
33 regarding those different layers by life stage and asked us to  
34 try to -- Tasked us with trying to get in touch with multiple  
35 different agencies, state and federal agencies, to try to get  
36 better data to inform those layers, and so that's what we're  
37 trying to do here with this contract.

38  
39 If you go to the second page, you can see the expected products  
40 that we would like to see from the contractor, and we want to  
41 make this a competitive process, if the committee and council  
42 agree with us, moving forward with this type of work, and then I  
43 will let Dr. Froeschke maybe see if he has any additional  
44 information that he may want to provide on this proposed  
45 contract.

46  
47 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Is there any discussion on this?  
48 Yes, sir.



1  
2 **DR. JOHN FROESCHKE:** I can provide a little bit more, if you  
3 want.

4  
5 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Yes, sir.

6  
7 **DR. FROESCHKE:** From this, as she mentioned, the way that  
8 essential fish habitat works in the Gulf is, for each defined  
9 habitat layer that we manage, and so you can think of these  
10 things as SAV, submerged aquatic vegetation, which includes  
11 seagrass, and then there's rock, hardbottom, reef, oyster, all  
12 of those, and what we need are comprehensive maps, state-by-  
13 state and federal waters, and so there's kind of a gathering  
14 process.

15  
16 There is a review and filtering, because, for example, there's  
17 lots of different maps of seagrass. Some are old, some are  
18 good, and some are duplicative. Some need to be vetted by the  
19 states, to say, for your area, we have the local expertise, and,  
20 you know, it's kind of a whole vetting process of putting that  
21 together and getting the metadata into translatable format and  
22 providing that so that can be incorporated into our management  
23 document, and so that's the part that we need, and it's a fairly  
24 tedious process that I think someone outside of us would be  
25 better suited to handle.

26  
27 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Is there any other discussion on  
28 this? If not, do we need a motion to accept this? Mr. Gill.

29  
30 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. **I recommend that we approve**  
31 **the proposed contract for EFH.**

32  
33 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. We've got a motion. Do we have a  
34 second? We have a second by Mr. Sweetman. Anything else? Any  
35 other discussion on this? **Anyone opposed? If not, the motion**  
36 **carries.** Okay. Now let's see where we're at here. I think we  
37 are down to the draft budget, and is that correct, Dr. Simmons?

38  
39 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Yes, Mr. Chair, and Ms. Hager is  
40 going to through that and the action guide.

41  
42 **DRAFT 2023 BUDGET**

43  
44 **MS. BETH HAGER:** In Agenda Item Number V, this is informational  
45 and for feedback, and we're looking for some input from the  
46 council. We're going to provide the 2023 budget, and the  
47 committee can ask questions, of course, regarding the current  
48 cost projections.

1  
2 The 2023 draft budget also considers increasing the Gulf state  
3 and commission funds by an additional \$5,000 in 2023, for up to  
4 a total of \$50,000 to each of the Gulf states and the  
5 commission. If the committee agrees with the proposal of this  
6 \$5,000 increase in liaison funds, then a motion would be  
7 necessary for that. No motion is needed, at this time, to  
8 approve the 2023 budget, because the council has not received  
9 the total funding, and so we will bring the funded budget back  
10 later for you all's review and approval.

11  
12 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay.

13  
14 **MS. HAGER:** We will turn to the agenda item, the budget, and so  
15 we're showing the 2022 budget here, alongside the 2023 estimate.  
16 The figures are rounded to thousands, as we normally do, and,  
17 although we have received a portion of our 2023 funding, of  
18 course, as I mentioned, this is just going to be based on  
19 planned activity and not necessarily hitting our total amount.

20  
21 Now, we are entering the fourth year of our five-year award, and  
22 so I wanted to update you all on the total funds received and  
23 obligated to-date. Bernie, could you scroll down to the bottom  
24 of this? At the very bottom of the budget that we're showing on  
25 here is our cumulative carryforward, and we have everything  
26 that's been funded and obligated, and the obligated costs are  
27 including the contracts that we've already committed for  
28 conducting the expanded sampling and ageing study on the Gulf of  
29 Mexico gray triggerfish and the expanded sampling of the fleet  
30 for effort monitoring in the Gulf of Mexico shrimp industry.

31  
32 The total uncommitted funds that we're currently carrying  
33 forward from the first three years is \$730,000, and, last year,  
34 we came very close to using everything, and we only carried  
35 \$27,000 from last year forward.

36  
37 If we go back up to the top, we can go through some of the  
38 significant changes, where we have large fluctuations, and this  
39 is in our key normal areas of travel, personnel, and contractual  
40 costs. Dr. Simmons reviewed for you all the proposed  
41 activities, and, of course, it includes hosting the CCC meeting,  
42 and that's on top of our normally ambitious meeting schedule,  
43 and so, right now, we do have a full \$70,000 increase in just  
44 the travel lines, and, of course, you will see an increase in  
45 the council personnel costs too and the staff salaries, and  
46 those are related to COLA and for council salary activity, and  
47 so that's also been gauged for activity that we have projected.

48

1 Also, we need to keep in mind that, because the post-pandemic  
2 travel costs have risen very steeply, sometimes virtual  
3 participation is an option, and I expect these travel lines to  
4 be adjusted when we bring back the final iteration of the budget  
5 to you all, and so we can go into a lot of depth at that point.  
6 At this point, we are really looking at estimates.

7  
8 In calculating the staff costs, another thing to consider here  
9 is we've included the potential to either rehire the  
10 administrative position that's going to be open at the end of  
11 next week or the consideration of hiring the additional  
12 technical staff person that we originally requested in our five-  
13 year award. The calculations for possibly filling one of these  
14 positions were only included for the last quarter of the year,  
15 and these may need to be reduced out of the final funded budget,  
16 depending on our funding availability.

17  
18 If we scroll down a little bit, to contractual services, that  
19 includes the \$85,000 that we just talked about for the EFH  
20 contract, and it also includes the \$5,000 for each state and  
21 commission, to help them offset the costs that are currently  
22 exceeding their contracted amount, for some states.

23  
24 We have some states that don't exceed them, but we also have the  
25 update to the contract, this year, that allows them to hopefully  
26 help when they send uniformed officers to our meetings. We're  
27 having them be allowed to charge those costs,

28  
29 Normally, in this contractual line also, it includes  
30 professional and contracted costs, like transcription, audit  
31 costs, payroll processing costs, IT, website technical work,  
32 liability insurance, general auto liability insurance, and  
33 software licensing, and none of those have a significant change,  
34 except for the insurance, our general liability insurance, and  
35 we're in Florida, and it's going up, and so pretty much  
36 everything else is very close to our normal line.

37  
38 We also may, when bring this back to the council, look at a  
39 change in the line for our rent. Our building has just recently  
40 -- It's in the process of being sold, and we may be looking to  
41 have to move our office, because they are considering  
42 redeveloping the site, and so that could be a significant change  
43 when we bring the budget back to you all later in the year.  
44 That's all I have right now, and does anybody have any questions  
45 about this pages?

46  
47 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Are there any questions on the proposed  
48 budget? Mr. Gill.

1  
2 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Beth, for that breakdown. Could you  
3 refresh my memory on what the amount that we pay the states and  
4 the commission to help cover some of their costs are? Is it  
5 \$30,000?  
6

7 **MS. HAGER:** Normally, we pay \$45,000, and that's our standard  
8 contract, and, usually, at the end of our five-year award, we  
9 have historically tried to create an additional amount there to  
10 offset cumulatively, or if there's a special project or  
11 something like that going on, and so that has happened  
12 frequently, and so, each year individually though, it's \$45,000,  
13 and, like I said, some states do regularly exceed that, you  
14 know, in the things that -- In the activities that they're  
15 incurring and dealing with on our behalf.  
16

17 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and so I move that we  
18 approve the increase to the states and the commission in the  
19 amount of \$5,000 a year.  
20

21 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Do we -- Yes, Mr. Chairman.  
22

23 **MR. DIAZ:** I guess I can wait and see if you get a second, but I  
24 do have a comment.  
25

26 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. All right. Do we have a second on  
27 that motion? We have a second. Any discussion?  
28

29 **MR. DIAZ:** I've got a question, and this is either for Dr.  
30 Simmons or Beth. I had a conversation with Dr. Simmons,  
31 sometime back, and so, being as the council office is located in  
32 the State of Florida, the State of Florida does send a lot more  
33 law enforcement help for SSC meetings and AP meetings, and  
34 there's a lot more public meetings that they are helping out  
35 with, and, anyway, I would see, Dr. Simmons, maybe if you could  
36 comment on that a little bit, and I don't know if it would be  
37 appropriate for us to maybe consider some small increase to the  
38 State of Florida, over the other states, because of that, or  
39 some flexibility to -- Because we are disproportionately calling  
40 on the State of Florida's law enforcement people, compared to  
41 the other states, and so can you comment on that, Dr. Simmons?  
42

43 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Yes. Thank you. That is correct.  
44 For several years now, since our office is located in Tampa, we  
45 have called upon FWC officers, uniformed officers, to help us  
46 with those meetings, and there's been no additional funds that  
47 have gone to the state for that.  
48

1 I did talk with Ms. McCawley, and I believe she did discuss,  
2 with Captain Pearce, whether the \$5,000 was going to be enough  
3 to cover this additional request, and I believe, at this time,  
4 it was appropriate, but, if the committee would like to consider  
5 additional funding, because there are some states that are  
6 spending way more than their \$45,000 in liaison funds, that's  
7 certainly up for the committee's discussion.

8  
9 I would note that, like Ms. Hager said, at the end of next year,  
10 we'll be at the end of our five-year grant cycle, and so,  
11 oftentimes, we have given the states and commission much larger  
12 chunks of money, at the end of our grant cycle, if it's  
13 available.

14  
15 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay, and so do we need to modify this to  
16 add money to that or just hold off? Mr. Gill.

17  
18 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and so, if we opted to  
19 increase the funding to Florida, my question for C.J. is would  
20 it go to FWC, or would it get sucked up in the general budget  
21 somewhere?

22  
23 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Mr. Sweetman.

24  
25 **DR. SWEETMAN:** This would be focused primarily on council-  
26 related meetings, council-related items, that FWC Law  
27 Enforcement would be attending. This was provided, and,  
28 honestly, appreciated, to help recover some of the costs for a  
29 lot of the meetings that we attend, just as Carrie explained.  
30 You know, a lot of those are based in Florida, a  
31 disproportionate amount relative to some of other states.

32  
33 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Mr. Chairman.

34  
35 **MR. DIAZ:** I just want to say, based on Dr. Simmons' answer, I  
36 mean, I'm comfortable with -- I'm not on the committee, but I'm  
37 comfortable with the \$5,000 increase, and, should the State of  
38 Florida put together something for a future meeting, before we  
39 take final action on this budget, and there's some amount that  
40 has been researched and all, I mean, I would certainly support  
41 that, because I know you are shouldering a larger burden than  
42 the other states, and we appreciate the Florida Law Enforcement  
43 folks being so willing to help. It's been a giant help, and so  
44 thank you.

45  
46 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Dr. Sweetman.

47  
48 **DR. SWEETMAN:** To that point, I mean, we've only discussed, on

1 our end, the \$5,000 increase, but certainly, before Full  
2 Council, I can work with Jessica McCawley and Captain Pearce to  
3 see if there is any potential other funds that could be utilized  
4 along those lines, and so more to come, I guess.

5  
6 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. With that said, then I think we'll  
7 just leave the motion as it stands and then leave that open for  
8 discussion for the future, if that's okay with Dr. Simmons.

9  
10 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** I was just asking if we needed to  
11 add 2023 in here.

12  
13 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Are we good? Are we going to put --  
14 Okay. Is there any other discussion? **Is anyone against it? If  
15 not, the motion carries.**

16  
17 Okay, and now where are we at? Let me see if I can get back to  
18 my calendar here. All right. Dr. Simmons, I think that's all  
19 we have in that, and is that correct, and now we'll go down to  
20 the other items. All right. In other items, we have a couple  
21 of things there, and one of the things is the 2023 Advertising  
22 for Red Drum and Coastal Migratory Pelagics Advisory Panels.  
23 Dr. Simmons, would you like to talk about this?

#### 24 25 **OTHER BUSINESS**

#### 26 **2023 ADVERTISING FOR RED DRUM AND COASTAL MIGRATORY PELAGICS APs**

27  
28 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:** Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Some years  
29 ago, and I think most folks recall that we have three-year  
30 cycles for our APs, and we stagger them, so that we're not doing  
31 all of them at one time, and so, this year, the Red Drum AP and  
32 the Coastal Migratory Pelagics AP is up for reappointment, if  
33 that is the pleasure of the committee and council.

34  
35 I would just note that the Red Drum AP has not been convened  
36 during this term cycle, whereas the Coastal Migratory Pelagics  
37 AP has been convened three times during this cycle, and so we  
38 often struggle with material and agenda items that we would put  
39 in front of this AP, and so what I am asking the committee is  
40 would you like to maintain the current membership of the Red  
41 Drum AP and perhaps readvertise for the Coastal Migratory  
42 Pelagics, or would you like to readvertise for both advisory  
43 panels?

44  
45 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Any discussion on this? Yes, Mr.  
46 Gill.

47  
48 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and so I agree with the

1 supposition that expending effort and resources on repopulating  
2 the Red Drum Committee doesn't make sense, or AP panel, and it  
3 makes little sense to me, and so I think we ought to advertise  
4 for the CMP AP only.

5

6 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Chris, I think you're the head of  
7 the Red Drum Committee, and is there anything that you would  
8 like to add to that?

9

10 **MR. CHRIS SCHIEBLE:** Well, I'm not on this committee here, and  
11 so I think -- You know, we could repopulate this as the need  
12 comes, correct, Dr. Simmons, and so it would be similar to the  
13 IFQ Focus Group. If the council decided that they needed to  
14 have this repopulated at a later date, we could then revisit it,  
15 correct?

16

17 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Yes, that is correct. I also  
18 forgot to mention that your ad hocs -- You tell us at the  
19 beginning of every year if you want to keep them as well, and so  
20 it would be considered more of an ad hoc AP, if we did it that  
21 way, but we can certainly convene them and repopulate as needed.

22

23 **MR. SCHIEBLE:** Okay. I'm good with that, but I'm not on this  
24 committee, and so --

25

26 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay, and so, Mr. Gill, was that a motion  
27 that you were making?

28

29 **MR. GILL:** I don't believe a motion is needed, but I would defer  
30 to Dr. Simmons.

31

32 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** I think it would helpful, Mr.  
33 Chair, if we had a motion, so there's clarity, and then we can  
34 take that and send it to the members.

35

36 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Mr. Gill.

37

38 **MR. GILL:** I was trying to reduce paperwork here, Dr. Simmons.  
39 **Well, I move that we readvertise for the Coastal Migratory**  
40 **Pelagics Advisory Panel only.**

41

42 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** We have a motion. Do we have a second? We  
43 have a second. Any discussion? No discussion. **Any objection?**  
44 **The motion carries.** Okay, and so -- Excuse me. Do you need  
45 anything on that, Dr. Simmons?

46

47 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** No. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

48

1 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay, and so now we are up to the added  
2 item, and, Mr. Gill, I think you would like to address that.

3  
4 **DISCUSSION OF PUBLIC COMMENT**  
5

6 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and so the subject of this  
7 item is public comment, and, for those that you have read Adam  
8 Grant's book *Rethinking*, it falls squarely within that context.  
9 My thought is that we haven't considered changing,  
10 substantially, public comment, maybe since inception, and it's  
11 always been this way, and it's always been the afternoon before  
12 Full Council, and maybe that's the best, but, on the other hand,  
13 we've never really looked at anything else.

14  
15 What I am suggesting is that we consider other ways to conduct  
16 public comment that might improve both the process and  
17 stakeholder involvement.

18  
19 I've been in discussions with several stakeholders who think  
20 similarly, and how we do it, I'm not getting there, but the  
21 question is just taking a look at it. I would note that most  
22 every council, and maybe Andy or somebody could clarify, but  
23 many councils do it differently, and maybe every council does it  
24 differently, and I'm not sure that anyone does it the same way,  
25 which says there is room for tailoring how we do public comment,  
26 to get that input to the council that works best for us.

27  
28 This, by the way, would apply to the SSC as well as the council,  
29 and part of the thinking, on my end, and the stakeholders' end,  
30 is there is potential value, it seems to me, to consider, in  
31 some fashion, and I don't know how we do it, but, in some  
32 fashion, getting public comment prior to committee and council  
33 discussions, rather than waiting until all the substantive  
34 discussion is done, and the train is well down the tracks kind  
35 of thing, and having their input help shape those discussions.

36  
37 This really came to mind, for me, several -- Maybe a year ago,  
38 at an SSC, on their public comment, where theirs has been  
39 typically at the end of the day, on the last day, and some of  
40 the comments that were made I thought that, boy, it would really  
41 have been helpful if they had discussed that during that  
42 discussion on whatever that agenda item was, and I am thinking  
43 similarly here.

44  
45 I think it has to be carefully structured. You know, I think  
46 there's potential positives, as I said, in including  
47 stakeholders more inclusively in the process, and also helping  
48 that discussion, if they're bringing up points that may not



1 otherwise occur.

2  
3 The downside, of course, is that we certainly don't want to add  
4 to the time effort, and so how we do that is not clear to me,  
5 but I think, for a starter, we could see what the other councils  
6 -- How they're handling it, what they like, what they're  
7 possibly thinking of changing, if they are, to see if any of  
8 that works, and then thinking a little more broadly about is  
9 there a better way to do this, because I think, if we thought  
10 about it, I would say we might. Maybe not, but I think it's  
11 worth a look.

12  
13 We certainly haven't considered it in many, many years, and,  
14 Andy, you can tell me, I would guess -- I know in the last  
15 twenty years we haven't done it, and so I think it's time to  
16 rethink how we do public comment, and I am fine if we go through  
17 that process and we don't change it, and that's an acceptable  
18 endpoint, but, if we don't look at it, we never will, and so my  
19 recommendation is, and I would defer to Dr. Simmons, and I don't  
20 think we need a motion, but, if we do, we do, but I would like  
21 to start that process on rethinking, and I think it falls in  
22 Emily's bailiwick primarily, to take a look at how might we  
23 revise public comment, to do better for both the process, the  
24 council, and the stakeholders. Thank you.

25  
26 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Is there any discussion on this?  
27 Mr. Schieble.

28  
29 **MR. SCHIEBLE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm not on this committee,  
30 again, but maybe -- Mr. Gill, how would you consider the thought  
31 of maybe having a survey of the actual public, to see what they  
32 prefer, and maybe we could have a survey that they take when  
33 they sign-up for public comment that's very short, a few  
34 questions, that say when would you prefer to have public  
35 comment, and I don't know, and that's Emily's shop, but  
36 something to see what the public prefers and not just  
37 necessarily what the council prefers.

38  
39 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Mr. Strelcheck.

40  
41 **MR. STRELCHECK:** Thanks. I'm not on your committee as well, and  
42 I do appreciate Bob's thinking on this, and I think it's always  
43 good to review processes and procedures, and I will speak for  
44 myself, that I often find public comment not very satisfactory,  
45 both from the stakeholders' perspective as well as the input and  
46 the process that it provides for the council and the kind of  
47 timing of that, and so I am certainly open to the idea of  
48 exploring other options.

1  
2 I want to look to Carrie, because I know, Carrie, you and I have  
3 been talking, as well as others, about just broader regulatory  
4 efficiencies, right, and we've had some emails shared with  
5 regard to looking at framework procedures, and I know you  
6 presented to this council, back in August or October, on some  
7 ideas to streamline the process.

8  
9 It seems like, you know, and not to overly complicate this idea,  
10 but it kind of rolls into, you know, new ways of doing business,  
11 and it could be looked at not just for public comment, but more  
12 broadly, in terms of other efficiency initiatives that this  
13 council could make, and then I would add, since I sit on  
14 multiple councils, that it would be even looking to the other  
15 councils as well, as process improvements that we could  
16 streamline for the Southeast.

17  
18 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. I can tell you that I'm a member of  
19 about six different councils, and none of them do it the same  
20 way. Mr. Gill.

21  
22 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to iterate,  
23 because Dr. Nance is here, that I would urge Ryan and the SSC to  
24 consider the same process. Theirs is a whole lot different than  
25 the council process, because their numbers are way smaller, and  
26 so they have a lot more flexibility in achieving the same end,  
27 but I think, conceptually, it's the same thing, that, if they  
28 rethink how they do public comment, there may be more value to  
29 them and to the stakeholders. Thank you.

30  
31 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Dr. Simmons.

32  
33 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and so a  
34 couple of things. As you stated, each of the regional councils  
35 handle this very differently, and they handle it differently for  
36 council meetings and for SSC meetings, and we didn't used to  
37 allow public comment, I think, when we first started having SSC  
38 meetings, and, to my knowledge, that's only been recently  
39 allowed, really since COVID, and so that is a change.

40  
41 During the communications sub-working group, this is a topic  
42 that the other regional councils are going to -- The various  
43 public information officers are going to be discussing, and we  
44 could certainly bring back a summary regarding, you know, that  
45 feedback from that body for the different types of meetings, and  
46 I would like to keep them separate, or think about them  
47 differently.

48

1 I know a lot of other councils allow folks to sit down, and  
2 there's no time limit, and I think most of it allow it after  
3 committees deliberate, but I'm not sure how much streamlining  
4 that would allow us, as far as like administratively, if we had  
5 public comment before every committee, and I hope everybody  
6 likes five-day meetings, if we did that, but I think we just  
7 need to think about, after we look at what other councils are  
8 doing, what is our goal? What do we want to improve? What are  
9 we not achieving that other councils are, so that we're not just  
10 shooting in the dark and trying to hit a target. Thanks.

11

12 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Mr. Chairman.

13

14 **MR. DIAZ:** I just want to weigh-in. First of all, thank you,  
15 Bob, for bringing this up. I think, even when we're doing a  
16 good job, we can always do better, and I do believe, and this is  
17 a fact, and, I mean, the best ideas that have moved through this  
18 council have come through public comment, and, I mean, that's  
19 just the way it works, and it's supposed to work that way, but,  
20 as a chair, you all were worried about time, and we're trying to  
21 set these agendas, and how do we get as much crammed into --  
22 Look, on Tuesday, you all got a half-hour lunch on Tuesday,  
23 because we're trying to jam as much -- We want to get every  
24 second of your time that we can get.

25

26 So, I mean, I like where we're going, and I think we should  
27 review this and try to figure out if we can do better and more  
28 efficiently and more satisfying for the public, and so I welcome  
29 this, and I think it's a good discussion to have, and,  
30 hopefully, at the end of the day, we can balance all these  
31 things and make the whole process better, and so, anyway, thank  
32 you for bringing that up, Bob.

33

34 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. I think this is -- Bob, I think the  
35 deal with this is it's obviously something that we need to look  
36 at, and I think, Carrie, if it's all right with you, we'll just  
37 table this, at this time, and let the staff look at it, and let  
38 the committee look at it, and see if we can come up with a  
39 process of how we would like to do it, unless we would like to  
40 have a vote on that, or have a motion on it, and, Carrie, you  
41 tell me how you feel.

42

43 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and so I  
44 think what we could do, and a motion would be good as well, but,  
45 I mean, we have this communications working group, and they  
46 already have staff from each of the regional councils, and we  
47 could start with a presentation on what that group discussed,  
48 and what the differences are for the different types of

1 meetings, and the committee could get -- Maybe it goes O&E,  
2 instead of Admin/Budget, and we can start there, if that's okay,  
3 Mr. Chair.

4

5 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Do we need any motion?

6

7 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** We'll just include it in the  
8 report, if that's all right.

9

10 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. I guess we will need to put it in  
11 the report, but do you want to make any type of comment on that?

12

13 **MR. GILL:** I have lost the thread, Mr. Chairman. Are we looking  
14 for a motion?

15

16 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** I don't think so.

17

18 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** I don't think we need it, and I  
19 think that I understand that you want to get a presentation from  
20 the communications subgroup on what different councils are doing  
21 for public comment for different types of meetings, and that  
22 would go to O&E first, and is that okay?

23

24 **MR. GILL:** As a first step, yes.

25

26 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay.

27

28 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Thank you.

29

30 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** All right. Is there any other business for  
31 the Admin/Budget? Mr. Chairman, it took a little bit extra, but  
32 it started a little late, and so I think that closes our  
33 committee, and thank you very much.

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35 (Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on January 30, 2023.)

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