

**Administrative / Budget Committee Report
January 30, 2023
General Joe Spraggins – Chair**

The Committee adopted the agenda (**Tab G, No. 1**), after adding a discussion about Public Comment under other business. The minutes of the August 2022 meeting were approved as written (**Tab G, No. 2**).

Review and Discuss Proposed Modifications to Council’s Statement of Organization Practices and Procedures (SOPPs) (Tab G, No. 4a and c)

Committee members provided suggestions to clarify specific verbiage in the Anti-Harassment policy for Process Participants (Tab G, No. 4a). A Committee member suggested that the Council reiterate that the policy is intended to cover all participants, including members of the public. The NMFS representative spoke to encourage the reporting of any case of harassment to NMFS as it has multiple resources in order to support various situations. Discussion about the frequency of member’s participation in training resulted in the recommendation that the following policy and verbiage be included in the SOPPs as the last paragraph in Section 4.8:

The Committee recommends, and I so move: **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.**

Motion carried with no opposition.

The Committee recommends, and I so move: **that the Council approve modifications to sections 4.8 and 4.8.1 of the Council SOPPs.**

Motion carried with no opposition.

Staff provided an overview of the Law Enforcement Technical Committee’s recommendations on the fishing violation section of the SOPPs outlined in Section 2.6 Advisory Panels (APs)/Fishing Industry Advisory Committees (FIACs). The Committee agreed with the recommendations of the LETC to amend the SOPPs as presented in Tab G, No 4c.

The Committee recommends, and I so move: **that the Council approve modifications to the SOPPs as recommended by the LETC and proposed in Tab G, No. 4c.**

Motion carried with no opposition.

Review and approve Proposed 2023 Activities and Contract (Tab G, No. 5a and b)

During the discussion of proposed activities (Tab G, No. 5a), a Committee member requested that staff consider and budget to hold an SSC and Reef Fish AP meeting in the western Gulf. The NMFS representative requested that additional meetings be considered in coordination with

Council staff and ongoing meetings to engage the for-hire sector in additional outreach and education materials. Staff presented a draft contract outlined for an Essential Fish Habitat project including timeline, maximum budget request, and product deliverables.

The Committee recommends, and I so move: **To recommend approval of the proposed EFH contract as presented.**

Motion carried with no opposition.

Review 2023 Budget (Tab G No. 6)

Although the full funding for 2023 is not known at this time, the projected budget includes the Council's consideration of increasing each State and the Commission's Liaison contracts by \$5,000 in funding. A Committee member pointed out that Florida provides more uniformed officer support than the other states due to the number of meetings held in the state at the Council office. The Florida representative noted that the proposed increase is anticipated to help this situation and will continue to discuss any further needs with the state agency leadership. Staff noted that consideration to provide additional funding is usually given if funds are available at the end of the five-year award period.

The Committee recommends, and I so move: **that the Council approve a \$5,000 increase in funding in 2023 for the State and Commission Liaison contracts.**

Motion carried with no opposition.

Discussion of Advisory Panels Due for Reappointment in 2023

During the discussion to determine if the Red Drum and the CMP AP committees should be re-populated this year, it was noted that the Red Drum committee has not met since it was appointed. As no activities are currently planned for this group, and in consideration of the fact that the panel can be re-appointed at any time in the future, the committee decided that it was unnecessary to change the membership of the Red Drum committee.

The Committee recommends, and I so move: **that the Council advertise to re-populate the CMP AP only.**

Motion carried with no opposition.

Discussion of Public Comment Process

A Committee member pointed out that the Council and SSC may benefit from considering alternative ways to incorporate public comments into the deliberative process. The member suggested that garnering public comment during different times other than when the Council traditionally has taken public comment may better inform the process and discussion of issues under consideration. Staff indicated that the Council Coordination Committee sub-committee of Communications staff planned to discuss this particular issue during its meeting planned in

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February. Staff will develop a presentation for the next O&E Committee to inform the Council of the results.

Mr. Chair, this concludes my report.