

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

JOINT EXECUTIVE AND FINANCE COMMITTEES

**Sea Palms Resort and Conference Center
St. Simons Island, GA**

March 8, 2011

SUMMARY MINUTES

Executive Committee

David Cupka, Chair
Robert Boyles
Duane Harris

Dr. Brian Chevront, Vice-Chair
Mac Currin

Finance Committee

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Mac Currin

Mark Robson, Vice-Chair
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George Geiger
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Dr. Wilson Laney
Charlie Phillips

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Tom Swatzel

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Anna Martin
Andrea Grabman
Myra Brouwer

Gregg Waugh
Mike Collins
Dr. Kari MacLauchlin
Kate Quigley
Kim Iverson
Julie O'Dell

Observers/Participants:

Lt. Brandon Fisher
Jessica McCawley
Dr. Jack McGovern

Monica Smit-Brunello
Bob Gill

Other Participants Attached

The Joint Executive/Finance Committee of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council convened in the Sea Palms Resort and Conference Center, St. Simons Island, Georgia, March 8, 2011, and was called to order at 11:10 o'clock a.m. by Chairman David Cupka.

MR. CUPKA: Our first item of business on the Executive/Finance Committee will be the approval of the agenda. Are there any additions or changes to the agenda? I have one issue I'd like to add under other business. It's a compensation issue and we will get to that at the appropriate time. Any other additions or changes? Seeing none, then the agenda is approved.

The next order of business is approval of the December 2010 Joint Executive/Finance Committee Meeting Minutes. Are there any corrections or additions? Seeing none, is there any objection? Seeing none, then the minutes are approved. Our next item of business is a status report on our FY 2011. There is an attachment for that and I'm going to ask Bob to over that very briefly.

MR. MAHOOD: You can see, if you look at Attachment 1, we're in pretty good shape so far. We haven't spent a whole lot of money in the first two months of this year. We should be at about the 16 percent level. Health insurance is a little higher than that at 23 percent but we pay a lot of our health insurance cost up front.

We don't have any claims from our states yet under our liaison grants. I think some of the office rent is paid up front, also, and we may have paid some of it up front and that's why it's a little higher, but it's about on schedule at 16 percent. Unless somebody has any specific questions, Mr. Chairman – of course, this is our first meeting, too, of the year so there will be some expenses added after this meeting.

MR. CUPKA: Any questions for Bob on where we are on our current budget? Seeing none, then we will move along.

MR. MAHOOD: I think everybody knows the status of where we are with the budgets this year. We're in a two-week continuing resolution. There was some \$4 billion cut out of the budget. I think Congressman Jones up in North Carolina had an amendment that took out – at least for two weeks it took out the catch share money, something like \$54 million. I'm not sure what happens after the two weeks. It depends on what they do on the budget.

Where we are as far as the council, we got an advance, I guess you might call it, last month from NOAA, probably about 25 percent of our base line item budget, and we're living on that right now. We haven't received any SEDAR money so we're fronting all the SEDAR activities right now with our administrative budget.

Hopefully when this budget mess, if it does get straightened out, we'll have some knowledge of what we're going to have to spend this year. We have been somewhat conservative on our expenditures pending learning what we're going to get. I think the region is in the same situation. You don't see as many faces here from the region at this meeting.

I think that is partially due to some of the restrictions that they're facing, also. I think everybody just kind of have their fingers crossed that something will happen. It's always nice to know where you stand even if you don't stand well, so we're waiting to hear that. Because of that, Mr. Chairman, the other items, the planning budget and the activities schedules, we haven't changed those from our initial draft from the first part of the year or late last year waiting to see how much funding we really have and try to narrow down what we can do. In the interim we're moving ahead with everything, and we will know shortly, I hope, what we can get accomplished during the rest of the year.

MR. CUPKA: Bob, weren't the executive directors planning on having a conference call meeting once the dust settles from the budget; and, of course, that hasn't happened yet.

MR. MAHOOD: Yes, and obviously it's going to be probably one of the major items at the CCC meeting which is coming up the first week of May. We've had a lot of e-mails back and forth about rumors and where we think we stand and what is going to happen and how we're going to deal with cuts and this type of thing. There is a lot of behind-the-scenes activities with the executive directors. Again, nobody seems to be able to put their finger on exactly where we're going to end up.

MR. CUPKA: Any questions for Bob on any of that? Seeing none, then we'll go down to other business. As I indicated, this is a compensation issue. A couple of weeks ago I met with the Socio-Economic Subpanel, which reports to the SSC. They had a very good meeting. We've got some really good people on there, and I think their input is going to be very useful not only to staff but to the council as well.

One of the issues that came up – and apparently they were talking among themselves – there are six people on that subpanel currently. One of them is a federal employee and the other five are university employees, academics. Out of that five, I think two of them are regular SSC members and the other three aren't on the SSC but they're on the Socio-Economic Subpanel.

In discussions they had among themselves they were wondering about that since they're all there doing the same thing and sitting down shoulder to shoulder and they're all participating in the meeting, but three of them weren't getting paid and two of them were. They raised this issue of compensation and I told them I would bring it before the Executive/Finance Committee and full council to see if there was anything that we wanted to do or could do about it.

Obviously, since they aren't SSC members, I don't believe they could get paid out of the SSC compensation money that we get, but the council has paid researchers and consultants before using other council funds. They've given them stipends and all. I guess the issue is what do we want to do relative to these three people? Do we want to try and pay them a stipend since they're doing the same job and sitting there? The only difference is they weren't selected from the SSC, but they're doing the same job. Again, I told them I would raise this issue and see how or if we wanted to deal with it. Bob.

MR. GILL: Mr. Chairman, we addressed this same issue at our February meeting for exactly the same reasons. What we ultimately did was to make the SEP a subcommittee of the SSC; thereby

entitling them to SSC compensation. It's my understanding from Lee Anderson that this is the common approach in other councils. Of course, the way we put it, we were the only council that didn't do that, so it's kind of interesting, but we did address it and that's how we handled it.

MR. CUPKA: Well, this group does report to the SSC; but like I say, not all of them are formal SSC members. Monica.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Well, I guess that gets to my question and it's more along the lines of FACA concerns and those sorts of things, but maybe you can refresh my recollection, David. This is a Socio-Economic Panel and I thought that they were a subpanel of the SSC in that they were SSC members.

MR. CUPKA: They are a subpanel of the SSC. They report to the SSC but they're not all SSC members. Only about half of them are actually SSC members. You remember we decided we could put people on there that were outside the SSC. That's how we got them on there, but they aren't formally SSC members. Robert.

MR. BOYLES: Mr. Chairman, I seem to recall – I believe it was about a year ago; maybe it was at Jekyll Island – we talked about – and John is going to have to refresh my memory – some of the representatives that we had impaneled as well; can you help me understand maybe the differences or the similarities between that group and the Socio-Economic Panel because it's my understanding that we are not compensating those members; is that correct?

MR. MAHOOD: What did you call the other groups, Robert?

MR. BOYLES: I thought they were species-specific. I think there was a Snapper Grouper Panel, I thought –

MR. MAHOOD: Yes, we have had a Snapper Grouper Panel in the past. I think that's a little bit different situation. We have never done that. I assume if you had an SSC member on it, they would probably get compensated.

MR. CARMICHAEL: We talked about creating what we called these technical panels and they'd be similar to the Snapper Grouper Assessment Panel and the Mackerel Assessment Panel of the past. They would be identified groups of people that we'd call upon to participate in the SEDAR workshops primarily of the species under their charge essentially.

It has been supported by the task force and the steering committee and as way of making sure that we have better consistency moving forward; and if you the same group of people and they become versed in the issues over time, you're going to be more efficient and you're going to be more consistent probably in how you deal with the common uncertainties from species to species.

These would be just loosely organized identified groups of people and they wouldn't have official standing. They'd never meet necessarily as a committee; but say when we did the mackerel assessment, if we do the coastal migratory pelagic assessment, we'd call on that group

of people that you've essentially pre-identified to be the core participants. If they were an SSC member, per the rules they would get their compensation when appropriate.

MR. MAHOOD: It seems like to me, Monica, if we called the SEP folks that weren't SSC members and we wanted to make them SSC members, they then would have to go through the full-blown background check and all that, if I'm not mistaken, to be an SSC member or considered an SSC member. That's one way we could do it. The other way, as David said, we could just keep them as they are where they're not SSC members, but if the council wanted to give them a stipend for participation on the SEP that can also be done, which is simpler than loading up with more SSC members.

MR. CUPKA: Yes, we're talking about three individuals. They haven't met that often in the past, but they're going to probably be meeting a lot more frequently in the future given the socio-economic concerns and everything we're going through on a lot of these plans right now. They may meet a couple times a year. It's three members and it may be a couple of meetings year.

We aren't talking a lot of money, but it just seemed to me that there is a fairness issue involved in having those people sitting there doing the same job. Like I say, they all contributed and they all had good comments. They apparently were talking about it among themselves, so I just agreed to bring it up before you. Robert.

MR. BOYLES: Mr. Chairman, if it's appropriate, then I'd make a motion that the Executive/Finance Committee recommend to the council that we offer a stipend to the non-SSC members of the SEP in order to deal with this issue of equity.

MR. CUPKA: We've got to get this motion up on the board before we can act on it. While we're doing that, let me ask Robert now you said a stipend; is that at the same rate that we – was that your intent, that it be at the same rate that we pay the SSC members, which I think is \$250.00 a day?

MR. BOYLES: Yes. Mr. Chairman, if you'd like you may coach me on how to perfect this motion, perhaps. I'd like to make the motion that council offer the same stipend as SSC members to the non-SSC members of the Socio-Economic Panel.

MR. CUPKA: Duane seconded. Okay, we have a motion before us. The motion is to offer the same SSC stipend to the non-SSC members of the Socio-Economic Subpanel. Is there any discussion on the motion? Is there any objection? Seeing none, then that motion is approved.

MR. MAHOOD: Just to clarify, you mean the \$250.00 level; when you say the same stipend, you mean the amount?

MR. BOYLES: Yes.

MR. CUPKA: Okay, is there any other business to come before the committee? Seeing none, the committee is adjourned. We'll break early for lunch.

(Whereupon, the meeting was adjourned at 11:26 o'clock a.m., March 8, 2011.)

Certified By: _____ Date: _____

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Graham Transcriptions, Inc.
April 2011

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JOINT EXECUTIVE/FINANCE COMMITTEES MEETING

March 8, 2011

St. Simons Island, GA

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ORGANIZATION

AREA CODE &
PHONE NUMBER

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