

SUMMARY REPORT
JOINT EXECUTIVE/FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
Stuart, Florida
June 9, 2009

The Executive and Finance Committees met in joint session the morning of June 9, 2009 in Stuart, Florida. The minutes from the March 2009 Joint Executive Finance Committee were approved. The Committee received presentations on the following agenda items:

1. CY 2009 Activities Schedule and Budget

Bob Mahood presented the CY2009 Activities Schedule to the Council indicating it was the same schedule tentatively approved at the last meeting. Bob then led the Council through the proposed budget comparing the CY2009 budget and funding sources to CY2008. Overall Council funding increased \$273,639 in CY2009, primarily as the result of an increase to the Regional Fishery Management Council's line item in the Congressional budget and the addition of ACL and SSC stipend funds. He explained how the eight Councils allocated new funds provided by Congress and NMFS.

During discussion of the budget there was strong support from the committee members for the proposed increase in the liaison funding for the states. It was recognized that the Council receives a much greater benefit from the state's participation than the funding provided. The committee approved the proposed CY2009 budget as provided in the briefing material.

2. Status of the CY 2009 Council budget

The committee was briefed on the status of the FY2009 budget. Attachment 2 shows that the expenditures for the year are below what would be expected. This is primarily because of the length of time the continuing budget resolution was in place and the uncertainty in the level of the CY2009 budget, which necessitated the Council limiting activities and expenditures during the first part of the year. The Council also received more funding than was anticipated when the Congressional budget was passed. Bob indicated the Council is in good shape financially and should have adequate funding to accomplish the activities specified in the Activities Schedule during 2009.

3. Status of the FY 2010 President's budget

The President's budget is out and it calls for an increase in funding for the eight Councils of approximately 4.7 million dollars. That would equate to about a \$500,000 increase for our Council. If the funding levels in the President's budget are maintained in the Congressional budget, we will be in pretty good shape in FY2010.

4. Executive Director's recommendations

The committee discussed two recommendations from the Executive Director. The first dealt with hiring a Fisheries Cultural Anthropologist/Social Scientist to fill the vacant position on the Council staff. The pros and cons of filling the position were discussed. There was some concern expressed about future funding in 2010 and whether hiring for this position was still a priority based on all of the other pressing needs facing the Council. There was a consensus that the greatest need was for more social data as opposed to someone to work on FMPs and amendments.

Bob provided another option to the committee of contracting with an outside source with expertise in Fisheries Cultural Anthropology/Social Science to obtain specific information needed to improve the Council's documents. After discussing this option, the committee's preference was going with contracting for social data at this time, with the intent to consider filling a full time position sometime in the future.

The Executive Director's second recommendation addressed providing the states with additional funding based directly on the number of man (or woman) days state personnel participate on the Council's SSC. The amount a state would receive for their personnel's participation would be the equal to the compensation rate for SSC members eligible for the daily stipend of \$250. The funds would be included in each state's liaison contract. The committee supported this recommendation.

5. Briefing on Grants workshop

Bob reported that the Grants workshop went well. Direction was received from the NOAA Grants Office on how to proceed with development of the next five-year grant (2010-2014). The Executive Directors are coordinating their efforts in developing the five-year grants and the process should be completed by September.

MOTIONS:

Motion #1: On behalf of the Committee I move the CY 2009 budget be approved as presented in the briefing material.

Motion #2: On behalf of the Committee I move that staff pursue contracting with an outside source with expertise in fisheries cultural anthropology/social science to obtain specific information needed by the Council.

Motion #3: On behalf of the Committee I move that the states receive compensation for their personnel's participation on the SSC equal to the compensation rate for SSC members eligible for the daily stipend.