

**SUMMARY REPORT  
EXECUTIVE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING  
WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA  
DECEMBER 5, 2013**

The Executive Finance Committee met on December 5, 2013 in Wilmington, North Carolina. The minutes from the September 2013 Executive Finance Committee were approved. The Committee received presentations on the following agenda items:

**1. CY 2013 budget expenditures**

Bob Mahood briefed the Committee on the Council's expenditures for CY2013. It was noted that we are in good shape for CY2013 because the funds we were able to carry forward from CY2012 offset the reductions the Council experienced. We have been able to operate under a budget that accomplishes our goals for the year.

**2. Proposed CY 2014 budget**

It was pointed out that we do not have a budget for CY2014, as Congress has not passed an FY2014 budget to-date. The proposed budget in Attachment 2 was developed by staff assuming the Council would receive level funding in 2014. However, it was noted that there is no assurance we will be level funded and adjustments to this budget may be necessary. The Executive Director also explained how staff developed the budget based on expected Council activities for 2014. He then further explained how our Council's share of the overall Congressional line item for the regional councils came about and how we started receiving additional funding from several NMFS budget line item categories, such as NEPA, regulatory streamlining and ACL.

**3. Council Follow-Up and priorities**

For the benefit of the new Council members Gregg Waugh provided a detailed overview of what the Council's Follow-Up is, the information included in the document and how it is used to track the Council's activities. It is a living document the Council members can use to stay up-to-date relative to where various amendments and other actions are in the development process. They can also use the Follow-Up for planning purposes. The Council will receive the Follow-Up document following each meeting after Council and SERO staff has finalized it.

Gregg briefed the Committee on the status of the Council's 2013 priorities and on the potential list of activities for 2014. A form was provided to the Council members to prioritize the list of proposed activities for 2014 by rating a particular activity as high, medium or low. The forms were to be completed and returned to staff by the end of the day. The forms would then be tabulated and used during the Council session as the bases for prioritizing 2014 activities. There was significant Committee discussion relative to how the members should proceed with making their decisions on ranking the various activities.

**4. Committee for South Florida Management Issues and the Ad Hoc Goliath Grouper Joint Council Steering Committee**

The Executive Director provided the Committee with background information on the makeup of the Joint Committee on South Florida Management Issues and the Ad Hoc Goliath Grouper Joint Council Steering Committee. A joint meeting of these groups is scheduled for January 7-9, 2014 in Key Largo, Florida. Jessica McCawley has taken the lead in developing the agenda and briefing material for the meeting.

## **5. Regional Operating Agreement**

Bob Mahood provided the Committee with background as to how the Council/NMFS Regional Operating Agreement (ROA) evolved from the formal document developed in 2006 to the current ROA document the Committee is being asked to approve today. The renewed effort to revise the original 2006 ROA as a formal signatory document is being done in response to the recent Inspector General's report on the NMFS. The ROA before the Committee for approval today has been modified to reflect how the SERO, SEFSC and Council currently operate. The Committee took action to approve the ROA.

## **6. CCC meeting webinar**

There was a short briefing on the recent CCC webinar meeting. Discussion items included the Councils' need to address allocation issues, changes in NOAA leadership and budgets. The Committee also discussed a potential management and administrative cost assessment proposed to be applied the Councils, perhaps as high as 16%. Dr. Crabtree briefed the Committee on the issue and provided background as to how this proposed assessment evolved. He indicated that it had been decided by NOAA that no assessment on the Councils would take place in 2014.

## **7. Other Business**

The Executive Director requested that the Committee recommend to the Council that staff receive an additional retirement related benefit, specifically a one-time benefit to help with financial planning prior to their retirement. The Committee approved the request.

**MOTION #1: APPROVE THE REGIONAL OPERATING AGREEMENT AS PRESENTED BY STAFF.**

**MOTION #2: APPROVE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REQUEST TO ALLOW A ONE TIME BENEFIT FOR STAFF TO HAVE A FINANCIAL PLANNING CONSULTATION.**