

**SUMMARY REPORT  
EXECUTIVE/FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING  
CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA  
SEPTEMBER 19, 2013**

The Executive Finance Committee met on September 19, 2013 in Charleston, South Carolina. The minutes from the June 2013 Executive Finance Committee were approved. The Committee received presentations on the following agenda items:

**1. Status of the Council's Federal CY 2013 funding**

Bob Mahood briefed the Committee on the level of funding we have received for CY2013. It was noted that we ended up with a 10% cut in all of our budget categories except for SEDAR, where we were level funded. We will be able to weather this budget reduction using funds carried forward from earlier grant years. The Council has been conserving funds critical to the Council's future operations, as we braced for these anticipated budget cuts.

**2. Status of the Federal FY 2014 budget for the Councils**

Currently, the President's proposed FY2014 budget for the Councils restores the funds cut in FY2013. However, Congress has not yet agreed upon and passed the FY2014 budget. The House and Senate versions vary from each other and from the President's budget, so it is unclear what our CY2014 budget will be.

**3. CY2013 Council budget expenditures**

The Committee was briefed on the Council's expenditures for CY2013. It was noted that although we experienced a 10% reduction we are in good shape for CY2013 because the funds we were able to carry forward from CY2012 offset the reduction. We have been able to operate under a budget that accomplishes our goals for the year.

**4. Update on the Joint Committee on South Florida Management Issues**

Chairman Cupka provided the Committee with background information on the makeup and function of the Joint Committee on South Florida Management Issues and the activities undertaken to-date. Jessica McCawley briefed the Committee on the series of five public workshops held in Dania Beach, Key Largo, Key Colony Beach, Key West and Marco Island, Florida. The workshops were well attended and resulted in valuable public input relative to fisheries management issues in the south Florida area. The Committee discussed what the next step in this effort should be. A motion was approved directing staff to work on scheduling a meeting of the Joint South Florida Management Issues and Goliath Grouper Committees early in 2014. It is to be an in-person meeting in south Florida centered on discussing how to move forward with goliath grouper and the other items identified at the South Florida scoping workshops.

**5. Address Council "Follow-up" and priorities**

Bob Mahood provided the Committee with background as to how the Council/NMFS Regional Operating Agreement (ROA) evolved from a formal document developed in 2006 to the current informal ROA or Follow-Up we use today. There is a new effort underway to revise the original 2006 ROA as a formal signatory document to meet the recommendations in the recent Inspector General's report.

Gregg Waugh presented a detailed briefing on the Follow-Up outlining current and future activities and schedules for the Committee's information, consideration and guidance. He explained how the Follow-Up is developed and the interactions between the Council and the SERO staff in completing the operations document. Committee Chairmen were asked to review the Follow-Up to ensure various on-going Council actions are moving forward as envisioned. The use of scoping webinars was discussed in detail. Generally, there was agreement that this is a good approach for the future scoping, with the exception of very controversial issues like MPAs, where the Committee indicated they would prefer in-person public scoping sessions. There was not a Committee motion but the staff was given direction to pursue using scoping webinars in the future.

## **6. Other Business**

Dr. Duval continued with several items not covered during the Visioning Workgroup meeting. She provided an overview of the planning and activities related to the proposed port meetings. Timing and locations for the port meetings was discussed, as well as, the role and participation level of Council members attending. The content and process for the port meetings were also discussed.

**MOTION #1: DIRECT STAFF TO SCHEDULE A MEETING OF THE SOUTH FLORIDA AND GOLIATH COMMITTEES EARLY IN 2014 AT AN IN-PERSON MEETING IN SOUTH FLORIDA TO DISCUSS HOW TO MOVE FORWARD WITH GOLIATH GROUPER AND ITEMS IDENTIFIED AT THE SOUTH FLORIDA SCOPING WORKSHOPS.**