SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The Beaufort Hotel
Beaufort, North Carolina

December 9, 2021

TRANSCRIPT

Committee Members

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Kerry Marhefka
Laurilee Thompson

Trish Murphey, Vice Chair
LT Robert Copeland
Tom Roller

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Attendees and Other Participants

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Dale Diaz
Shep Grimes
LT Patrick O'Shaughnessy
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Additional attendees and other participants are attached.

The Outreach and Communications Committee of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council convened at The Beaufort Hotel, Beaufort, North Carolina, on Thursday, December 9, 2021, and was called to order by Chairman Spud Woodward.

MR. WOODWARD: We'll get started with our Outreach and Communications Committee meeting. It is 2:00, and we're thirty minutes behind, but we're going to certainly allocate as much time as we need to to make sure we get through our agenda and give everything some thorough coverage. Members of the committee are myself are Chair, Trish Murphey is Vice Chair, Chester Brewer, Lieutenant Robert Copeland, Kerry Marhefka, Tom Roller, and Laurilee Thompson, but, as always, we certainly welcome input from everybody that is on the council, and so, with that, we've got an agenda before you.

The Approval of the Minutes was left off of the agenda, but I'm going to address that, and I'm also going to take the Chairman's discretion, under Other Business, to take care of something we need to do, and so any additions or modifications to the agenda? Seeing no hands, and I don't hear anything, we'll consider the agenda approved by consensus. The next item is Approval of Minutes from the June 8, 2020, meeting of the committee. At that time, it was actually the Information and Education Committee, but you've had those provided to you. Any edits or modifications or changes to the minutes? I don't see any digital hands, and I don't see any real hands, and so we'll consider the minutes accepted by consensus as well.

We've got Cameron on with us virtually, and Scott Baker, our advisory panel chair, was unable to attend the meeting, even virtually, and so Cameron is going to give our advisory panel report from our most recent meeting, and so, Cameron, are you there and ready to go?

MS. RHODES: I'm here, and I'm ready to go. Can you hear me, Spud?

MR. WOODWARD: We've got you loud and clear.

MS. RHODES: Okay. Great. First of all, let me say hello to everybody. I'm sorry that I'm not there in-person with you all, and I would definitely like to be able to see your faces, but I'm glad that I'm able to call-in like this and provide the report this way. Like Spud mentioned, Scott Baker was unable to be here for this, and so, unfortunately, you're going to have to listen to me droll on about what happened at the Outreach and Communications Advisory Panel meeting.

It was a great meeting. They were super engaged, and they provided a lot of input on a whole range of discussion items throughout the meeting, and so I'll just hop over here into our presentation for the summary that I am going to provide today. If you would like to see more detail, of course, please take a look at the advisory panel report that is provided in your late materials for this briefing book, and, there, you will be able to see all of the discussions in-depth, including a whole range of discussion questions that we posed to the AP, but, here, I will try to focus a little bit on some background information and then take you through many of their recommendations.

Just stepping back for a second, I'm going to walk through all of the summary for today and what we discussed at the AP meeting, and, if you have any questions, just go ahead and chime in. Spud will call on you, and I will be glad to answer any questions throughout the presentation. Please

don't feel like you need to hold on to them, since we're going to be hopping through multiple different agenda items that the AP covered during their meeting.

The AP met on November 18 and 19, earlier this fall, and the meetings were held via webinar. We had many AP members show up for the meeting, which was great, and there was lots of engagement across-the-board, and, just as a reminder, we have had some changes to the advisory panel, just because we've included some more seats for additional candidates, and that has been really great, and we've definitely seen the benefits of that, having various perspectives, from a variety of stakeholders at the AP level, and so that has been truly a benefit to the discussions that we've seen at the AP. As a reminder, Scott Baker is the chair of the advisory panel, and Shelly Krueger is the vice chair.

They covered a large range of agenda topics, starting with a social media discussion and finishing up with advisory panel member updates, and so they definitely covered a gauntlet here and provided incredible feedback for the council to consider when moving forward with outreach and communications efforts.

I will just dive right in here to this social media discussion. We first presented the AP with some background information on how we go about approaching social media on behalf of the council, and that is something that we have not covered at the council level in quite a while, here at this committee, and so I just wanted to go ahead and provide some background for you all, so you were on the same page as the AP, and then we can dive into some of their feedback and suggestions.

One of the things of how we've approached social media has really been with kind of an informal approach, and it's largely been driven by staff, as to decide how we go about what content goes up on our social media platforms, and we're currently active on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube. We don't have quite as much presence on YouTube, and that's really been utilized on as-needed basis, and so, for example, if we have a public hearing video presentation that we would like to have available on YouTube, then we post it there, and folks can access it at any time, and they don't necessarily have to be present for an actual public hearing, because they can certainly submit public comment in written format, via our public comment forms online.

Then we also post how-to videos and things like that. For example, we have a best fishing practices how to build your own descending device tutorial available from our YouTube right now, and so it largely hasn't been prioritized, but it's utilized whenever we have content that we think would be appropriate for the platform.

Meanwhile, on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, we are posting on those channels roughly five-times per week. There are, of course, exceptions to that, but, for the most part, we're relatively consistent, and we have content on those platforms on a regular basis.

Our past approach really has been largely informal. Again, we have left it up to staff to determine when to respond to comments that might come through on social media, and so, if you've ever been on our social media platforms, you have likely seen some negative comments, or some contention, that occurs across those platforms, and, really, it's been left up to staff to determine if a comment on social media warrants a response.

Also, we haven't necessarily directed people to public comment opportunities on every single post that has had information about a public comment opportunity, and we've really left a lot of what we put up on Facebook, which tends to the platform that we get the most engagement, and we've really left that up to staff's discretion, and this has resulted in some recent concerns, and folks mostly are concerned about the time that is required to manage these platforms, and there's also some concerns about whether there is a fairness issue, since staff are determining when it's appropriate to respond to certain comments, and they are not necessarily responding to every comment that comes through on the platform.

Then there's also been concerns that have come to light about whether or not people are clear on how they go about providing public comment and if they're assuming that comments that are posted to social media platforms are included in the official administrative record for the council, and that has not been the case.

Any comment that comes in through social media has not been included in the official administrative record, and that's really been kind of an internal policy that's been utilized, just because it's extremely difficult to try and keep track of those comments, and people have the ability to delete them, and we don't really know if people want those comments to be considered official public testimony.

With that, given those concerns, staff had been directed to change things up a little bit, as a temporary fix, and then, ultimately, the council will have the opportunity to talk about this in a bit more depth, hopefully at an upcoming council meeting, and there will be the opportunity to really figure out how the council would like to go about approaching the council's presence across social media platforms, and the current strategy is relatively simple.

We are just not responding to comments on social media at this time, and so, if somebody were to post something on let's say one of the posts from this week regarding the council meeting, we're not engaging with any kind of interaction with that person, and we are including information on how you go about providing public comment whenever we are posting material that relates to a particular public comment opportunity.

For example, for the council meeting week, every day, we've posting where someone can get information on how to provide official public comment, and we also provide a note indicating that comments on social media platforms are not being included in the official administrative record for the council, and so we're really being very clear about those things and adding that information into our posts across social media platforms, and that has been our temporary approach I would say over the last couple of months, and there have been some modifications, like the addition of the note that comments on this post will not be included in the official administrative record as a public comment, but, instead, we've really had this in place, as a whole, since I would say around July or August.

We went to the AP just opening up the floor for discussions, to see what they thought the council might consider to do, and what were some of their recommendations on best next steps, and we posted a pretty lengthy series of discussion questions for them, as to whether or not the council should consider developing a social media policy or some kind of guidelines document, and we asked them what are some of the expectations of an agency like the council and what they need to be responsible for on social media, and that's not really a question that we've, I think, had much

discussion about at the committee level, or at the AP level, and so we did end up having some really interesting discussions.

If you would like to see those detailed questions that we asked of the AP, I definitely encourage you to go take a look back at the AP report, but, in general, the AP was definitely interested in suggesting that the council consider developing some sort of social media guidelines document, and whether that comes in the form of a policy or something more informal, like guidelines, is certainly up to the council, as to how you would like to move forward, but there was quite a bit of discussion that that would be extremely beneficial to council staff, as well as would provide some guidance for the public as to what some of the social media guidelines are and some of those expectations, so that document could be made available to members of the public at any given time.

Ideally, a social media guidelines document would lay out some of the goals and objectives in what the council hopes to achieve by being on social media and interacting with people across those platforms. The AP also discussed risks of being on social media or not being on social media, and they made it very clear, in their discussions, that they felt that the risks of not being on social media far outweighed the risks of being on social media, and they noted that, if you're not the body filling the void of information, somebody else is going to come in and take that place, and so they felt that it was really important that the council play that role and participate on social media to share information with folks.

It was also -- This was probably one of the more interesting things that even came out of this discussion, but it was noted, not only during the AP, the South Atlantic AP, but it was also noted during the Gulf Council's Outreach and Education Technical Committee, that they felt that negative comments on social media could actually yield positive interactions, and so, if you respond back to certain negative comments and are able to have a discussion, it's more likely that that person might be more engaged in the council process down the road, and so that was a really interesting take-away from both our AP and the AP for the Gulf Council.

Then they suggested that staff consider developing standard responses to routine questions, especially when considering the time issue that might be coming into play when asking staff to monitor social media platforms and to see what kind of engagement we are receiving across them, and then one of the big expectations of the council that came about during the discussion was to post announcements and reminders and any kind of content as it might relate to citizen science, as it might relate to habitat, and just to keep people aware of what's going on at the council level.

Next, the AP had a brief demo of the council's new website, and you will receive a similar demo here shortly. The web demo was provided by Steven Locker with Happy Prime. Those are the contractors who are assisting us with this immense project, and they have been truly wonderful to work with and trying to piece together what our needs are as an agency and what the needs of our stakeholders are.

They got a walk-through of the homepage design and the general design elements that are being employed across the entire site, and they got to get a little bit of an inside scoop as to why some of these design concepts and elements are being used for species pages and fishery management pages, and you will receive a similar update on all of that here shortly.

Overall, the AP responded very positively to the design, and they felt that it was clean and visually appealing, and there was good use of white space throughout, and they also gave us some caveats to make sure that we don't get too wordy with information that we provide across the site, that we establish a quick way for people to get news, and so any kind of big news item needs to be something that is easy for folks to access.

They felt that the menu items were appropriate and that they really covered a large range of topics that the council would like to share with stakeholders, and they also made some suggestions that it's important to consider making sure that all stakeholders are represented in the imagery that's posted to the site, and so it might be helpful to have banner images that showcase various stakeholders or various states, and then, lastly, that it might be important to take a second look at the about-the-council tab, to really consider whether or not that's the most appropriate and intuitive place to house membership-directory-relevant information.

Then the AP had a nice discussion on Reef Fish Extension Fellowship, which, again, you will get an update on that here shortly, and it's our next agenda item for this afternoon, and they were able to get a real overview of that project, the partnership with the various regional Sea Grant offices here, and so we are working with South Carolina Sea Grant, North Carolina Sea Grant, Georgia Sea Grant, and Florida Sea Grant on this effort, and they received an update on the various different job duties that the fellow will be taking on, and so the snapper grouper outreach, with a real focus on best fishing practices and serving as the liaison between Sea Grant and council staff and council members on the red snapper count and the greater amberjack count.

Folks are really excited about this opportunity, and we definitely got a lot of positive feedback that we are trying to engage with folks in multiple different ways now, and since this fellow will be focusing on a lot of in-person interactions, they felt very positive about all of that, and they were really glad to see that we're going to be heading back to more of those in-person activities and hopefully engaging people in more of a grassroots-style approach.

They also offered to help, and so AP members were definitely enthused and wanted to provide any support that they could, whether they come as a guest speaker to assist with the fellowship or if they came along just to provide contacts or things of that nature, and so everybody was definitely very supportive and interested in seeing this move forward, and they also felt that it could really help show the value of this type of work in the South Atlantic, and being able to show this cooperation between the Sea Grant offices and the South Atlantic Council and the importance of Reef Fish Extension would be extremely beneficial to everybody involved. I know I'm hustling through here, and so, if anybody has questions, feel free to step up.

MR. WOODWARD: Are there any questions so far for Cam? I don't see any, Cam, and so proceed.

MS. RHODES: All right. I'll keep trucking. Next, we've got this discussion of building relationships with tackle shops. This is something that I think our staff internally are really excited to see move forward, and the AP had a very similar reaction to it. It's very much tied in with what the Sea Grant fellowship is going to be focusing on and trying to help us achieve.

Nick Smillie has been absolutely integral in getting this off the ground, and this is something that we've been wanting to do for a long time, to start prioritizing building relationships with tackle

shops and try to leverage those relationships, so that they help us by sharing information with their customers or anybody else that they might be interacting with.

Nick had been really great, and he's been putting together this comprehensive database, and the fellow will eventually be stepping in to help assist with that, and probably take that over a bit, and this database is something that we hope to have available to our partners as well, and it's necessarily an internal thing. We're looking to partners to help assist with it and make sure that information is up-to-date, and so, really, we're trying to put together a database of tackle shops and marinas and fishing clubs, any kind of site that might cater to the type of stakeholder that we're trying to interact with and keep track of the different engagements we've had with them, who their regular clientele is, what kind of information do they have readily available in-store, and try and make sure that we get them to share information, whether that be passing out flyers, emailing their databases, really doing what we can in order to coordinate with them more effectively.

Again, the AP provided lots of feedback on this topic as well, and they actually said that, since people are starting to loosen the reins a little bit, following COVID, that there definitely seems to be more anglers out there, and they're really interested in participating in in-person seminars and workshops.

They felt that going to these tackle shops and maybe setting up some of those seminars, or workshops, would be extremely beneficial to lots of different anglers, whether they might be new or they might be seasoned, and then they also suggested that council staff consider working with fishing and boating clubs, in order to disseminate information and host any kind of workshop or training that might be helpful.

They also made it very clear that we need to be cognizant of limited space here, and so I know we're trying to come up with different materials that we might want to send to these tackle shops, and they said don't get too crazy with it, because they don't normally have a lot of space to host many print materials out on their counters, or maybe it's best to try and come up with solutions where you can post things on a corkboard or something like that.

They also said don't forget to keep pursuing digital ways to interact with tackle shops, whether that be through a Constant Contact or other means, or having them share social media on their own channels, and then they said be sure to establish relationships with the staff there, maintain those relationships, keep the messaging consistent, and that this should be a really great opportunity for the council and tackle shops to help each other out, by getting people engaged in the management process.

Next was probably our most challenging discussion, and, to be frank with you, the AP did not have much to weigh-in on this topic. They felt that it was very important that we consider other opportunities to do so, and we really posed some challenging questions to them on how to go about addressing red snapper management issues through outreach and communication, and staff provided a lengthy overview of red snapper management challenges.

In that overview, we included John Carmichael's video presentation from I believe it was the June council meeting of this year, where he provided a really, really great overview of the challenges, stuff that we received from the stock assessment, and what are some of the additional challenges that we're going to see moving forward, and so the AP responded extremely positively to that

overview, but, when it came to the discussion questions, they got a little bit stumped and felt that they needed some more time to really mull over it.

They suggested that council staff develop a video series featuring John Carmichael on some of the various challenges in the red snapper fishery, as well as the snapper grouper fishery as a whole, and how we go about tackling those issues, and they really liked the idea of having that available for folks on YouTube and sharing it across other social channels. They also suggested, and this was the really big-ticket item, was to suggest a red snapper session, where outreach and communication specialists in the region, as well as scientists and managers, come together to discuss the questions that we posed to them during the AP meeting.

We were asking them questions like what materials do we need to put together to help address these challenges, what are some of the key messaging techniques that we can use in order to address these challenges, and they felt that it would be most appropriate to have some kind of workshop or session dedicated specifically to that, that included scientists and managers and not just outreach and communications specialists.

They also made suggestions, which you actually discussed earlier this week, about whether or not folks should be required to watch certain kinds of videos, whether it be a red snapper educational video or a best fishing practices video, before they get their permits, and so that really applies to for-hire and commercial permits at this time, of course, and they also suggested that it might be beneficial to have that video available before soliciting for public comment on red-snapper-related items.

They, again, suggested, which is not new to us, and we've definitely heard this suggestion to keep moving with influential members of the community, and we will certainly do that over time, and we'll start to continue to build on those relationships, some of which were put into place through BeBe's work and have been really helpful, and hopefully we can take advantage of those in the future, but they, again, said that it was very important to leverage those relationships and have influential members of the community be the ones to explain information to the public, rather than it coming directly from council staff.

Then develop a way to evaluate whether any of these efforts are actually effecting change, and that, I think, is a really important piece of this that we haven't quite sorted out at a staff level, and it's definitely a challenge, but it's something that I think will be really important moving forward.

Then we covered the Citizen Science Program update, which walked through a whole series of projects, as you all are familiar, and the AP had quite a bit to discuss on this. They again, suggested utilizing influential members of the community, in getting folks engaged that way, develop social media contests, and maybe even consider gamification and making things a little bit more fun for folks as they participate in these projects, post seminars on the project, make sure to highlight participants and make it very clear that what they're doing is very much appreciated and their involvement in citizen science projects does not go unnoticed, and then utilize incentives, wherever possible, and that's certainly a challenge for us at the council level, but it might be something that we can think creatively about, and then be sure to send people personalized catch summaries, and maybe develop a citation program, much like what you might see in North Carolina.

Then, again, consider geofencing for notifications, so that folks are getting constant reminders

about the different projects that they might already be involved in, but maybe they've forgotten about, and then set up booths at tournaments, where appropriate, so that you can answer questions for folks and get them involved and have them sign up for the different mobile applications or projects that we might have underway.

Then the AP received a quick briefing on the Habitat Program's Outreach and Communication Plan that's going into effect and taking a look at the blueprint, and this was really a general just first introduction to what's going on, so the AP is aware of some of these efforts underway and that they know that they're going to have opportunities, probably in the near future, to take a look at this.

They made it very clear that they thought it was important to establish outreach and communications objectives for the Habitat Program and have those laid out nice and clean, and then utilize the website, video content, and Story Maps to help explain the council's role in habitat, since there has definitely been some confusion about that, as of late, and so it would probably be wise to have materials readily available from the site, and they suggested that we take a look at the Mid-Atlantic Council's site for examples on how they handle the separation between habitat protection work and ecosystem-based management work, and then they said one of the key things to do is to make it very clear that a healthy habitat is directly tied to healthy fisheries.

As always, we have AP members provide updates and basically give them an opportunity to share information from their neck of the woods and what they have been experiencing, and so we received reports from various AP members, all listed here, and I would strongly encourage you guys to go take a peek at those, and they are available through the report, at a link, or you can get the information from the AP meeting briefing book.

Again, as I mentioned a little bit earlier, there was some discussion on utilizing game theory in our approach to how we go about addressing management challenges and try to break down complex information, so that it's a lot easier for people to digest, especially as we start to see younger stakeholders come up through our system here, and that is it for me, Spud, and so I'll turn it over to see if there are any questions on those AP discussions.

MR. WOODWARD: Thanks, Cameron, and there was a lot, and she summarized it, and I certainly encourage you to look at the report. It's nine pages, but it gives you an interesting insight into how a diverse group of people look at these problems and potential solutions. I do have one question, and hopefully I'm not the only one that doesn't know what geofencing is. Can you maybe tell us what geofencing is?

MS. RHODES: Yes, I can give it a shot, and I can definitely say that it's not my area of expertise either, Spud, and so you're not alone in that, but my understanding of geofencing is it's really a way to see where your users are located and that you can send notifications specifically to that location, or that user, in a given area range, so that you're targeting people in a more specific way, rather than doing these broadcast approaches to people who might not necessarily be in our region.

MR. WOODWARD: All right. That makes sense. Any questions for Cameron about the AP report? Go ahead, Dewey.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: I've got a question, and it's an excellent report, and it seems like a lot of work that's been going on, and how are you going to bridge -- It seems like, when you go to take an issue to the public on this -- Are you going to be coming straightforward and like saying the question would be asked of how do we reduce our dead discards, or are you going to be going in a -- I am trying to get to -- It seems like, in the social media phase, we're looking at different friendlier things and adjectives, but, in the world of reality of fixing something, how are you going to bridge that gap of coming straight out and asking the question of how are we going to do something and get it done, versus a lot of the other ways, and I guess I'm a little bit not explaining myself well, but hopefully you'll understand what I'm asking.

MS. RHODES: I think I do, Dewey. Spud, are you good with me to just jump in?

MR. WOODWARD: Yes, and go right ahead.

MS. RHODES: I think I understand what you're getting at, and it actually -- Steer me if I'm wrong, Dewey, but we actually had a similar discussion at the AP level, where an AP member, who is a fishing representative, kind of perceived our discussions here at the AP level as an opportunity to provide public comment, and it sounds, to me, that that's kind of what you're asking, is how are we going to go about explaining information to people in a way that describes the issues and then opens the floor up to discussion, as to what they think is a suggestion, and so more like a visioning workshop of sorts, or things like that.

This AP has really been focusing on not necessarily -- I guess it's definitely focusing on how we go about engaging people, but it's not necessarily focusing on how we go about soliciting for public comment, and it's more taking a look at how we craft messaging to explain complex information to people and how we craft, and basically package, that messaging, so that it's received in a way that is something that people might be interested in taking a look at.

I think one of our biggest challenges, as of late, has been trying to get people to participate in council issues, or different public hearings or scoping sessions, whatever it might be, and it's also been hard to get information out in front of people, since one AP member indicated that they're in social media overload, and there's so much content out there that weeding through it can be pretty challenging, and so the AP hasn't really taken a look at necessarily how we're going to go about soliciting public comment on these complex issues, and it's more taking a look at how we're going to craft some of the language for these issues, and did I get at any of what you were getting at, Dewey, or am I totally off-base here? I can't read your face, and so it's hard to know where I'm at.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: You did a great job. Thank you.

MS. RHODES: Okay. Thanks, Dewey.

MR. WOODWARD: All right. Any other questions or comments or feedback? I will say that probably an actionable item that certainly has emerged out of this is we'll be looking at the Gulf Council's social media guidelines as sort of a role model for how do we proceed forward. Social media, as you heard in her report, is -- We're sort of in a catch-22 situation. If we don't engage in it, then we actually can be worse off than if we do engage in it, but then you've got to figure out

the best way to engage in it, and we certainly want to make sure that staff don't get caught in a social media trap, and it's a dangerous place out there in social media, and I don't do it.

I am kind of like Mel, and we're digital immigrants in a world full of increasing digital natives, and we just kind of -- We go home and close the door and try to pretend that a lot of this stuff isn't going on, but it's out there, and it's useful and valuable, but it has its risks, and so that will be one of the first things we're doing. Go ahead, Monica.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: I guess it's along the lines of what you said about looking at what the Gulf Council has developed for guidelines, and I wondered if people in Cameron's position who were -- Assuming there are people in Cameron's position with all the other councils, whether they have gotten together and talked about what are some of the best ways, or whether they have guidelines, or, heck, even whether it's been discussed at the CCC meeting, as to how the council should go about navigating the social media platforms.

MR. WOODWARD: I think one of the things that has already emerged, from us sort of revising the membership of this advisory panel, is we have much more diversity now, and those folks are talking to each other and communicating and sharing ideas that I think will help us craft guidelines, because you will notice that there was a clear delineation made between guidelines and a policy, and a policy that could have unintended consequences versus guidelines, because we've got to have some flexibility, because the challenge is that you hate to see blatantly incorrect information propagate itself, but then, you know, once you start engaging, it almost becomes a never-ending match back and forth, and it's how do you best do that, and it's tough.

When this first all started, people were saying, when I was back working, why don't you get on there and straighten them out, and I said that I will never have the last word, and, besides, somebody that's up on a computer ranting at two o'clock in the morning, I am probably not going to be able to convince them of anything anyway, but that doesn't mean that we don't try, and so go ahead, Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: I mean, I think part of that will be determining what our goal of using social media is. If it's literally just another way to get out information of this is closed, this open, and we're having this meeting, then you can almost turn off comments, which is something you can do on, I think, all the platforms. Then all it is is a place where we're giving information.

If it's about something else, like interacting with the public, which then gets stickier, then that's a whole different set of guidelines, and, while Cameron was giving her -- I was paying attention, Cameron, but I was also, for the first time ever, going on our -- I've never been on our Facebook page, and I read the comments, and so, yes, there's some stuff on there that's fun, and it makes you want to respond, and you're just like, no, you have it so wrong, and you're right that it is -- It's the most ridiculous waste of time in the whole entire world, but, you know, what do we intend to use it for, I guess.

MR. WOODWARD: I think it comes down to, like we're saying, is do we use it as a billboard or as a telephone? Is it a conversation, or is it a way of merely using another pathway to distribute information? Obviously, the latter is much safer than the former. Chris, I saw your hand.

MR. CONKLIN: Thanks for letting me speak on your committee, Mr. Chair. I feel like we used to respond to people on that, maybe when Amber was running it or something, and when did we make the conscious decision not to do that, because I would prefer that we do what we're doing now and not engage, and use the proper channels, but I just was wondering when that changed.

MR. WOODWARD: I don't know. When did that happen, Cameron?

MS. RHODES: That change really came about in the June or July timeframe, and so I have been engaging with people through social media over the last four-and-a-half years. We didn't have much of a social media presence before that, and Kari Buck ran it for a little while, and then, when I came onboard, I took that over, and so I would say we've been interacting with people, on a regular basis, up until June or July of this year.

MR. WOODWARD: All right. Thanks. Any other questions? Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: Just to that point, and I get why we have that policy, but then what I was literally just reading, and it was red snapper, I think, and people are allowed to comment, and then they keep going, how come we're getting no response, and they feel like they're being ignored because we have that policy, and, again, I'm not saying it's the wrong policy, and I don't know what's right or wrong, but these are the nuances that we find ourselves struggling with.

MR. WOODWARD: Would you like to address that, John? Then I will come back to Chris.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Yes, and I'll take a little pressure off of Cameron, because it was kind of me that led it into this direction, and it was really concerns about there being a gray area about what gets commented on and what doesn't, and, in looking at the Gulf, they really -- Emily engages heavily with people, and they get tons and tons of comments, and one of the things that really concerned me was a comment where it was a pretty benign post, and clearly people thought it was going to be exciting, because the first comment was someone saying, wow, this will be great, and I'm going to get my popcorn.

That just really resonated with me, to be like what some of the comments are on Facebook about, and so what we've tried to do is make it a lot more clearer, in our posts, how to submit comments to you, through the Wufoo form and directing them to the website, and, you know, we accept written comments, and we accept email comments, and we have a process for getting all of that into the record.

When people comment on Facebook, there's a tendency to think, well, I submitted an official comment on the record. Well, you really didn't because you commented on Facebook, and so we were trying to avoid some of the confusion, and it's been interesting that there's very few comments on most of our posts recently, and I think part of it is, by not getting into the back and forth with people, and maybe being more clear about, if you want to submit a comment on this issue, and like, on the council meeting, we direct them to the meeting page and the Wufoo form.

If it's about an amendment, we direct them to the form for the amendment, or how they can take part in a scoping or what have you, and so we've really tried to be using the Facebook and the social media as more of a way for us to share news and less of a way where we're going to try to

engage people, for kind of the issues that are discussed about trying to engage in that forum, and it's so difficult, and trying to focus on more of the one-on-one engagement.

MR. WOODWARD: Thanks, John. I will go back to you, Chris.

MR. CONKLIN: I was just wondering, and is there a way that we can just turn off the comments? I don't have Facebook, and I wouldn't know, but can't you just stop the ability for people to do that, because a lot of this stuff is pretty disrespectful or uneducated.

MR. CARMICHAEL: The thought there is that, if you did that, then people really would get angry, but then I'm like, well, if they get angry, where are they going to comment, because they can't comment on Facebook, but, no, and that is sort of the thought that you see from the OC AP, and it's like, well, you should allow some comment, to some level, but we don't consider it an official comment, and we're trying to avoid engaging.

MS. RHODES: Mr. Chair, can I chime in real quick?

MR. WOODWARD: Yes, go ahead.

MS. RHODES: There have definitely been some questions, and I want to step back to Monica's initial question, where she was asking whether the CCC or other councils have had these discussions, and we've definitely had these discussions in the past, but there's not that many councils who are on social media, and so I believe the only three that I think are on Facebook are the Gulf Council and the South Atlantic Council, and maybe the Caribbean Council, and there might be a couple of others in there, and so forgive me if there are other councils on here listening and shouting, but it's primarily really been the Southeast Region that has prioritized the use of social media. It's likely that we will continue to have discussions about this, but it just hasn't been all that relevant to the other councils that participate at the CCC level.

Going back to Chris's comment, or question, you can definitely turn off the comments, but, as John indicated, I think there is very likely to be some concerns from the public about transparency issues, and we even had an AP member, who was representing NOAA Fisheries, indicate that NOAA Fisheries has to be pretty buttoned up when it comes to the social media approach, and it's nice to see the council be a little bit looser with that and have more engagement with people and to really consider NOAA Fisheries as the standard for what it's like to be very regimented in their approach to social media, whereas, thinking back to some of the other comments and things that have gone around the table, there is also -- It's really important to note that, when utilizing social media, if you turn off comments, or if you don't engage with people, you are directly impacting the algorithm, and so you're making it less likely for people to see information on your social media channels.

If you're not participating in engagement, you're ultimately impacting your total reach, and so that's something to keep in mind as well, that, when you are having engagements, yes, you might see a bunch of negative comments back and forth between different people, but what you're not seeing, but what I am seeing on the backend, is that that post reached 50,000 people.

It wasn't 50,000 people who commented on it, and you're typically seeing probably the ugliest of the comments, or angriest of the comments, on social media, but what you're not seeing is that

pretty enormous reach on certain posts. Now, that doesn't necessarily apply to everything, and it certainly applies when we're posting about something big, like a red snapper announcement or something of that nature, but we have seen that level of reach before, where we're reaching tens of thousands of people in a single post, and we don't have any other kind of platform that could possibly facilitate that.

That gives us a huge bang for our buck, when we're thinking about different ways to interact with people across the region. Yes, there's definitely a lot of negative commentary that can come out of it, but there are certainly benefits to all of that, and just considering how many people are getting the information they need in order to know what's going on on the water and what they're allowed to do and how they can go about being in compliance, and so there's certainly a pros and cons here, and I think this will require considerable discussion among the committee, and the council as a whole, trying to figure out, like Kerry said, those goals and objectives, and then you can map out what your approach will be moving forward, whether you do it through a policy or guidelines or something like that.

Looking to my Gulf Council counterpart, who is Emily Muehlstein, she has also made it abundantly clear, from her end, that she feels that those kinds of negative interactions do end up spawning some really positive ones.

For example, for those of you who know Bill Gorham, he started out as really one of our social media warriors for quite a while, and he has become an incredibly beneficial person for us to have working with us and communicating with us. Less so now, now that cobia has been shifted away from our management north of the Florida/Georgia border, but we have definitely seen tangible benefits of those kinds of interactions on social media, and so food for thought. That's definitely not indicating what you all should or should not do, but those are things to consider, that there is an algorithm that will be affected if you don't communicate with people and engage and you don't allow comments.

MR. WOODWARD: Well, like a lot of things in life, it cuts both ways, and I guess the thing that has always troubled me about it is you can send out a fact-based source of information and, unfortunately, it drags along with it all of the comments and things that are intending to invalidate it, but I guess the risks of living outside of that world are probably greater than living in it, but that's just something I think we're just going to have to continue to wrestle with. Tim, you had your hand up, and then I will go back to Kerry.

MR. GRINER: Thank you for letting me speak. I think that's the exact point that I wanted to get across here. I mean, this is too important of a platform to ignore, and I don't like the policy of not commenting back. I think you're missing the opportunity to engage and to take constructive ideas and make people glad that they took the time to comment and to look at your Facebook page, and I will give you a perfect example.

I am looking at the website, or the Facebook page, right now, and there's a guy that says that maybe the fishermen can weigh their harvest and get more days, and they're talking about weighing fish and collecting data, and the next guy says, exactly, and I have been saying that us rec guys need some kind of reporting system for years, and you don't want to ignore that. You want to engage those guys, and you want to make them -- You want to turn the conversation and

get them involved, because they're the ones that are going to engage their peers, and then it starts stair-stepping.

You've just got to -- You've got to have somebody who is very, very skilled at administering this website, and there is tons of -- It's done on Facebook pages all over the place. It is skill, and it does take some work, and you have to -- You really have to be a person that doesn't allow themselves to get dragged down in the mud, but you do not want to ignore these opportunities to engage guys with great ideas.

I am looking through some of these posts, and I see -- They're not comments, but I see likes, and I recognize some of these names, and these are professional fishermen, and these are great, very skilled, intelligent charter and recreational fishermen, and they're liking your posts, and don't ignore them, and so, even if it's a just a matter of picking up on some of these people and, when they do make a constructive comment, make sure you reply back and engage them. You don't have to engage to the negative stuff, and that's always going to be there, but I do think that this is too important of a platform to ignore and to just put information out there and, when somebody says something nice, not say thank you.

MR. WOODWARD: All right. Thanks, Tim. I think, Kerry, you said you were good?

MS. MARHEFKA: I just did want to say that, if we do that, that's almost a full-time job for a person. I do it for my business, which only has 8,000 people who care about it, and I often have to stop in the middle of something else that I'm working on, because someone has a sort of pertinent question, and you've got to think about how to word it, and it's very, very time intensive, and so you're looking at staff labor.

MR. WOODWARD: Yes, and that's a good point, and certainly we're going to continue this discussion and move forward and try to figure out how to -- Developing guidelines is one thing, and being able to manage according to those guidelines is a whole different matter, because people on social media expect a quick response.

It's kind of like us when we're texting each other, and, if somebody doesn't text you for hours, you're like are they ignoring me or what's going on, and so it's -- Anyway, it's something we'll certainly continue to work on through this committee. Any last questions or comments about the OC AP report? If not, we'll move on. Cameron, are you ready to brief us on the Sea Grant Reef Fish Extension Fellowship?

MS. RHODES: I am, Mr. Chair.

MR. WOODWARD: All right. Go ahead.

MS. RHODES: All right, and so you guys have received some updates on this project, but I'm going to provide a little bit more detail today. I am cognizant of time here, and so I will try to get through it relatively quickly, but I just wanted to provide the exciting news to you that we have actually hired somebody to take on this role, and her name is Ashley Oliver, and she is going to be stepping into this role I believe sometime in mid-January is what it's looking like, and so we will have somebody onboard in the fellowship position and getting ready to take on a lot of the cool actionable items that I am going to describe to you today.

Just as a reminder, this project really came about as the result of a much bigger Sea Grant project that is being led up by Dr. Marcus Drymon out of Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant, and that project is going to be focusing on reef fish extension issues throughout the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic, and we were lucky to pretty much catch a ride with this. The project is not necessarily focusing on providing extension fellows to all of these different councils or state agency offices or things like that. It's not of this nature. We were really brought in based on the kindness of the South Atlantic Sea Grant offices, and so North Carolina Sea Grant, Georgia Sea Grant, South Carolina Sea Grant, and Florida Sea Grant. We're very grateful to them for thinking of us for this project and looping us in.

The project overall is going to be focusing, again, on developing and implementing extension and outreach programming related to data and information on reef fish. For us, of course, that's snapper grouper, but, since this is led up by Gulf folks, it's going to be called Reef Fish for this project, and it's really taking a look at the various counts within the two regions and providing materials to folks, so that they're making sure that it's very clear and provide expectations for those various counts that are underway, with also a special focus on barotrauma mitigation and descending-device-related issues.

The project will also spend considerable time overall developing materials and supporting training for fishermen and building capacity for reef fisheries extension. They will be coordinating some annual surveys to really identify research needs across the Southeast and the Gulf of Mexico and spend some time trying to gauge stakeholder attitudes and perceptions about reef fish management change over time, and then, in addition, there is going to be where we come in, and the Reef Fish Extension Fellowship, support for that work, and really this coordination between South Atlantic Council staff and the regional Sea Grant offices here in the South Atlantic.

What all of that really entails is that we're going to be bringing on two two-year fellows, and so it's a four-year fellowship under this larger project, and two fellows will get the opportunity to come onboard for two years. They will serve as a liaison between the South Atlantic regional Sea Grant offices and the South Atlantic Council staff, which has proven to be a really important element of this, and we all know that we're operating in silos sometimes, and so it's nice to have somebody who can help coordinate interactions and make sure that we're all on the same page, especially when it comes to any kind of messaging that we might be putting out.

That has been something that was really driven really from the FishSmart folks, who really said that we have to be very clear about our messaging here and make sure that everything is consistent, and they're also going to be helping us to support outreach and communication efforts for snapper grouper in the South Atlantic and really spearheading a lot of these in-person, grassroots interactions that we would like to see take off in the coming years.

There's lot of folks involved in the project, and there is South Atlantic Council staff, of course, and then we also have the various folks listed on the screen from the Sea Grant offices who are helping to put all of this together and lay out the game plan for how this fellowship is going to move forward and how it's going to be structured.

The job duties for this fellowship are super cool, and it's the kind of work that I think we've all wanted to see take off, and we're really excited to have somebody onboard to assist with that, and

they're going to be really helping out with putting together tackle shop tours, and so, as described in the AP report, sending people out to interact with tackle shops, maintain relationships and contact with them on a regular basis, and we're hoping to have somebody onsite at these tackle shops in these various states at least once a year, but hopefully two or three times, if possible.

They're also going to help with coordinating best fishing practices outreach, and much of that will be conducted through some specialized media tours, and so inviting a variety of writers, social media influencers, people who have television programs, to come out and join us on charter fishing trips, where we can talk through various management issues, and we can talk about different citizen science projects that are underway, and we can really describe the need for best fishing practices and relay some of these discard issues that we're having here in the South Atlantic. Then they're again, going to really be helpful when it comes to serving as a liaison and really facilitating communications among our partners and stakeholders and council staff, so that we're all on the same page.

They're going to help out with the greater amberjack count and the South Atlantic red snapper research projects that are underway, of course, and those are projects that we're really going to need assistance with on the council's end, to make sure that we can help manage expectations for those projects and make sure that everybody is really clear as to how those things are going to be used, potentially, in the future, and so having somebody onboard to help facilitate a lot of that discussion will be really critical, moving forward.

They will be attending regional meetings, to discuss outreach and communication strategies with various partners and stakeholder groups, and they're also going to be helping to coordinate some research symposiums, where we can talk about reef fish and a virtual format, and really just get some discussions going about some of the ongoing research within the region and then also some of those research needs, moving forward.

Interviews were held in November, and we will have this specialist onboarded come January, and mid-January is the timeline we're looking at, and then we'll start mapping out project planning, getting all of this together, have them tackle putting together this tackle shop database and get all of that moving forward and coordinating with media personnel, so that we can have some of these really cool ideas for how we go about getting people to come out and experience what we're really trying to educate folks on and then have them walk away and share that information with their stakeholders or their followers, whatever is the best approach there, and so we're really excited to have somebody ready to do all this work and take it on and be the face to a lot of these cool activities that we have mapped out. I will pause to see if there are any questions.

MR. WOODWARD: Thanks, Cameron. This is pretty exciting, and I think we all look forward to seeing how this effort is going to move forward. I assume, when you were conducting interviews, that you might have measured the thickness of their skin, because it might be a little tough the first few months out there, but are there any questions or comments for Cameron about the fellowship? I am not seeing any, and so good job with that, and I guess we'll move on to the website demo.

MS. RHODES: All right. Thanks, Spud. If I could, real quick, I should have provided a little bit more information on who Ashley Oliver is, and she's -- Definitely we gauged her tough skin, and she actually was handling creel surveys up in the Lake Michigan area, around Chicago, and so she

has certainly experienced a lot of this need for a thick skin up there and has experienced trying to navigate those kinds of interactions and how to physically walk away from it and make sure that, when she does walk away, that it is as positive of an interaction as it can be, and she definitely demonstrated some really, really great people skills and skillsets that I think will serve her quite well in this role.

She is going to be heading this way, and you will get the opportunity to meet her, I would imagine, at the March council meeting, and so I am very excited for you guys to be able to interact with her and send her out on the road, so that she can do all of this great work, and I think she'll be a real asset to our outreach and communications team here at the council office.

MR. WOODWARD: All right. Thanks for that. Last opportunity for any questions about the fellowship. I don't see any, and so we'll move forward.

MS. RHODES: All right, and so I am going to look to our staff here to see if Stephen Locker is online and if he's been taken care of and unmuted here.

MR. LOCKER: I am here.

MS. RHODES: Hi, Stephen. Stephen, I'm just going to provide a quick introduction here to everyone, and some background, and then I will turn everything over to you for you to take over presenter mode.

MR. LOCKER: Okay. Sounds good.

MS. RHODES: All right. All right, everybody, and so this is a much-anticipated website demo, and it's probably better for me to call it a preview at this point, and we still have quite a bit of stuff to take care of moving forward, where you guys can get in there and start playing around with the website, but I think this is going to be a really nice way for you to take a peek at what we've been working on with Happy Prime, and we have Stephen Locker online with us today, and Stephen is with Happy Prime, and he has been an incredible asset to us, just being able to work with him.

It has truly been one of the best experiences of my career here at the council, and so I'm really excited for you to see the work that they've been doing to really think about what our needs are, as an agency, and also what the needs of our stakeholders are, and they've done a really great job doing research on this and really providing us comprehensive information on how we should go about setting up this website so that it's a quite a bit easier to navigate.

Just as background, for council members who might be new to the table, the council decided to move forward with a website redesign project following pretty much years of input from council members and members of the public that our website was just pretty challenging to navigate, and it was hard to get the information that you needed, and, from a staff perspective, it was extremely difficult to manage on the backend.

There was just lots of moving parts all the time, and numerous pages that were hosting the same information, and it all needed to be populated separately, and so it was time, from all different perspectives, to take a look at how we could go about making this website a bit more user friendly,

so that it was something that actually achieved many of the goals that we have set out for this website, which is to be able to get people the information they need.

It is the really primary resource for all for folks who might be interested in council-related news or any kind of council-related measure or update, and so it's really important that we have a clean website that is easy for folks to navigate, and so that's a little bit of background as to why the council moved forward with a redesign project, and, when talking about this with Happy Prime, they put together a series of really nice exercises on how we could consider setting up navigation, and so we sent out a series of exercises to our AP members, to council members, and some of you were able to participate in those.

Then we also sent it out to members of the public. Some of our family members even participated, and we really wanted to get a wide range of people who might not necessarily have experience with navigating council stuff, so that they could give us a different point of view on how we might want to consider setting up navigation so that it's a bit cleaner than what we've seen in the past on our current website.

Those navigation exercises really taught us a lot, and we also received quite a bit of confirmation that we were valid in our concerns, and that people were having a hard time navigating our site, or categorizing information, because some things just don't fit into a box very cleanly, and so these navigation exercises have definitely been helpful in trying to figure out how to move forward with the site, and much of the design that you're going to see here this afternoon was really directed by some of those navigation exercises, as well as input from stakeholders on just the general site and what needed to be modified, and also based on input from council members and staff on what our needs are, as far as making sure that we have a solid website that gets folks the info they need. With that, I am going to go ahead and pass it on to Stephen here. Stephen, once you get the notification that you are good to go with the presenter mode, feel free to take it away.

MR. LOCKER: Thank you, Cameron. I appreciate that. I just want to kind of reiterate a couple of things that Cameron had talked about, and, first, I would also just like to share that this has been a great partnership for us. We have really enjoyed working with Cameron and the team at the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council. It's been a fun project.

This project does have a lot of challenges, just from the amount of content that a site like this has, the number of species that you deal with and all the regulations, but the challenge has been pretty fun, and it's been also fun being able to work with the folks like the people that put together the Fish Rules mobile apps and also with some of those things, and so I'll get into a couple of those items as we go along.

This will be mostly a preview of a couple of pages here, just to give you an idea of kind of how things are coming together and what things look like, and just, again, to go through kind of the goals, through different research, through analytics and stuff like that, and this is not going to surprise probably anybody in this meeting, but regulations and council meeting info are by far the top trafficked parts of the sites and the information that folks are looking for consistently, and so we wanted to make sure that that information was easy to find and is also highlighted throughout the site.

The second thing that we had is we want increased stakeholder participation, and part of that is going to be through making sure that public comment is easy to see and just, we believe, through making the site easier to navigate, it will increase some of that, and then the third, and where a significant amount of work is, is to make sure the site is more manageable. We want to reduce the amount of time that the site takes for it to be updated by the folks that maintain it, so they can find -- I don't know, and it sounds like there's all kinds of stuff with social media, it sounds like, or time needed, but, anyway, we just wanted to work on that and make sure that things sync well, and so I'm going to kind of go through each of those things as we go through this homepage here.

First, I want to start on the left-hand column, and we're big believers, when sites have a lot of information, of utilizing vertical navigation, here on the left, and there's a couple of reasons for that. One, it allows for sites to be drilled down without page reloads and without there being things that drop down over the site. This is a little bit better for accessibility, for folks that have different needs on the web, and, also, this is how navigation eventually looks on the phone anyway, and so it's distributed that way. There's also the ability for, when you load a page that is not the homepage, that it will show you where you are on this site right off the bat, with the navigation on the left.

These are the terms that we've been looking at for launching the site and the organization, and I think this will probably be pretty familiar for most folks, and we throw in the regulations and the management pieces right up top, along with meetings, and one of the things that was noted, I think, in the review at the beginning of this meeting was just talking about how do we handle the directory and people like that, and people listed in the directory, and we're going to take a look at that a little bit further, if that's something that lives within the About or if that's something that needs to be pulled out.

You will also note, in the navigation to the left there, is we've just also called out public comment, and we give it a slightly different colored bar around it, just to kind of, maybe a little more than subtly, note that there is a way to get to the things that are open for public comment.

The top of this site here on this page is what we call a hero, and this has the ability to pretty much communicate anything you would like, and, right now, generally the idea is that -- To have it be something that's about the council that just has a statement about who you are, why you care, or a message about others getting involved. As we work down, we want to peek the council meeting part below, and we're just going to call out the upcoming or, if it's the current council meeting, the "upcoming" will actually change to the word "current" and the previous meetings, right here, things where you can actually get your quick documentation for that part of meeting.

Below this, there are two column parts, and they're pretty much related to getting involved, and there's a list of upcoming meetings and then with a link that goes to the full calendar, and then there's a series of cards on the right that can allow you to highlight other pieces that you have that are of interest that are going on.

Another kind of a block here, just to kind of begin to pull something out or feature something here that we think is a pretty good place for calling out the Citizen Science Program, being able to link to the current projects and other pieces of information that they have going on, and, when I get down to News here, I'm going to have a couple of points that I would like to note, and so this pulls in just recent updates and news that are on the site, and it just pulls them into the homepage here, and these pages themselves will have pretty simple layouts.

This notes when there's a big news item, and each of these blocks on this homepage are pretty easily editable to be moved, and so, if I want into the backend here, just to show you how this stuff gets built, and the news section here -- Now, if I just wanted to move that up and down, that is easily done within the backend of the website, and so if there were some news items that we wanted to call up.

Another option is we have a thing called a banner, which will allow you to populate a quick alert message at the top, and maybe it has something to do with red snapper or something like that, and you can have that populated on every page or only the home page, and you can even set it a different level of alerts, or it will populate a different color. I don't have that as part of this demo, but I just wanted to call that out, for folks that might be concerned about having news further down on this homepage.

Another section, a different kind of component here, just to kind of nicely talk about regulations and have some links to some of the common regulation links that we have on the site, and then a nice visual of the FMPs that are a part of this, and these are, obviously, not the correct images for the FMPs, or their names, but it's just a nice three-column grid, just showing those quick references, and these are also all available through the navigation over here, and you will also notice that I have scrolled down to the site, and the navigation will stick. This is a great way so that you don't get completely lost. If you go down a page that's a little bit longer, there's still a quick, easy way to get to another page. I don't know if it's best for me to pause now for some quick questions, before I move into a different page. Cameron, I'm open to however you want me to move forward there.

MS. RHODES: I will defer to the Chair. Spud, are there folks in the room who would like to ask a question at this point?

MR. WOODWARD: I will check. Any questions thus far in this presentation? I've got one from Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: Just real quick, and you might have mentioned it and I missed it, but I assume that someone on our staff is going to have the ability to go in on the backend and easily edit boxes, as necessary, and we're not reliant on a contractor to do that.

MR. LOCKER: That is correct. We want no part of that, to be honest, and so this will be completely managed by whomever owns it at your site or at the SAFMC location, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, and we'll make sure that there's training that is provided and that folks there can maintain their own website.

MR. WOODWARD: All right. We've got a question from Dewey.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: I was wondering, and you put some green lines around the public comment, and are you trying to highlight the public comment?

MR. LOCKER: Yes, that is true. We are highlighting that, because one of the things that we were told is that we need to get more people oriented to where they can place public comments. The

public comment will be around all the amendment aspects of the site and the other links to the pages, but we decided to pull it out as something to --

MR. HEMILRIGHT: Maybe, if you put the public comment in red, it will stand out for sure, because, right now, to me, it don't stand out that much, but I think, if you put it in red, it would stand out, and it would be highlighted, and it would be easily seen.

MR. LOCKER: I think that's definitely something we should take a look at playing with, making sure that it is prominent enough. Thanks, Dewey.

MS. RHODES: Mr. Chair, Chester Brewer has his hand raised.

MR. WOODWARD: I was going to call on him, and then I'll go to you, Tim. Chester, go ahead.

MR. BREWER: Thank you. One of the problems that I've had with the old website is the public comment, and it's laid out in a format that, for some reason, my tablet, and/or my phone, really -- You've got to scroll through about, I don't know, several times to be able to pick up all the information, and, if you read a comment and you say, oh, it's this person, and you didn't try to go back, you've got to scroll through again, like three pages or something, and is that the -- The formatting of the public comments that are actually made, is that going to be changed here by you all, or is that something that staff will change, once you turn it over to them?

MR. LOCKER: I will defer that to Cameron, though we've had lots of conversations about public comment and how that can go in the future, but, as far as that answer, I would prefer Cameron to answer that.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, Stephen, and thanks for the question, Chester. You are certainly not alone in that experience. I think a lot of people have struggled with our current public comment structure, and so we've actually modified that at this point, where you shouldn't have to scroll quite as much, and we're only showcasing information on what the actual comment was at this point, and so it shouldn't necessarily require you to scroll across as much as it did before, because that was definitely burdensome, from previous public comment forms.

I think it's pretty likely that, once we complete the website project, the overall kind of build of this site, that it's likely that there will be discussion with all of you at the council level as to whether you would like to move forward with some kind of revision for how we might want to have a public comment system on the site, and there are other councils that have different comment structures that we might be able to emulate.

Happy Prime, in discussions with them, has indicated that they would be interested in possibly exploring that with us, if that is something that you would like to see through, and so I think there will be opportunities, in the future, to really try and think about how we want public comment to be structured on the website, and that will be something to take a look at in the future, once we get through this initial build.

MR. BREWER: Okay, and, quite frankly, all I would be interested in seeing would be the name of the person who is making the comment, what state they're from, and the comment, and so that's truncating it pretty well, and I did notice, because I went to read the comments before this meeting,

that it has been shortened up a lot, and it's better than it was, but I think it still needs some improvement, and thank you, Cameron.

MR. WOODWARD: Thank you, Chester. Go ahead, Tim.

MR. GRINER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was kind of curious, and have you -- Do you do any kind of analytics or any looking at different fonts? That font doesn't jump out at me as something that makes me feel great. The old font, I actually liked, on the old website, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council and the font for the title of the website, and I don't want to be nitpicky, and you all may have gone through fifteen iterations among yourselves and picked this one that everybody felt was the best, but I was just curious, and is there a method to going through and actually picking a font that really catches people or makes them engage more than another one? Also, I wanted to echo what Chester was saying, and I think you definitely need the person's name with the public comment. Thank you.

MR. LOCKER: Thanks. Good question with regard to font and topography. Topography absolutely can give a certain feeling. We offered up a couple of different font choices at the beginning, just that we thought were important to explore, and this is where things got where they landed. For a site like this, the thing that we think is most important with the font needs to be its readability, and so, while there are titles and things like this, what we want to do is make sure that it scales well at different sizes and it reverses out well and it stays crisp and looks good on a phone, things like that.

What is good about topography also is it's not that difficult to change, if you need to in the future, and so, if we start working through this site, and we're finding that there's a lot of issues with the topography, or the font choice, we can work with you all to kind of like, all right, what are our issues, and how do we need to correct those.

MR. WOODWARD: All right. Go ahead, Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: Last thing on the stylistic side, but I am wondering if you all are providing -- There's a name for it, and I can't remember what it is, and we've done it with our business, where you sort of have a brand package, so to speak, such that colors and font and things like that are repeated throughout all of the materials the council uses, whether it's in printed materials and things like that, and it just -- In essence, a website is about -- Even though we're not a company, it's a branding situation, and it needs to be consistent throughout, so it's easily recognizable, and I think it looks cleaner, and so I'm just wondering if that's something that will come out of this, because I know, personally, when we built our website, that's one of the things that we got, was this number color is the color you use for everything, blah, blah, blah.

MR. LOCKER: Certainly, and we provide a style -- What we do is we go through what we call style tiles that call out the color usage, the topography, and all those items. Since the logo has not changed, there's nothing to be done with that, and we do provide that. I think what you're looking at is a complete style guide. We have a web style guide for this particular project, and we weren't charged with creating a greater style guide, and we tried utilizing some of the things that were in place, and we were told where we had places of flexibility to kind of establish some kind of a palette.

As far as beyond and how this applies to PowerPoints or print pieces or things like that, I would defer to Cameron, but we are in a position to certainly help with kind of highlighting how we think some of these things work together well and also different things with accessibility.

MR. WOODWARD: Okay. Any further questions? I don't see any, Stephen, and so why don't you go ahead.

MR. LOCKER: All right. The second part that I'm just going to show you is where this is significantly under work, and we're pulling a lot of data, and we're working on getting a lot of data from Fish Rules, and it's the regulations by species, and so it's the species page itself, and we're trying to work through -- This one is an example of red snapper. If it was closed recreationally and opened commercially, this is what it could potentially look like.

Here's a quick hit here of some information and additional photos and then an ability to kind of quick go through, all right, what's the bag limit, and what is a bag limit, and let's say we're in the process of working on getting iconography worked on, because we understand that different hooks may not be appropriate in different places, and so we'll continue to work to make sure that things are as generic as possible without being too ridiculous.

Then the ability to see both recreational and commercial guidelines, and this is where a lot of work on the site is going to be happening, and it's like the upcoming events here, and these are going to be events on -- If this was the red snapper page, these events would only be events that have red snapper as part of their agenda or talking about them. The same with the amendments in progress, and these will only be snapper grouper stuff, and amendments that have red snapper are part of it, and news tied to red snapper, and then the potential of having contact information, and this is something that we're still discussing, but figuring out the right context for each of these species' pages as well.

This will be not too different from each of the FMPs as well, having their specific news, their specific amendments, things that are in process, events, stuff like that. This process has been a little bit more laborious than we initially thought, but it's, I think, going to be something that is going to be pretty handy, and I think it's going to super helpful for the website.

The data, all of the regulation data, we're pulling in from Fish Rules, and so one of the difficult things that we're still working through right now is there is different areas that have different regulations off the coast, and Fish Rules does that through a location, by your coordinates, and so we're pulling in all that data and finding where the coordinates are different or the same, as far as the regulations, and then consolidating that, and so that process we're continuing to do.

Then, as that goes forward, we will update the data multiple times a day from Fish Rules, to make sure that we've got the updated data, or there's also an ability for the web user, in the back, just to click a button that will do a fresh import at that moment, and it will take about twenty to thirty minutes for the database to compile all that information and spit it back out, but you will have updated data there fairly quickly after that. This is kind of the approach for handling a single species, and we just want to make sure that it's an easy place to get all of your information upfront about a specific species, and I would love to hear any feedback or questions as it pertains to this particular page, because we do believe that these pages will have a lot of use.

MR. WOODWARD: All right. Thanks. Any questions or feedback? It seems a lot more intuitive than kind of the way we've done things in the past. I mean, it's nice to be able to go to one place and get, as much as you can, information about that species. I like that, and the fact that it's sort of -- It will be updated, to make sure that it stays consistent with all the other things that are going on, and so I think that's a big improvement. Has anybody else got any comments? Go ahead, Rick.

MR. DEVICTOR: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a question, and so, of course, the regulations page is a big page that I go to, and I know a lot of people do, and so, right now, it's currently more of a list, right, where you see all the species, and are we going to have a page for each species for the regulations, or is it still going to be kind of the list form?

MR. LOCKER: That's a great question, and so let me -- First, each species will have its own page, but there will be an overview page, which is still in process, and we've been working with Cameron on getting, and let me see if I can locate it here, to get this in the correct way and a way that works well, and it's the ability to see all the species also in this kind of a view, and that allows you to quick type in the name of a fish, and you only may have to type in three letters, and it will start giving you choices, and it will automatically reduce what's below, or you only want to see what's open or closed, for recreational and commercial. We'll have a quick view of something like that on the overview page like this, and then each of these individual species will have what I was just showing you earlier, their own page like this. Does that answer your question?

MR. WOODWARD: I think we're just trying to -- Because there used to be sort of a tabular way of doing it, and so now you're going to have the ability to -- That's sort of a more -- It's a more evolved table, I guess you could say, and you go to each species, and you don't necessarily see them in a vertical row assignment, but you can go through and -- I like the functions where you can filter for things that are open and filter for things that are closed, and I think that would be pretty helpful, too.

MR. LOCKER: As far as the typing in and filtering, you'll be able to filter by its proper name or other synonyms that it has for its name as well, and so we'll be grabbing each of those fields.

MR. WOODWARD: Okay. Any questions? I don't see anything, Stephen, and so move ahead.

MR. LOCKER: Okay. I think that's mostly what I have to demo for today, and we'll just continue kind of hacking away and continue to get this in place, but, so far, this has been a really exciting project.

MR. WOODWARD: Well, thanks. So that is sort of our timeline for this going live?

MR. LOCKER: That's a great question, and I will defer some to Cameron, but I think one of the things that was identified early, and continues to be daunting, is the amount of data on the current website, and it's kind of the how to pull it in and what should stay and what should come. I think that process is ongoing.

Because of the scope of that, I don't feel comfortable to actually maybe give the specific date, and, again, I would defer to Cameron on that, but I think, as far as our tools being in place for this website to have data in it, we're pretty close, and we just have to sync that fish species page, the

single species, just getting that stuff from Fish Rules to display correctly, and that's one of our big pieces that we have remaining to get right.

MR. WOODWARD: All right. Thanks. Cameron, I don't know if you remember or not, but there was some very fine print that you signed when you started working there that said that you can't leave until this website goes active.

MS. RHODES: I must have missed that fine print there, Spud, but I will say that I think we still have a ways to go. Like Stephen said, there is some things that need to be worked out, as far as like actually getting the functionality working, right, when it comes to the species pages or fishery management plan pages, but I do think, when content starts, we're probably going to start just from like the most recent material and then work our way back, so that we can actually do a launch from the site and then continue to work on uploading briefing materials and things like that from previous years in a more systematic way, but then we can go ahead and have the site up and running, and people who are trying to access current materials, or upcoming meetings, will be able to do it through the site.

I don't feel comfortable providing a date, especially given some of the transitions that are coming up here, but I do think we're on track, and we initially had thoughts of maybe being ready to launch in January or February, but I think we've still got a ways to go before that happens, but all of this coming together, and what I will say is the site is extremely complicated, in that we have 700 pages on our current website, some of which need to be retired, and others need to live on on this new site, and so it's going to be a while to weed through all of that stuff, but I do think we're going to end up with a far better product, and one that has been really well crafted and thought through, and so I'm really excited to see this move forward.

I think, given these changes, like Tim's comments on font and things like that, those are the kinds of modifications that can be made after we go through testing and all kinds of things, and you guys get additional chance to review, but I think, as far as like the general layout goes, it sounds like we're on track here to keep moving forward and building this out, so that you guys have a nice site to look at in the coming months.

MR. WOODWARD: All right. Very good. Kerry has got a question.

MS. MARHEFKA: Super short, I promise, but, in the transition over, and as you're deciding which materials to bring over first, I just ask staff that we can keep access to all the old plans and amendments, and I am hearing yes. Okay, because I am a nerdy person who does go back and read them often. Thank you.

MS. RHODES: We discussed with Stephen, and in conversations with Monica, that we're going to make sure that those original links stay, but then we might update links, but everything will be redirected appropriately when it comes to those amendments and other really important documents and things like that, and so we're going to do our best.

Where we might fall short is when it comes to the briefing books, and people might have to go through a bit more of a learning process, just to figure out where briefing books are, but, with this new site, I think it will be much easier to find that material, and it should be a much smoother

process for everyone, but we're certainly making sure that we're going to have some redirects in there, to keep people from getting lost, where possible.

MR. WOODWARD: All right. Thanks. Chester, I am going to give you the last word on the website.

MR. BREWER: Thank you, sir. Going to the individual pages for the different species, I think it's great, but a thought occurred to me, and, Cameron, this may need to be directed to you, and some of our species, and, as an example, cobia, go by different names in different parts even of the South Atlantic Council jurisdiction, and you might want to put -- Like cobia are also known as ling, and so somebody might put "ling" in there, and it wouldn't come up, and so I was just thinking that if you could get some of these different names and have them to come to -- I mean, you don't have to create a whole ling page, but you just want people, if they put "ling" in, that they go to the cobia page, and that's just a thought.

MR. LOCKER: One of the things that we'll make sure that things filter through is that we'll have synonyms and all the also-known-as, to make sure that we populate all of that and make sure that's grabbed for each of the single species, and that could be a list that evolves, especially if we've missed some, but, yes, I think that's super important, and we'll make sure that that is captured and that's displayed.

MR. WOODWARD: All right. Thanks, Stephen. We appreciate the update and the briefing, and we certainly look forward to the final product.

MR. LOCKER: Yes, me too.

MR. WOODWARD: Okay. Cameron, any last words to wrap up on any of the agenda items?

MS. RHODES: I think that's it. I think we can go ahead and move into Other Business, whenever you're ready.

MR. WOODWARD: All right. Thank you. I wish this wasn't an Other Business item that I had to do, but I think everybody knows that Cameron will be resigning effective February 4 of next year, and it's going to be a great loss to us. I mean, you've brought a lot of enthusiasm and a lot of energy and a lot of innovation to the council, and you've always approached the difficult task of having to communicate oftentimes unpleasant news with a lot of -- As much happiness as could be summoned up, and that's an admirable trait, and, some of us old wore-down war veterans, we kind of have a hard time doing that sometimes, and so we're going to miss all of that.

We certainly wish you well, and you've been a great asset in the four-and-a-half years you've been here, and I'm sure we won't be able to exactly replace you, but hopefully we'll find somebody that's got the same enthusiasm and the same vision that you've had, and so, with that, let's give her a round of applause, you all. *(Applause)*

MS. RHODES: Thank you, Spud.

MR. WOODWARD: I would certainly open up the floor to anybody who has any comments that they would like to make before we wrap up our meeting. Briefly, said the Chairman. Okay. well,

I wish you were here, so that we could bid you a farewell in-person, but we appreciate you being with us, and, if there's no other business to come before the Outreach and Communications Committee, we will stand adjourned.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Spud. Well done. Thank you, Cameron. We will miss you.

(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on December 9, 2021.)

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Attendee Report:

SAFMC December Council Meeting (12/6/21 - 12/10/21)

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Webinar ID	Actual Start Date/Time	Duration
509-177-083	12/09/2021 09:09 AM EST	8 hours 23 minutes

Attendee Details

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Yes	BYRD	01JULIA
Yes	Bacheler	Nate
Yes	Bianchi	Alan
Yes	Bonura	Vincent
Yes	Brennan	Ken
Yes	Brown	Julie
Yes	Burgess	Aurora
Yes	Calay	Shannon
Yes	Chaya	01Cindy
Yes	Cheshire	Rob
Yes	Christmas	Merry
Yes	Clarke	Lora
Yes	Conklin	The Real Chris
Yes	Copeland	00 Robert
Yes	Cox	Derek
Yes	Curtis	01Judd
Yes	DeVictor	Rick
Yes	Diaz	Dale
Yes	FRANCO	DAWN
Yes	Finch	Margaret
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Yes	Sagarese	Skyler
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Yes	Seward	McLean
Yes	Simpson	Julie

Yes	Smillie	01Nicholas
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Yes	Stemle	Adam
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Yes	Sweetman	CJ
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Yes	White	Geoff
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Yes	Wiegand	01Christina
Yes	Wiseman	adam
Yes	Wyanski	David
Yes	brewer	00chester
Yes	colby	barrett
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Yes	gloeckner	david
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