

1 GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

2
3 ADMINISTRATIVE/BUDGET COMMITTEE

4
5 Omni Houston Houston, Texas

6
7 June 24, 2024

8
9 **VOTING MEMBERS**

10 Joe Spraggins.....Mississippi
11 Jonathan Dugas.....Louisiana
12 Dale Diaz.....Mississippi
13 Dave Donaldson.....GSMFC
14 Bob Gill.....Florida
15 Anthony Overton.....Alabama
16 Troy Williamson.....Texas

17
18 **NON-VOTING MEMBERS**

19 Kevin Anson (designee for Scott Bannon).....Alabama
20 Kesley Banks.....Texas
21 Susan Boggs.....Alabama
22 Billy Broussard.....Louisiana
23 Tom Frazer.....Florida
24 Lt. Carl Fuhs.....USCG
25 Dakus Geeslin (designee for Robin Riechers).....Texas
26 Michael McDermott.....Mississippi
27 Chris Schieble (designee for Ryan Montegut).....Louisiana
28 Jack McGovern (designee for Andy Strelcheck).....NMFS
29 C.J. Sweetman (designee for Jessica McCawley).....Florida
30 Ed Walker.....Florida

31
32 **STAFF**

33 Max Birdsong.....Social Scientist
34 Assane Diagne.....Economist
35 Matt Freeman.....Economist
36 John Froeschke.....Deputy Director
37 Beth Hager.....Administrative Officer
38 Lisa Hollensead.....Fishery Biologist
39 Mara Levy.....NOAA General Counsel
40 Emily Muehlstein.....Public Information Officer
41 Ryan Rindone.....Lead Fishery Biologist/SEDAR Liaison
42 Bernadine Roy.....Office Manager
43 Carrie Simmons.....Executive Director
44 Camilla Shireman.....Administrative & Communications Assistant
45 Verena Wang.....Fishery Biologist

46
47 **OTHER PARTICIPANTS**

48 Tim Griner.....SAFMC
49 Frank Helies.....NOAA

1 Anna Kersting.....NOAA
2 Dominique Lazarre.....NOAA
3 John Walter.....SEFSC
4
5 - - -
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1
2
3 Table of Contents.....3
4
5 Table of Motions.....4
6
7 Adoption of Agenda and Approval of Minutes and Action Guide and
8 Next Steps.....5
9
10 Discussion of Modifications to Council SOPPs.....6
11
12 Update Status on Inflation Reduction Act Funding for the
13 Regional Management Councils.....16
14
15 Adjournment.....17
16
17 - - -
18

TABLE OF MOTIONS

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12

PAGE 14: Motion that the council accept the proposed changes to the SOPPs in Section 3.8, Council Member Compensation. The motion carried on page 14.

PAGE 16: Motion that the council accept the proposed addition to Training in Section 4.8.1 of the SOPPs. The motion carried on page 16.

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1 The Administrative/Budget Committee of the Gulf of Mexico
2 Fishery Management Council convened at The Omni Houston in
3 Houston, Texas on Monday morning, June 24, 2024, and was called
4 to order by Chairman Joe Spraggins.
5

6 **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**
7 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
8 **ACTION GUIDE AND NEXT STEPS**
9

10 **CHAIRMAN JOE SPRAGGINS:** I would like to adopt the agenda for
11 the Administrative/Budget hearing, and our members are myself,
12 and Dugas is the vice chair, Diaz, Donaldson, Gill, Overton, and
13 Williamson, and I would like a motion to adopt the agenda for
14 today.

15
16 **MR. BOB GILL:** So moved, Mr. Chairman.

17
18 **MR. DAVE DONALDSON:** Second.

19
20 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Any discussion? All right. The
21 agenda is adopted. I would like to also have approval of the
22 January 2024 minutes, if I could get a motion to approve those.
23

24 **MR. GILL:** Mr. Chairman, I would like to point out a discrepancy
25 in the minutes that needs correction.

26
27 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Go ahead.

28
29 **MR. GILL:** A typo on page 6, line 16, and I would replace "Bog"
30 with "Bob", and so I may be obtuse, but, as far as I know, I'm
31 not swampy.
32

33 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** All right. Any further discussion? All
34 right. Then do I have a motion and a second?
35

36 **MR. DONALDSON:** Motion to approve as amended.

37
38 **MR. GILL:** Seconded.

39
40 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** All right. Any discussion? The motion
41 carries. All right. Dr. Simmons.
42

43 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CARRIE SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good
44 morning, everyone. I will go through the action guide. We have
45 -- Really, our main task today is to work through some proposed
46 changes in the SOPPs, and we would like the committee to
47 consider those and provide feedback, via motion, as appropriate.
48

1 The three main areas in our SOPPs that we want to focus the
2 committee's attention on is -- They're in track changes, but, in
3 Section 2.5.3 and 2.6.3, we just wanted to put in writing
4 essentially what our current practice is for the conduct of our
5 SSC and AP and technical committee meetings.

6
7 We have done that for the council, as far as like hybrid
8 meetings, virtual participation, in-person participation, but we
9 really haven't laid out a process in writing, you know, for our
10 SSC and AP meetings, as well as our technical committees, and so
11 that's what we were trying to do here in this draft changes to
12 the proposed SOPPs, and we tried to mirror some of that with
13 what the council is currently doing.

14
15 We also have a section that we're considering changes to reflect
16 the council stipends, and that change was requested from NOAA
17 Headquarters, for the council to consider that verbiage in from
18 the Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act,
19 and then, finally, Section 4.8, we have some proposed changes,
20 or we don't have proposed changes there, but we just want to
21 bring to your attention our current process for the anti-
22 harassment training requirements for members of the council's
23 SSCs and APs, and just have a little bit of discussion on what
24 we have there currently. Mr. Chair, if there's no questions on
25 the action schedule, I'll jump into the changes.

26
27 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Any questions? All right. Dr.
28 Simmons, go ahead.

29

30 **DISCUSSION OF MODIFICATIONS TO THE COUNCIL SOPPS**

31

32 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** All right. Thank you. If we could
33 please pull up Tab G, Number 4. Like I said, these are
34 participation requirements, and the first section is for the
35 SSC, and that's Section 2.5.3, and this is all administrative
36 provisions, and then also some participation requirements for
37 the APs and technical committees, and this text kind of mirrors
38 each other, and so, if we have changes we want to consider in
39 one, we might want to consider those in the other.

40

41 The black text is what we currently have in our SOPPs, and the
42 blue proposed text is what staff is suggesting the committee
43 consider, and I guess I will go ahead and read the change into
44 the record, Mr. Chair, while folks are thinking about it.

45

46 I will start with the new proposed text: The council prioritizes
47 holding in-person SSC meetings with the ability to freely
48 discuss and exchange information. However, the council may

1 choose to hold virtual meetings of the SSC. The council also
2 recognizes that extenuating circumstances occur for individual
3 participants, and therefore may allow virtual participation on a
4 case-by-case basis at an otherwise in-person meeting. A request
5 for virtual participation by an SSC member will request at least
6 fourteen days advance notice to the council staff lead for the
7 SSC. That is based on our travel requirements, the fourteen
8 days. Further, SSC members who have volunteered to serve in-
9 person in the Southeast Data Assessment and Review, or SEDAR,
10 process must notify the council staff lead of the SSC at least
11 thirty days in advance if they cannot attend.

12
13 Then this last sentence here mirrors what the council SOPPs
14 represent, which is what we're currently doing. Members of the
15 public will be allowed to provide verbal comments during in-
16 person and virtual meetings of the SSC, as noticed on the
17 agenda. Like I said, that text is similar below for the APs and
18 technical committees. Mr. Chair.

19
20 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Do we have any discussion? Mr.
21 Schieble.

22
23 **MR. CHRIS SCHIEBLE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm not on this
24 committee, but I just had a technical question. Why the
25 difference between the SSC and the SEDAR committee of another
26 additional, I guess, fifteen or sixteen days, and why are they
27 not the same fourteen-day advance notice?

28
29 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Thank you. Good question. That
30 has to do with the fact that SEDAR is a separate process, and we
31 have to coordinate with the SEDAR coordinator, Julie Neer, Dr.
32 Julie Neer, and make those changes, and we have to confirm it
33 with the chair and vice chair, and those types of things, and we
34 just need some more time, logistically. Oftentimes, there is
35 hotels involved, and we can make those changes. When we have
36 more control, we have -- That fourteen days meets our travel
37 requirements for our internal meetings.

38
39 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Go ahead.

40
41 **MR. SCHIEBLE:** So the same question, and so I see that, and I
42 understand what you're saying, but I also see that, when it
43 comes to the members that are on the SSC, that may attend the
44 SEDARs, a lot of things can change in a person's life in thirty
45 days, and you never know if they can plan that far out or not,
46 that far out for the respective participant, and that's the only
47 concern that I have.

48

1 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Dr. Simmons, anything else on that? Any
2 other questions?

3
4 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** I mean, I think this is an ideal
5 situation. I mean, we understand that things can come up, and
6 many of the SEDAR schedules are set, I believe, one to two years
7 in advance, when we're asking for volunteers. Membership
8 changes, and people's lives change, and I think we'll obviously
9 work with people, but this is what we're asking for. What we
10 want to avoid is, you know, people not showing up or telling us
11 that they're not attending. That's what we want to avoid.

12
13 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Mr. Gill.

14
15 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand particularly
16 the SEDAR one for a long time, but I read this as the default,
17 that this a normal thing, and emergency situations would be
18 handled on a case-by-case basis, and the question I have is the
19 one for the fourteen-day advance notice.

20
21 I'm not sure that I understand the rationale, and could you talk
22 a little bit about why fourteen makes sense, because, to me,
23 what it says is that somebody on the SSC says, okay, I can't be
24 there, and the action is by staff is not significant, because
25 you haven't incurred travel at that point in time, or booked it,
26 and there's not a whole lot of interaction required, and so why
27 are we mandating a default of fourteen days?

28
29 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** So I believe, and my understanding
30 is, that we have made reservations for the in-person SSC
31 meetings. We do have an attrition rate, when we develop a
32 contract for sleeping rooms for meetings of the SSC. Even
33 though our meetings are in our council office, we have to have a
34 hotel contract that says we are going to have this many sleeping
35 rooms, and we're going to fill that, and, if we don't, then we
36 have penalties.

37
38 What we're asking is, in an ideal work, if you can't attend,
39 please let us know fourteen days in advance, so we can take you
40 off the list and make sure that we're not paying for your hotel
41 with you not being able to attend.

42
43 **MR. GILL:** Thank you.

44
45 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** You know, if I can too, the issue here,
46 with the fourteen days and all, I think is all just an
47 administrative thing, to be able to try to get everybody their
48 travel, or anything else, prior to that, but, I mean, there's

1 always that circumstance, and tell me if I'm wrong, Dr. Simmons,
2 but, if something comes up after that fourteen days, and you
3 can't make it, a circumstance with the family, or a circumstance
4 with anything else, we could always change that and give
5 permission at that point, right?

6
7 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Yes, sir. That is correct. What
8 we would like to do is just really allow the body -- You're
9 repopulating your SSC and putting, you know, members om there,
10 and it's just to kind of remind everybody that, you know, we
11 would like folks in-person, if we can. If you can't, please
12 give us that notice, and do not wait until the last minute for
13 planning purposes, as best we can, but, obviously, we will
14 certainly work with, and we have been working with, members of
15 the SSC, APs, and technical committees.

16
17 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Mr. Griner.

18
19 **MR. TIM GRINER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I was curious, and do
20 your SOPPs have a formal procedure for removing -- For an
21 attendance-based removal of an AP or SSC member?

22
23 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** I believe, and I will look at Ms.
24 Levy, but I think it's they all serve at the pleasure of the
25 council, I believe, and they may consider that in a closed
26 session, during deliberations, but it's not explicit. It's just
27 at the pleasure of the council.

28
29 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Ms. Levy.

30
31 **MS. MARA LEVY:** So just a question, and maybe thinking about the
32 language, because we put language in the SOPPs, and then
33 something happens, and then we come back, and we're like, well,
34 this is what it says, and that's not really what we wanted to
35 have happen. It's very prescriptive, the way it's written now,
36 right, and, I mean, it says it will be a case-by-case basis, but
37 then the timing is written in a very prescriptive way, that it
38 will require at least fourteen days' notice, but I think what
39 some of the discussion I'm hearing, and from what you're saying,
40 Carrie, is that things come up.

41
42 If you don't know -- If you're thinking that you want to be in-
43 person, and then, oh my gosh, all of a sudden you get sick, and
44 you still want to participate, you could be within seven days,
45 or within three days, and what I hear you saying is that we will
46 still work with people, but it's not reflected in the language,
47 and so I don't know if we want to kind of think about this, and
48 a way to kind of note that there may be other extenuating

1 circumstances, because the whole thing is based on extenuating
2 circumstances, but then the timing then negates those
3 extenuating circumstances that might happen within the fourteen
4 days.

5
6 We don't have to tweak it now, but you might want to think about
7 whether we want to add a little more wiggle room to that, so
8 that, when we come back four years from now, when something has
9 happened, it's clear that we didn't mean for this to like be
10 talking about people who may have gotten ill or had some
11 immediate need to attend virtually within that fourteen days.

12
13 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Any other questions? Dr. Simmons, any
14 other --

15
16 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and so I
17 guess I understand what Ms. Levy is saying, and maybe we could
18 think about what type of change we might consider there. I
19 mean, it really is for planning purposes, and, as we move
20 forward in a virtual world, you know, our meetings are hybrid,
21 and essentially every one of them now are hybrid, but we would
22 like to strongly encourage people to participate in-person, when
23 they can, and that's what we're trying to get across here.

24
25 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Ms. Levy.

26
27 **MS. LEVY:** Just to that, to try, in my own mind, think about how
28 we might tweak this, so -- Because the first part says the
29 council recognizes that extenuating circumstances occur, and so,
30 from the council's perspective, in you all's perspective, do you
31 want to articulate that you will only allow for virtual
32 participation of an in-person meeting if there are, quote,
33 extenuating circumstances, regardless of the timing, right?

34
35 Like I get the timing, and you could put it in there that this
36 would be the ideal timing, or is it the idea that there are
37 whatever circumstances, and someone could participate virtually,
38 and I guess I'm just trying to figure out how the extenuating
39 links to the time, and whether it does it all, and it seems like
40 maybe they're separate things.

41
42 The timing is this is what we really want, for planning
43 purposes, and the extenuating circumstances is we really want
44 you to be there in-person, unless you really can't, for some
45 good reason, right, and like they're two separate things, is
46 what I'm getting.

47
48 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Mr. Gill.

1
2 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't think this fully
3 gets at what Mara is talking about, but one way to consider it
4 is to soften the need for advance notice, and so, for example,
5 on line 5, instead of "will require", replace that with "should
6 be", and, similarly, on the last line of that paragraph, instead
7 of "must notify", "should notify", or something like that, to
8 note that, by the way, you're not dead if you don't do it.

9
10 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** I am listening to all of this, and I'm
11 trying to put something in my mind, if there's a way that we
12 want to change something. Mara.

13
14 **MS. LEVY:** I know we're spending a lot of time on this, and so I
15 just want to kind of make sure that it's clear, and so I think
16 Bob has a good suggestion, although I feel like the issue you
17 might think about then is that -- You know, what the limit is,
18 right, because I see why you're using "will", because you want
19 to indicate that this is really important to us, that you give
20 us this fourteen days' notice.

21
22 Maybe there needs to be some language about extenuating
23 circumstances, or something like that, with respect to the
24 timing, right, and so it's going to be fourteen days in advance
25 unless there's some circumstance that means that you couldn't
26 give us that notice, and so unless there's an extenuating
27 circumstance on the time limit, right, so that you're
28 articulating that this deadline is really important, unless
29 there's a good reason that you couldn't tell us beforehand.
30 Again, maybe it's -- Maybe we should just think about how to
31 articulate that, but that's the sense that I'm getting from the
32 discussion.

33
34 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Dr. Simmons, I think we've heard
35 this, and, I mean, I can look at it and say, you know, if you
36 add one word or something in there, and I don't know if there's
37 something that you think we need to change on that, with one
38 word that would make it.

39
40 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** I think Mr. Gill had a suggestion,
41 in two sections, to soften the language, but I didn't know if
42 Ms. Levy maybe wanted to help us think about some other changes
43 that we might consider at Full Council.

44
45 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Go ahead.

46
47 **MS. LEVY:** I mean, you can soften the language. I was just
48 trying to see whether you should soften it in conjunction with,

1 you know, it's an it's-still-important type of thing, right, and
2 so, instead of it should be fourteen days, it will be at least
3 fourteen days, unless there's an extenuating circumstance that
4 made that not possible, and like that type of thing, but it
5 depends on how forceful you want to be, I guess, and so I'm just
6 pointing out the issues I see that may come up down the road,
7 when we're trying to decide what this means, to try to make it
8 more clear, but I don't know what your -- It depends what your
9 intent is, right?

10

11 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** All right. Dr. Simmons, do we need a
12 motion on this?

13

14 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Yes, but it sounds like, Mr. Chair,
15 that we probably should come back, maybe at Full Council, with
16 some more considerations on this particular section. I mean,
17 just to remind the council, and the committee, what we were
18 trying to accomplish here, we were trying to accomplish putting
19 down in writing what we are currently doing for these other
20 panels and committees besides the council.

21

22 We wanted you to confirm that holding in-person meetings, you
23 know, are a priority, which I think it is for the council, and
24 so that's what we're also trying to document, and then, for
25 planning purposes, think about what we need, moving forward, and
26 trying to put that in writing, and so those are the three main
27 things we were trying to accomplish, and so we'll try to come
28 back and massage these two sections a little bit for the SSC,
29 APs, and technical committees.

30

31 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay, and so we're just going to table this
32 and then move forward to the next one. Is that all right?

33

34 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Mr. Diaz's hand is up.

35

36 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Go ahead.

37

38 **MR. DALE DIAZ:** I just wanted to make a comment. I think in-
39 person is important for a lot of things, and I think we should
40 also -- This is separate from what we're talking about, but we
41 should try to get as many in-person presentations as we can at
42 the council also in the future, and we've had so many bad
43 experiences with technical problems, not being able to hear, and
44 I think that should be something else that we think about also,
45 when we talk about in-person. Thank you.

46

47 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** We'll just table this, and bring it back at
48 Full Council, and try to come up with something that we can come

1 up with a better answer, if it's a word change or whatever we
2 need to do, and I think the staff's idea is they've got to staff
3 the SSC, and, to be able to do it, they need to know as much in
4 advance as possible, and, obviously, there's reasons that could
5 happen at the last minute, and so we'll look at that. Dr.
6 Simmons, is that all right with you to move forward?

7

8 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

9

10 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Let's move forward to the next item.

11

12 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Okay. Could we please go to
13 section -- The reporting requirement, the Section 3.8, Council
14 Member Compensation? Again, the black text is what we currently
15 have in the SOPPs. If we go down to the bottom section, the
16 blue section, we have been doing this for a couple of years now,
17 or last year was the first year that we were notified that we
18 should do this, and it is currently in the Code of Federal
19 Regulations, and we were advised that this information should go
20 in the SOPPs.

21

22 We wanted to let council members know that your name is not
23 associated with the compensation, and that is redacted from the
24 information that's provided.

25

26 The proposed change is pretty much right out of the law, is, in
27 accordance with 500 CFR 600.245(c), the executive director of
28 the council must submit to the Regional Office annually a
29 report, approved by the council chair, of the council member
30 compensation authorized. This report shall identify, for each
31 member, amount paid, dates, and location and purpose of meetings
32 attended. This is right out of the codified text, and that's
33 why it reads like that. Mr. Chair.

34

35 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Is there any discussion on this? I
36 am seeing none, and so do we need to vote on this one also, Dr.
37 Simmons?

38

39 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Yes, please, sir. If you don't
40 have any changes, I think it would be a good idea to go ahead
41 and approve this by the committee.

42

43 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Could I get a motion to approve?
44 Mr. Gill.

45

46 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Given that we're going to
47 revisit the first portion of these proposed changes at council,
48 why would we approve it in the current status? We don't know

1 what that one is council is going to be. Conceptually, I can
2 see agreeing with it going forward, and developing the language
3 that is subject to approval of the council, but I don't see why
4 we should be doing that at this committee at this time.
5

6 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** I was just suggesting this
7 particular section, if the committee didn't have any changes,
8 just so we didn't necessarily have to redeliberate it at Full
9 Council, but at your pleasure.

10

11 **MR. DONALDSON:** I make a motion that we accept the language as
12 written.
13

14 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. We have a motion. Do we have a
15 second? We have a second. Any discussion?
16

17 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Mr. Chair, we need to get that text
18 up, please, on the board, and Mr. Diaz has his hand up.
19

20 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** All right. Go ahead, sir.
21

22 **MR. DIAZ:** I'm sorry. My hand was up from earlier. It's down
23 now. Thank you, Mr. Chair.
24

25 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. All right. Any other discussion?
26 We have a motion, and we have a second. **Any opposed?** All
27 right. **The motion carries.**
28

29 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Mr. Chair, can you slow down just a
30 second, and so Mr. Donaldson offered the motion, and who was the
31 seconder? Mr. Dugas?
32

33 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** He seconded it.
34

35 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** **The motion was to accept the**
36 **following language in Section 3.8, Council Member Compensation.**
37 Is that correct?
38

39 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Yes, that's correct.
40

41 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Thank you.
42

43 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Any other discussion on that? All
44 right, Dr. Simmons.
45

46 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chair. The
47 final section, and, again, we may need to come back to this at
48 Full Council, but, for folks to think about, is Section 4.8.1.

1 Since we were bringing you the SOPPs, we just wanted to let you
2 know that, since we implemented the anti-harassment policy,
3 things have been going very well.

4
5 The majority of the members, or all the council members, have
6 completed the training. All the SSC members, I think but two,
7 completed the training, and a majority of the AP members, and so
8 we have some minor changes here, but I just wanted to confirm
9 that this is the practice that you want to continue with.

10
11 We're proposing adding technical committees, for completeness,
12 to this section, even though that does include a lot of state
13 employees, and, just to remind everybody, in general, you know,
14 the training has been very successful. It has been completed by
15 most members, but we just want to ask, or seek direction from
16 you, for the minimal number of members, primarily AP members,
17 who have not completed the training, does the committee want to
18 make any other changes to this particular section of the SOPPs?
19 Mr. Chair.

20
21 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Any discussion on this? Mr. Gill.

22
23 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and so I think the changes
24 are good. My question is, the way the first line is written, it
25 implies that the training will be prior to appointment, and
26 including, for example, AP, or whatever, and is that really the
27 intent? For example, that then prohibits appointments where the
28 person has not yet gotten it, for whatever reason, being new or
29 something, and so is that really the intent of what we want?

30
31 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** I guess -- Do we have the whole
32 section here on that particular -- It looks like we only have
33 the subsection, and we might have to pull up the whole SOPPs,
34 but I think it says "at the time of appointment or
35 reappointment", and so I think it's -- That's the whole section?
36 Okay.

37
38 What we've done, to try to implement this, is we've had two APs,
39 an ad hoc, which is the Charter-For-Hire Data Collection and
40 Mackerel, that you just recently repopulated, and so, when they
41 were appointed, we sent the training link, virtually, and then,
42 for those, when we convened them, for those who did not take the
43 training, we had a lunchbreak, and they took the training there,
44 who attended, and so we only have a few number of members that
45 didn't take the training, and those are primarily folks that
46 have not shown up to the meetings, and so the question is, if
47 they do show up at the next meeting, do you want us to require
48 them to take it later, or do you want to not let them

1 participate until they take it, or do you want to make any
2 changes, I guess.

3

4 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Mr. Gill.

5

6 **MR. GILL:** So I think that's adequate, in my mind, that the
7 intent is that there will be a dovetailing of the training with
8 the appointment in some fashion, and I think that's fine for the
9 intent of what we're trying to achieve here. Thank you.

10

11 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Any other discussion? You know, just from
12 my viewpoint of this, obviously, you know, it's something that
13 all of us need to do, and we need to make sure that we cover
14 that the people that are a part of these committees, or any part
15 of this council, that we do this, and that we take it, and we at
16 least have the training to understand what we're supposed to be
17 doing, and so I think that it's a good thing that we do that,
18 and any other discussion? Do we need a motion on this one also?

19

20 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Yes, Mr. Chair. That would be
21 good.

22

23 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** All right. Mr. Gill.

24

25 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. **I move approval of the**
26 **changes in Section 4.8.1.**

27

28 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** We have a motion. Do we have a second?

29

30 **DR. ANTHONY OVERTON:** Second.

31

32 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Anthony seconds. Any discussion? **Any**
33 **opposed? The motion carries.** All right, Dr. Simmons. I think
34 now we're down to the Inflation Reduction Act, and I know you
35 wanted to talk just a little bit about that.

36

37 **UPDATE STATUS ON INFORMATION ON INFLATION REDUCTION ACT FUNDING**
38 **FOR THE REGIONAL MANAGEMENT COUNCILS**

39

40 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Yes, sir. Thank you, Mr. Chair.
41 For this section, we were hoping we would have a little bit more
42 to brief kind of the council on, when the agenda was developed,
43 and so, at this time, we really don't have a whole lot of new
44 information, other than what was shared at the CCC meeting.

45

46 Since then, to-date, I have contacted all of the executive
47 directors, and none of the executive directors, or the regional
48 management councils, have received any Inflation Reduction Act

1 funding, to-date. We have hired Dr. Verena Wang, and she is
2 temporarily serving as a fishery biologist on our administrative
3 award. Once we receive the Inflation Reduction Act funds, she
4 will be an ecosystem analyst, but, until then, she's our
5 temporary fishery biologist, and so we are anxiously awaiting
6 those funds.

7
8 Just to tell you a little bit about Dr. Wang, she received her
9 PhD from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, and a
10 lot of her graduate work focused on examining fish stock
11 structure and connectivity, and she did a lot of that work in
12 the South Atlantic, and, prior to that, she conducted research
13 at the University of Southern Mississippi and East Carolina
14 University, where she worked on understanding the effects of
15 climate and environmental factors on fish distributions.

16
17 We did receive an email, from Headquarters, asking us to refine
18 some of our information that we had provided in the proposal,
19 and Dr. Wang has helped us do that, for the phase two of our
20 proposal, and we really just were trying to connect the
21 activities in our proposal better to the objectives. We think
22 we've done that, and we resubmitted that on June 13, and so
23 we're just anxiously awaiting next steps on this work, because
24 I'm getting nervous. It's halfway through the year. Mr. Chair.

25
26 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Any questions, or any discussion, on
27 this? I know it's frustrating, trying to get what you need to
28 be able to operate, and, you know, I see things coming out of
29 Washington saying that they have awarded it, but then they're
30 not telling anybody, and so I guess it's sure enough that we'll
31 get something. All right. Any other discussion? Dr. Simmons,
32 anything else?

33
34 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** No, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

35
36 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** All right. Is there any other business for
37 the Administrative/Budget Committee? If not, Mr. Chair, we're
38 going to turn back about an hour to you.

39
40 (Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on June 24, 2024.)

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42 - - -