

**Administrative / Budget Committee Report
August 19, 2024
General Joe Spraggins – Chair**

The Committee adopted the agenda and August 2024 minutes (**Tab G, No. 1 & 2**) as written.

Review and Approval of Final 2024 Funded Budget (Tab G, No. 4)

Upon review of the proposed, funded 2024 budget, a Council member asked if there was a plan to increase state liaison funding in future periods. Staff responded that the states received an increase of five thousand dollars in 2023 which brought the liaison annual funding up to \$50,000, so an increase was not planned or budgeted in 2024. This is something the Council may choose to consider during the review of the next annual budget in 2025.

The Committee recommends, and I so move, **that the Council approve the proposed 2024 funded budget.**

Motion carried with no opposition.

Update of 2020-2024 Projected Expenditures and Budget Carryover to 2025 (Tab G, No 4a)

Staff presented a table summarizing the administrative award expenditures to date, projected expenditures by year-end, and anticipated projected funds available to complete work in progress during 2025. Staff, in consultation with Council leadership, will develop a prioritized list of activities that will be best suited for inclusion in a no-cost budget extension request and submit the request for an extension before the end of October. A committee member asked if funds would likely be fully expended by the end of the extension. Staff stated this should not be a problem as the remaining unspent funds will be much lower than in previous years.

Review Activities and Budget for the Multi-Year 2025-2028 Council Funding Request (Tab G, No 5)

Staff presented the Council with the 2025-2028 estimated funding request. Due to changes in the funding process, this administrative funding request will cover four years. Per guidance provided to the Council Executive Directors in January, the request projected the 2025 funding level with the 2024 funded amount. An average annual increase of 7.9% was incorporated in future periods. The Chair questioned if level funding in 2025 would present a challenge. Staff noted that this factor, combined with the costs related to moving and leasing new space, would be challenging given the current commercial real estate market conditions in Tampa; however, completing some activities under a no-cost extension would help to offset some activity costs. The Regional Administrator commented that there are two versions of budgets currently working through Congress, one might provide an increase for the Councils in 2025, but that budgeting for level funding was appropriate.

The Committee recommends, and I so move, **that the Council approve the 2025-2028 Council budget request as presented.**

Motion carried with no opposition.

Status Update on Inflation Reduction Act Funding for the Regional Fishery Management Councils

Staff provided an informational update on the status of funding for the Gulf Council's proposal that was submitted in January 2024 for the Inflation Reduction Act Funding. The award was approved, and the Council received the Phase I funding amount of \$375,000 on August 15. NOAA has communicated the anticipated funding for Phase II activities will be fully funded, based on the request with the exclusion of the Summit activities. The Council was also informed that the first two years of Phase II funding may not be received until March 2025.

Other Business

Staff provided the committee with an update on the results of the recent in-depth NOAA headquarters site visit. It was noted that this went well and that they provided a lot of good feedback. Staff explained some of the recommendations made and advised that they would be updating the Council's SOPPs and Administrative Handbook to reflect these changes. NOAA will be providing a site report within the next 6 weeks and staff will share it with the committee and Council as appropriate.

Mr. Chair, this concludes my report.