

GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

ADMINISTRATIVE/BUDGET COMMITTEE

Omni Houston

Houston, Texas

June 24, 2024

**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

**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

**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

**OTHER PARTICIPANTS**

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

1 Anna Kersting.....NOAA  
2 Dominique Lazarre.....NOAA  
3 John Walter.....SEFSC  
4  
5 - - -  
6

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.

- - -

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.

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 on 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.)

41  
42 - - -