

Administrative/Budget Committee: Action Schedule & Next Steps for Tab G

Agenda Item VI: Presentation of the 2023-2024 Audit Report

Timeline Status: Informational

Council Input and Next Steps: The biennial fiscal audit for 2023-2024 was completed August 7, 2025, and a meeting was held with Council Leadership, our NOAA Program Officer, and the Chair of the Administrative / Budget Committee to review and discuss. At this meeting, the independent audit firm issued an unqualified opinion that is also outlined in the summary report. The final summary report is presented here for the Committee's review. This item is for information only and requires no further action by the Committee.

Agenda Item V: Review 2025 Budget

Timeline Status: Review, provide feedback, and approve via motion

Council Input and Next Steps: Staff will provide a draft of the proposed 2025 funded budget (Tab G, No. 5).

In January 2025, the Committee reviewed a draft activities schedule and reviewed a draft budget based on our 2024 funding level. All administrative funds have been received from NOAA for the 2025 year, totaling \$4,253,815. This is a one percent reduction from 2024. Staff revised the original budget taking year-to-date activity into account. The Committee should review the revised final 2025 budget, ask any questions, and consider passing a motion if approved.

Agenda Item VI: Updates to the SOPPs (Tab G, No. 6)

Timeline Status: Discuss and Provide Feedback via Motion as Appropriate

Council Input and Next Steps: Council staff will review the areas in the SOPPs for the Committee's review and consideration of modifications. The proposed modifications to the SOPPs are indicated in track changes in Tab G, No. 6. The Committee is asked to review and consider a motion to adopt the proposed verbiage or some iteration thereof to the following sections:

- **Section 2.7.3 Ecosystem Technical Committee.** A suggestion for modification is proposed to reflect the needs of this committee and current membership.
- **Section 4.1 Staffing.** The verbiage and citations here were updated to reflect current practices.
- **Section 4.3 Detail of Government Employees.** The Council has never pursued this action; however, the text was unclear so it was updated to mirror the language used in the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

- **Section 6.0 Financial Management.** Updates in this section reflect policy items that we recommended to be formalized or updated after NOAA Fisheries’ enhanced site visit. This visit was carried out by the Financial Assistance Division of NOAA Fisheries Office of Management and Budget. The policy recommendations included specifying that certain oversight and actions are outlined in policies as edited. An internal fiscal procedure manual has been created as well that outlines the actions and tools used to complete the day-to-day fiscal operations which support these policies.
 - Minor updates throughout the text include updating naming conventions and correcting grammatical and typographical errors.
-

Agenda Item VII: Update to the Administrative Handbook (Tab G, No. 7)

Timeline Status: Discuss and Provide Feedback via Motion as Appropriate

Council Input and Next Steps: Council staff will provide an overview of the policy updates proposed for the Administrative Handbook. The primary changes are in Sections 4.2 Sick Leave and 5.3 Retirement Plan. The current Council plan includes a clause for employees that have reached age 55 and have 20 years of service to qualify for the Council to pay 75% of their health insurance premium until they reach age 65. Even though the scope of the policy is such that no one has been able to take advantage of it, if left in place, the policy could create untenable costs for the Council to support. Staff are suggesting an alternative policy that would allow a more lenient pay out of earned sick leave with specific caps. The net effect of this policy change is projected to save the Council \$2.6 million dollars if all staff work until they qualify.

Other minor updates throughout the text include updating naming conventions and correcting grammatical and typographical errors.
