

Administrative/Budget Committee Report
April 3, 2017

Dr. Kelly Lucas - Chair

The Committee adopted the agenda and minutes of the January 2017 Administrative/Budget Committee meeting as written.

Agenda Item IV: Review of Grant Expenditures and Anticipated Budget Activities & Funding

Dr. Simmons presented the list of proposed 2017 activities in Tab G, No. 4a. The list contains both activities that are anticipated as well as those already conducted. Ms. Hager presented a summary of Council expenditures to date from the first two years of our 5-year grant and preliminary estimate of 2017 budget in Tab G, No. 4b. The presented 2017 budget is a 1% increase above 2016 funding. Once we get clarification from NMFS regarding our final funding level for 2017, we anticipate bringing the final 2017 budget back to the Council for approval in June.

Agenda Item V: Approval of Changes to Check Writing Procedures

Current Council policy, as shown in Tab G, No. 5, is to allow electronic signatures only for checks less than \$2000. We are printing more checks manually in the office that range between two and five thousand dollars. The ability to electronically sign these checks will help us prevent payment delays in the event we have two of the three Council officers out of the office. The five thousand dollar threshold should cover most normal operating costs, including individual travel and meeting expenses.

The Committee recommends, without opposition, and I so move: **To accept the revised language as stated in the SOPPs.**

6.4 Check Signatures: All checks issued will bear two authorizing signatures, these signatures being two of either: the Administrative Officer, the Executive Director, or the Deputy Executive Director. All checks **processed through accounts payable** for amounts greater than **\$5,000** must be manually signed.

Agenda Item VI: Review of H.R. 200 (MSA Reauthorization) Potential Impacts

House of Representatives bill 200 has been introduced into committee and has a number of items that are directly pertinent to the Gulf of Mexico. Staff noted that NOAA General Counsel has advised the Councils they could no longer indicate to Congress preferences for particular sections of a bill, but rather, should only comment on the potential impacts of proposed legislation.

Staff first presented a summary of potential impacts in Sections 12, 14, 16, 17, 20, 23, and 29 of H.R. 200, as listed in Tab G, No. 6, directly related to the Gulf of Mexico. Afterward, staff was also able to review Sections 1- 6. Committee comments and suggestions will be incorporated into the impact analysis, and additional review of the remaining 10 sections of H.R. 200 will continue during the June Council meeting.

There was no other business to come before the Committee.

Madam Chair, this concludes my report.