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JIM RILEE
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MARGARET NORDSTROM
Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

To: RMP Amendment Committee
From: Margaret Nordstrom, Executive Director
Subject: Record of RMP Amendment Committee Meeting of July 12, 2017
Date: July 14, 2017

The RMP Amendment Committee met on Wednesday, July 13, 2017 at the Highlands Council office in Chester. This meeting was public noticed and opened to the public to attend.

Committee Members present: Council Chair Rilee, Committee Chair Alstede, Committee Members Holtaway, Sebetich, and Vohden.

Highlands Council Staff Members present: Margaret Nordstrom, John A. Maher, James Humphries, Kim Ball Kaiser, Corey Piasecki (via phone), and Carole Ann Dicon

Also present via phone: Lisa LeBoeuf, Assistant Counsel, Governor's Authorities Unit

Public present: Sean Gilson, George Stafford, Wilma Frey, David Shope, and Deborah Post

Committee Chair Alstede called the meeting to order at 4:03pm.

A moment of silence was held for the passing of Highlands staff member Chris Ross.

Monitoring Program Recommendation Report (MPRR)

Ms. Nordstrom reported that on Tuesday, July 11, 2017 the MPRR was released to the public for a 60-day public comment period. An email was sent to all 88 municipalities, as well as Technical Advisory Committees (TACs). Committee Chair Alstede asked what the last day is to submit comments. Ms. Dicon responded that the deadline to submit comments is Sunday, September 10, 2017.

RMP Addendum – Procedure for Considering Proposals to Amend the Highlands Regional Master Plan

Mr. Maher stated that the Council, at its January 19, 2017 meeting, approved a resolution to utilize the draft “Procedure for Considering Proposals to Amend the Highlands Regional Master Plan (RMP)” (Procedure) going forward to finalize the MPRR and to consider any proposals to amend the RMP arising out of the MPRR, and to adopt a final version of the Procedure as an amendment to the RMP.

At that meeting, the Council heard concerns from members of the public regarding the length of the public comment period on proposed amendments, and other issues. The Committee responded to these comments by recommending that the Procedure be revised in two respects, which revisions are reflected in the tracked changes version provided to the Committee. Mr. Maher reviewed the two revisions for the Committee members.

Mr. Maher stated that, in his opinion, the Procedure must be adopted as a part of the RMP before the Council considers any proposed amendment to the RMP that may arise out of the MPRR. He therefore recommended that the Committee vote to recommend to the Council that it adopt a resolution at its next meeting authorizing Council staff to conduct 5+1 public hearings that are required by the Act before the draft Procedure may be adopted by the Highlands Council as an amendment of, and addendum to, the RMP. Mr. Maher added that it is expected that the public hearings will be held in September after which time a Comment Response Document will be drafted by staff and presented to the Committee. The Committee in turn would make a recommendation to the Council to adopt the final Procedures as an Addendum to the RMP.

Committee Member Vohden asked if one of the meetings will be held in Trenton. Ms. Nordstrom responded that it is expected that one of the hearings will be held in the public hearing room at the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), two will be held at the Highlands Council office (a.m. and p.m.) and the others will be held in various locations in the Highlands region.

It was clarified that the MPRR is not an amendment of the RMP, and therefore would not go through the hearing process required for amendments. It was further clarified that Council will review all amendments prior to conducting the 5+1 public hearing process.

Committee Member Holtaway had one revision to the Procedure document and that was on page 3, “3. The text of the proposed amendment.” Mr. Holtaway recommended that it be revised to “3. “The suggested text of the proposed amendment.”

Mr. Maher recommended that Committee Member Holtaway’s revision be made to the Procedure document as part of the resolution the Council will consider at its July 20, 2017 meeting.

Committee Chair Alstede asked for a motion to make Member Holtaway’s revision to the Procedure document. Member Holtaway made a motion. Member Vohden seconded it. All were in favor.

Committee Chair Alstede asked for a motion to recommend that Council approve a resolution authorizing Highlands Council staff to conduct 5+1 public hearings on the draft Procedure, as revised. Member Vohden made a motion. Member Holtaway seconded it. All were in favor.

Report out to Council

Committee Chair Alstede noted that Council staff will conduct a 3:00pm sub-quorum meeting on July 20, 2017 (prior to the Council Meeting) to answer any questions Council members may have regarding the MPRR and the Procedure document.

Next Committee Meeting

The Committee meeting tentatively scheduled on July 20, 2017 at 12 noon has been cancelled. Mr. Vohden asked when the next meeting will be scheduled. Ms. Nordstrom responded that as we receive comments to the MPRR, staff will reach out to the Committee. Mr. Vohden suggested that the Committee receive comments as they come in for the MPRR. It was noted that as comments are received for the MPRR, Highlands staff will provide these comments to the Committee ahead of time and/or on a weekly basis.

The meeting adjourned at 4:23pm.