



State of New Jersey

Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council
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BENJAMIN L. SPINELLI, ESQ.
Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

To: Budget & Finance Committee
From: Benjamin L. Spinelli, Esq., Executive Director
Subject: Committee Meeting Minutes – April 2, 2024
Date: April 4, 2024

A Budget and Finance (B&F) Committee meeting was held on Tuesday, April 2, 2024 at 12:00pm via Zoom. The following participants were present:

Committee: Committee Chair Visioli, Council Chair Richko, Members Bush and James.

Governor's Authorities Unit (GAU): Alexis Franklin, Associate Counsel.

Highlands Staff: Ben Spinelli, Gabrielle Gallagher, James Humphries, Maryjude Haddock-Weiler, Neda Hartman, Allison Bittner, Carole Diction, Roberta Burkhart and Annette Tagliareni.

Chair Visioli opened the meeting at 12:00pm.

All committee members were present via Zoom.

Highlands Council FY2024 Highlands Protection Fund Grant Requests

Stormwater Management Planning

James Humphries, Director of Planning, Science & GIS, reported that several Highlands municipalities have requested funding to comply with the enhanced regulations of the NJDEP Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit. Highlands Council grant funding will be used to supplement NJDEP grant funding.

Mr. Humphries noted that five (5) requests were received, but due to funding constraints Council staff needed to prioritize. Three (3) grant requests (totaling \$91,750) came from Franklin, Harmony, and Oxford Townships (located in Warren County). All 3 municipalities are conforming municipalities and are Tier B moving to Tier A. The amount for these requests is shown in the table below and the tasks associated with the funding requests include some or all of the following:

- MS4 stormwater facilities mapping update.
- Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan development or update.

- Municipal Stormwater Management Plan update.
- Local public outreach.
- Preparation or revision of required community-wide ordinances.
- Inspection and maintenance of private stormwater facilities.
- Employee training.
- Storm drain inlet retrofitting assessment.
- Storm drainage, catch basin, and infrastructure inspection.
- Preparation of a Municipal Maintenance Yard BMP Manual.
- Stream scouring and illicit discharge outfall inspection.
- Development of a Watershed Improvement Plan (Phase I).

Municipality	County	MS4 Tier	Amount
Franklin Township	Warren	Former B	\$41,500
Harmony Township	Warren	Former B	\$32,000
Oxford Township	Warren	Former B	\$18,250

Mr. Humphries also reported that Council staff plans to send notices to municipalities that we will be closing grants that have been inactive for long periods of time. This funding is intended to go back into the grants budget for additional monies toward future grants.

Ms. Dicton asked if NJDEP is offering additional funding for the MS4 regulations. Mr. Spinelli responded that he is unaware of any additional funding from NJDEP.

Committee Chair Visioli asked for a motion to move the Stormwater Planning grants for Franklin, Harmony, and Oxford Townships (Warren County) to the full Council for consideration. Council Chair Richko made a motion and Member Bush seconded it. All were in favor.

Township of Vernon, Sussex County: Lake Management Plan Phase II (\$202,000)

Allison Bittner, Regional Planner, reported that the Township of Vernon is seeking a grant to conduct the Phase II assessment of the Township lakes’ watersheds. Phase I has been completed. Ms. Bittner noted that Phase II includes a similar analysis of an additional 11 lakes’ watersheds as well as a trophic state assessment and general assessment report.

Committee Member Bush asked if owners of the lake community are informed. Ms. Bittner responded that homeowner associations were notified as they had already been a part of Phase 1. Princeton Hydro will again reach out to the private lake communities to obtain access onto the properties to conduct the necessary testing as indicated in the Scope of Work. Per conversations with Princeton Hydro, there had been no issues with gaining access onto the sites or working with the private lake communities.

Council Chair Richko asked if Council staff could update new Committee Member Bush on Council’s Lake Management Plans to date. Mr. Humphries gave an overview of the Council’s lake management plans and their effectiveness in helping municipalities develop plans that enable municipalities to apply for USEPA 319 Grants for the physical improvements recommended in the plans.

Committee Chair Visioli asked for a motion to move the Lake Management Plan Phase II grant for Vernon Township to the full Council for consideration. Council Chair Richko made a motion and Member Bush seconded it. All were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 12:14pm.