



# State of New Jersey

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*Chairperson*

TAHESHA L. WAY  
*L. Governor*

BENJAMIN L. SPINELLI, ESQ.  
*Executive Director*

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Budget & Finance Committee  
**From:** Benjamin L. Spinelli, Esq., Executive Director  
**Subject:** Committee Meeting Minutes – December 4, 2023  
**Date:** December 6, 2023

A Budget and Finance (B&F) Committee meeting was held on Monday, December 4, 2023, at 10:00am via Zoom.

*Committee Chair Holtaway opened the meeting at 10:09am.* The following participants were present:

Committee: Committee Chair Holtaway, Council Chair Richko, and Member Visioli.

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

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

### Highlands Council FY2024 Highlands Protection Fund Grant Requests

#### **Green Township, Sussex County – Master Plan Land Use Element (\$40,000)**

Allison Bittner, Regional Planner, reported that the Township of Green is requesting funding to update its Master Plan Land Use Element. The Township last completed a Master Plan update in 2005, with a reexamination in 2008 and 2018. Updated Housing Elements and Fair Share Plans were subsequently updated in 2008 and 2016. The 2018 Reexamination made recommendations to update the Township Land Use Element, as much has changed since 2005. The proposed Master Plan Update will include an updated Land Use Element, as well as the Climate Change Related Hazard Vulnerability Assessment, which is required by the Municipal Land Use Law. Green Township is conforming only for the Preservation Area, however this grant will provide for increased conformance of the municipality with the RMP.

#### **Kinnelon Borough, Morris County – Master Plan Update - Climate Change Related Hazard Vulnerability Study (\$30,000)**

Ms. Bittner reported that the Borough of Kinnelon is also requesting funding to update its Master Plan Land Use Element. Kinnelon completed a Master Plan Reexamination Report in December 2022, which recommended that a Climate Change Hazard Vulnerability Study (CCRHVS) be completed as part of the Borough's proposal to update its Land Use Element over time. The CCRHVS was the first step recommended to inform decisions for future Land Use Element Updates. The CCRHVS would include various requirements outlined in NJSA 40:55D-28.b (2)(h) which requires Master Land Use Plans to include a Climate Change Related Hazard Vulnerability Study and such assessments.

It was noted at this time that we do not yet have formal scopes of work for Green Township or Kinnelon Borough; however, those projects will advance the Highlands Act and Highlands Regional Master Plan, as well as address the requirement for New Jersey Climate Change Resilience in the Highlands region.

#### **Kinnelon Borough, Morris County- Redevelopment Plan Study (\$15,000)**

Ms. Bittner added that the Borough of Kinnelon is requesting funding to create a redevelopment plan for a designated area in need of redevelopment within the Borough's Planning Area in the Highlands Region. The Borough Council designated Block 57601, Lots 101 and 102, as a condemnation area in need of redevelopment in 2021. This area is located on Lead Mine Hill Road and Matthews Avenue and consists of 7.36 acres in the northeastern part of the Borough. The Borough would like to use this Redevelopment Plan study to explore options for potential development of this parcel and create a redevelopment plan for the area.

Council Chair Richko asked about the current status of the land. It was noted that the property is in the Borough's Planning Area (3%). Ms. Bittner shared on the screen the Highlands Interactive Map regarding this property. At this time the Committee decided that more information was needed before forwarding this grant request to the full Council.

#### **Morris County, Morris County Park Commission (MCPC) – Natural Resources Inventory (\$48,600)**

Kelley Curran, Science Manager, reported that the MCPC submitted a grant funding request to conduct a Floristic Inventory and Assessment at two of their facilities over a two-year period: In 2024 Mount Hope Historical County Park in Wharton (444 acres), and in 2025 Hedden County Park in Randolph (420 acres).

Work would include the following:

- Generation of distinct plant and bryophyte lists
- Documentation of any rare plant species
- Documentation of the distribution of invasive plant species
- Description of stewardship issues that threaten the integrity of plant communities and rare species
- Calculation of floristic quality metrics
- Preparation of a report summarizing finding and recommendations for stewardship that will include maps and photographs

*Committee Chair Holtaway asked for a motion to move the following grants to the full Council for consideration: Green Township (Master Plan Land Use Element), Kinnelon Borough (Master Plan Update-Climate Change Related Hazard Vulnerability Study), and Morris County (Natural Resources Inventory). Council Chair Richko made a motion and Member Visioli seconded it. All were in favor.*

In closing, Chair Richko thanked Committee Chair Holtaway for all his years as Budget & Finance Committee Chair.

*The meeting adjourned at 10:27am.*