



State of New Jersey

Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council
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Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

To: Budget & Finance Committee
From: Benjamin L. Spinelli, Esq., Executive Director
Subject: Committee Meeting Minutes – December 12, 2024
Date: December 19, 2025

A Budget and Finance (B&F) Committee meeting was held on Thursday, December 12, 2024 at 3:30pm via Zoom. The following participants were present:

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

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

Highlands Staff: Ben Spinelli, Gabrielle Gallagher, James Humphries, Maryjude Haddock-Weiler, Kelley Curran, Corey Piasecki, Neda Hartman, and Annette Tagliareni.

Committee Chair Visioli opened the meeting at 3:28pm.

A roll call was taken.

Committee Chair Visioli reported that the committee will discuss four (4) agenda items.

Highlands Council FY2025 Highlands Protection Fund Grant Requests

Hunterdon County – Economic Sustainability Planning - \$100,000

Maryjude Haddock-Weiler, Planning Manager, gave an overview of Hunterdon County's request for an Economic Sustainability Planning grant. Ms. Haddock-Weiler noted that Hunterdon County is continuing their efforts to direct the County's economic growth toward sustainable market practices and building on recent success, particularly their tourism market.

Member Bush was recused.

Committee Chair Visioli asked for a motion to move the Hunterdon County Economic Sustainability Planning grant in the amount of \$100,000 to the full Council for consideration. Chair Richko made the motion and Member James seconded it. All were in favor.

Stormwater Management Planning (\$70,000)

Kelley Curran, Science Manager, reported that West Milford and Byram Townships received prior MS4 grant funding and needed to close out their initial grants (or show considerable progress) before receiving additional funding for their MS4 permit compliance work (five-year cycle). The Townships both showed considerable progress and requested \$50,000 (capped amount for West Milford) and \$20,000 (Byram).

Committee Chair Visioli asked for a motion to move the Stormwater Management Planning grants for West Milford Township (\$50,000) and Byram Township (\$20,000) to the full Council for consideration. Member Bush made the motion and Member James seconded it. All were in favor.

Greenwich Township, Warren County - Initial Assessment Grant (\$15,000)

Mr. Humphries reported that Greenwich Township has requested \$15,000 for an Initial Assessment grant, the first step towards Plan Conformance.

Committee Chair Visioli asked for a motion to move Greenwich Township's Initial Assessment grant for \$15,000 to the full Council for consideration. Member James made the motion and Chair Richko seconded it. All were in favor.

Agriculture Sustainability Grants:

Corey Piasecki, Principal Planner, reported that the Council approved six (6) Agriculture Sustainability grants at its October 23, 2023 meeting. Three (3) of those grantees are coming back for their second year of funding. At this time, Mr. Piasecki gave an update and overview on their progress and plans for the new funding. The grantees are:

- **Foodshed Alliance (\$92,064)**
- **City Green (\$90,000)**
- **Northeast Organic Farmers Association (NOFA) (\$93,245)**

It was noted that these grants only need the approval of the Budget & Finance Committee. The Council already voted on these grants in 2023 for a three-year funding allotment of up to \$100,000/year.

Committee Chair Visioli asked for a motion on the Agriculture Sustainability grant funding to Foodshed Alliance, City Green, and NOFA. Chair Richko made the motion and Member Bush seconded it. All were in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:39pm.