



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 – November 14, 2022
Date: November 17, 2022

A Budget and Finance (B&F) Committee meeting was held on Monday, November 14, 2022 at 10:00am via Zoom.

Committee Chair Holtaway opened the meeting at 10:00am. The following participants were present:

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

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

Governor’s Authorities Unit: Jeffrey Nielsen, Associate Counsel

Highlands Council FY2023 Highlands Protection Fund Grant Requests

Committee Chair Holtaway announced that there are five (5) grants being proposed today and staff will provide a summary for each.

Township of Montville, Morris County: Floodplain Reconnection for Enhanced Groundwater Recharge Demonstration Project - \$124,800

Kelley Curran, Science Manager, reported that Montville Township is requesting \$124,800 to reconnect a section of a stream in the drainage basin to its floodplain. Ms. Curran noted that the Township provides potable water to approximately 5,600 customers with the main source of supply from three production wells located in Towaco Valley (northern part of the Township). It was noted that the existing stream channel in the recharge area is entrenched. The floodplain reconnection will promote more frequent flows in the floodplain areas with the goal of promoting greater infiltration rates of high-quality water for shallow groundwater recharge within the drainage basin that is identified as a sole source aquifer supplying drinking water to Township residents. The tasks include:

- Hydrogeologic characterization and preliminary modeling
- Wetland delineation
- Preparation of required permits
- Hydrology analysis
- Field data collection
- Installation of structures to increase infiltration
- Data analysis
- Final report/conceptual design for implementing.

Ms. Curran noted that this project implements RMP Policy 2E2.

Committee Chair Holtaway was pleased to see this type of project. Ms. Curran noted that this could be a pilot project for others.

Chair Richko commented that this is a great step forward for the Township and could be a model for other towns.

Township of Vernon, Sussex County: Updated Housing Element & Fair Share Plan - \$18,000

Allison Bittner, Regional Planner, reported that Vernon Township is requesting \$18,000 to update their Housing Element and Fair Share Plan. Ms. Bittner noted that this project is a required part of Plan Conformance – RMP Policy 6O8.

Township of Vernon, Sussex County: Online Marketing & Branding Plan - \$28,000

Ms. Bittner also reported on Vernon Township's request for \$28,000 to highlight their assets to boost economic health and grow their tourism industry. The proposed plan will undertake three phases to help market the Township:

- Phase 1 – Digital Voice Story Telling Program
- Phase 2 – Creating and developing branding materials
- Phase 3 – Identify arts, history, and cultural sites and integrate them into an online interactive map

Ms. Bittner noted that this project implements RMP Policy 8C3.

Committee Chair Holtaway commented that staff should review such marketing plans after implementation to benchmark success, and what consists of a successful plan. This way, it is known what kind of plan should be a model for future municipalities.

Byram Township, Sussex County: C.O. Johnson Park Improvement Projects - \$122,250

James Humphries, Director of Planning, Science & GIS, reported that Byram Township seeks to restore and upgrade various components of the C.O. Johnson Park facility. Mr. Humphries noted that this project implements RMP Policies 2G7, 6N5, 8C1, and 8C2. The Township seeks funding in the amount of \$122,250 for planning and engineering design work to accomplish the following items:

- Stormwater management improvements
- Reconfiguration of playing fields to maximize useable area
- Realignment and extension of walking paths
- Expansion of parking areas
- Installation of a dog park

Bethlehem Township, Hunterdon County, Vliet Farm Historic Site Feasibility Study - \$25,000

Mr. Humphries reported that Bethlehem Township seeks funding in the amount of \$25,000 to conduct a Planning Feasibility Study of the recently preserved Vliet Farm property, which it proposes for adaptive reuse as a Historic Museum and Farm site – a first phase of a 4-part project. Mr. Humphries noted that this project will implement RMP Policy 4A7. Phase 1 study would include:

- Evaluation of existing site conditions
- Assessment of the building and property's reuse and evaluation
- Preparation of Planning Feasibility Assessment report
- Presentation to the public and outreach for community input

Committee Chair Holtaway asked for a motion to move the Highlands Council FY2023 Highlands Protection Fund Grants to the Council for consideration. Member Visioli made a motion and Council Chair Richko seconded it. A roll call vote was taken, and all were in favor.

Council Chair Richko asked if all grants will be voted on at one time. Ms. Gallagher responded that there are presently no Member conflicts, so all grants will be provided in one resolution for Council's consideration and vote.

Committee Chair Holtaway noted that he may not be available to provide a report to the full Council at its meeting on December 1st. If that is the case, Committee Member Visioli will provide the report.

The meeting adjourned at 10:16am.