
STAFF PAPER

REFLECTIONS ON THE COUNCIL PROCESS
AND IDEAS FOR CHANGE

DIANA EVANS, MARCH 2022



STAFF PAPER: REFLECTIONS ON COUNCIL PROCESS AND IDEAS FOR CHANGE (1/8)

- Requested by Council in December 2021
- Identifies 14 ideas for Council process change, relating to:
 - Council meeting schedule/agenda timing, and
 - Council advisory bodies
- These are NOT staff recommendations; just ideas that have surfaced. Looking for public input and discussion.
- Council will direct staff whether to initiate deeper dive for a future meeting.



MEETING SCHEDULE (2/8)

- 1. Reduce the number of annual Council meetings from 5 to 4, and drop the February meeting**
 - Dec to Feb shortest time for work between meetings (holiday leave)
 - Options: move April and perhaps June earlier; hold different meeting in Pacific northwest
- 2. Create a schedule that makes 1-2 meetings per year virtual, and the remaining meetings in person**
 - Cost savings for public and Council; equal access
 - Explore which meeting(s) make sense
- 3. Consider issue-specific meetings, whether as virtual or in-person**
 - e.g. in December, only do specs and end of year reports?
 - Or issue-specific meeting for major final actions



MEETING SCHEDULE / SPECIFICATIONS (3/8)

- 4. Change the timing of the October meeting to avoid government shutdowns**
 - Move at least SSC meeting earlier by a week, or later in Oct
 - Implications for specifications cycles
- 5. Reevaluate the timing of the crab and groundfish harvest specifications, in light of fishery needs and stock prioritization**
 - Difficulties with crab specs and opening fisheries on October 15
 - SSC and AFSC author concerns with groundfish timing
 - BUT timing factors very complex – need broad internal review



AGENDA AND COUNCIL OPERATIONS (4/8)

6. Reconsider frequency of agency reports

- Keep written agency reports with annual oral report?

7. Consider order of agenda, and how to make time for longer-term planning

- Sometimes moving non-final actions earlier in agenda?
- Or theme meetings by subject? Dedicated workshop for long-term planning?

8. Consider ways to avoid duplicate staff presentations and public testimony, especially during virtual meetings

- Esp in virtual when AP/Council do not overlap, is it redundant or beneficial for Council/public to hear same staff report / testimony twice?



COUNCIL ADVISORY BODIES: ADVISORY PANEL (5/8)

9. Changes to the nomination/reappointment process for the AP – timing, qualifications, term length

- Move AP nomination process earlier (deadline mid October)?
- Change AP membership criteria?
- Change term length? Initial appointment always single year?

10. Reconsider the size and/or composition of the AP

- Geographic representation fixed in Council SOPP; other diversity is not



COUNCIL ADVISORY BODIES: ADVISORY PANEL (6/8)

11. Clarify the purpose of the AP, and consider operational changes to agenda, voting

- Council SOPP language indicates primary function of AP is to provide operational input. Practice of AP is to also recommend policy choices.
- Suggestion for Council to clarify purpose and set expectations
- Based on purpose, ideas for changes to AP operations
 - Continue to review final actions?
 - Continue to review agenda items that have undergone specialist committee review?
 - Continue to use motions and voting?



COUNCIL ADVISORY BODIES: SSC (7/8)

12. Changes to the nomination/reappointment process for the SSC – timing, recruitment, soliciting SSC input.

- Move SSC nomination process earlier (deadline mid October)?
- Consider SSC recruitment process
- Formalize process for getting SSC input on expertise needed

13. Consider how to reduce SSC workload.

- Consider which agenda items the SSC reviews, other review bodies, timing of materials
- Initial discussion from SSC about pros/cons of reducing non-action items and more limited peer review role



COUNCIL ADVISORY BODIES: OTHER (8/8)

14. Evaluate the purpose and usefulness of all Council advisory bodies, and consider ways to improve.

- Suggestion: request close look at advisory bodies and their original and current purpose, and evaluate
- Are expectations clear both to group and Council
- Is leadership and membership appropriate to meet those expectations
- Is there iterative communication between group and Council?
- Do recommendations get used / save Council time?

