



# North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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## Finance Committee Meeting MINUTES

1/29/2021, 9am – 10am

Members Present: Simon Kinneen, Bill Tweit, Steve Marx, Jim Balsiger, Rachel Baker, Dave Hanson

Others Present: David Witherell (staff), Diana Evans (staff), Nicole Schmidt (staff)

The Finance Committee met in Executive Session on January 29 to review the status of Council finances and determine an appropriate amount for stipends to eligible AP members, and provide guidance on eligible AP stipend days.

The Committee reviewed the status of the Council funding and expenditures and the Committee notes that due to some cost savings and carryover allowance, the Council is in reasonably good financial shape at the beginning of year 2 of our five-year budget period (2020-2024). Nonetheless, the Committee notes that there are potential added costs resulting from any MSA reauthorization in the coming years. There are also added costs with AP stipends, and the potential added costs of implementing any new Council outreach initiatives, all of which would need to be absorbed into the existing budget.

The Committee noted that whereas there have been some savings associated with not having in-person meetings due to COVID-19, there are still large costs associated with holding virtual meetings (phone bills, IT costs), and additional administrative effort is required. The Committee indicated that the Executive Director should draft a plan for the Council to review that would, to the extent practicable, continue remote participation for in-person meetings after the pandemic is controlled. Costs associated with remote access, and limitations of IT and personnel should be considered in determining the extensiveness of continued remote participation.

At direction of the Council from its executive session in December to provide for AP stipends, the Committee discussed different stipend levels for AP members. After weighing the total annual costs of stipends within our ability to absorb this new expense into our budget for 2021-2024, the Committee decided that a stipend level of \$150 per day for AP members was an appropriate amount.