

Appendix 15– Council Member Selection Process
FINAL – May 30, 2013

Council Member Selection Process
ONMS HQ, Region and Site Roles

Press Releases to Recruit Members

- ❖ The preparation and distribution of the recruitment press release announcing vacant seats, including positions (i.e., primary, alternate), for which applications are being sought, is the responsibility of the **SUPERINTENDENT**. He or she may delegate the responsibility to his or her respective Media Coordinator, Advisory Council Coordinator, or other appropriate site staff. Press releases must be developed using the template and process outlined in Appendix 3.
- ❖ Draft press releases should be prepared for submission by January 2, April 1, July 1, and October 1, respectively. Press releases must be submitted to the National Advisory Council Coordinator, with a cc: to the National Media Coordinator (and West Coast Media Coordinator, for those sites in the West Coast or Pacific Islands regions) by the aforementioned dates in order for the vacancies to be included in the next quarterly recruitment *Federal Register* notice.
- ❖ The National Advisory Council Coordinator will conduct a preliminary review of the submitted press releases to ensure that all vacant seats and positions noted in the draft quarterly *Federal Register* notice have been accounted for before distributing the complete set to the National Media Coordinator for review and clearance. The National Media Coordinator will review, edit and seek clearance on all press releases and work with the respective media coordinators, or other appropriate staff, to address any necessary revisions. A brief description of the steps involved in the clearance of a press release can be found near the end of Appendix 3.
- ❖ Superintendents can ask their council members and alternates to assist with announcing advisory council member recruitments by asking them to redistribute recruitment press releases or other announcements. He or she can also contact local government offices, nongovernmental organizations, associations, and other groups for assistance in distribution of the press release. Widespread public notification in local media outlets is desirable and all reasonable methods are suggested, including newspaper ads and public service announcements on radio and television. Notice of the vacancy and the application kits should also be offered on-line at the site's specific website. Superintendents need to be as creative as possible in getting the word out.

***Federal Register* Notices to Recruit Members**

- ❖ The **SUPERINTENDENT** is responsible for identifying and submitting a list of the vacant seats, including positions, for which applications are to be sought by January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1. The list is to be provided to the National Advisory Council Coordinator, with a cc: to the Advisory Council Support Specialist, by January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1. If the Superintendent delegates this responsibility and does not submit this information him/herself to the

National Advisory Council Coordinator, the submitter (e.g., Advisory Council Coordinator) must also copy the Superintendent on the submission.

- ❖ The **NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL COORDINATOR** prepares each quarterly *Federal Register* notice (Appendix 2), but provides an opportunity for the Superintendent and Advisory Council Coordinator to review a draft prior to submission of the final, signed notice to NOS for clearance and processing.
- ❖ The National Advisory Council Coordinator should submit the final, draft *Federal Register* notice to the Advisory Council Support Specialist an absolute minimum of 30 days (preferably longer) before the proposed publication dates (since it can take several weeks to get the ONMS Director's signature, NOS clearance, and then submit to the Office of the *Federal Register*). Based on the current schedule, the final, draft notice should be submitted around January 15, April 15, July 15 and October 15.
- ❖ Although the notice needs to be in the *Federal Register* for at least fifteen days before the application due date, all quarterly recruitment *Federal Register* notices should be open for approximately 45 days. As such, the expected closing dates for the aforementioned publication dates are March 31, June 30, September 30 and December 31. If sufficient time has not been allowed, the due date for applications will need to be changed.
- ❖ A model of the *Federal Register* notice and associated cover memorandum from the National Advisory Council Coordinator to the ONMS Director can be found in Appendix 2 and Appendix 12(c), respectively. The National Advisory Council Coordinator should conform each quarterly recruitment *Federal Register* notice exactly like the model, making sure to do the following:
 - Double-spaced, in 12 point font
 - Numbered pages, center bottom
 - Account number (3510-NK) should be first thing on the first page, right justified
 - Signature block single-spaced for ONMS Director's signature
- ❖ The **ADVISORY COUNCIL SUPPORT SPECIALIST** prepares the final, draft *Federal Register* notice for signature and gets it signed by the ONMS Director.

The following is the current ONMS Director's signature block for *Federal Register* notices:

Daniel J. Basta
Director, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
National Ocean Service
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Date

- ❖ The **ADVISORY COUNCIL SUPPORT SPECIALIST** forwards the final, signed *Federal Register* notice to NOS. NOS reviews and forwards the notice to the Office of the *Federal Register*. NOS staff inform the Advisory Council Support Specialist of the publication date, and he/she informs the Advisory Council Coordinator of the publication date.

Application Package

- ❖ The **SUPERINTENDENT** is responsible for developing and distributing the council member/alternate application package. The **SUPERINTENDENT** must use the OMB-approved application form (OMB Control #0648-0397) that is currently set to expire on July 31, 2015, and is posted as revised Appendices 6-7 on the advisory council section of the intranet.
- ❖ In addition to the application form, the application package must contain a cover letter (Part IV, Appendix 12(f)) and the final, signed charter so prospective members understand the purposes and authority of the council and what their responsibilities and rights would be as council members. It is recommended that the application package also contain the descriptions of general qualifications and expectations for seats (Part I, Section H) and the communication protocols (Part II, F1).

Selection Process

- ❖ Once the **SUPERINTENDENT** has received the applications, the selection process begins. Refer to the National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council Implementation Handbook (Part II, C.2. Selection of Non-governmental Members (Steps 3-6)) for a detailed account of the selection process.
- ❖ In instances where no qualified or an insufficient number of individuals apply for a seat or position, it may be necessary to re-advertise the vacant seat and position during the next scheduled quarterly recruitment.
- ❖ Only in rare circumstances will an extension of the current application period for particular seat(s) and position(s) be granted. If a **SUPERINTENDENT** wants to extend the current application period for a particular seat and position, he or she must petition the ONMS Director and Deputy Director for Policy and Programs by providing a written justification to the National Advisory Council Coordinator. Extensions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and require the approval of both the ONMS Director and Deputy Director for Policy and Programs.

Member Vetting and Approval Process

- ❖ The **ADVISORY COUNCIL COORDINATOR** or other appropriate site staff (as determined by the Superintendent) should preliminarily run the selected member names through the lobbyist vetting process to identify possible issues. See Appendices 17 and 18.
- ❖ The **ADVISORY COUNCIL COORDINATOR** or other appropriate site staff (as determined by the Superintendent) prepares the clearance memo from the Superintendent to the Regional Director.

He or she forwards the signed and dated clearance memo and completed applications of the individuals being recommended for selection as members or alternates to their Regional Director. The **REGIONAL DIRECTOR** reviews the applications, works directly with the Superintendent to resolve any issues, and then forwards the signed and dated clearance memo to the Advisory Council Coordinator. The Advisory Council Coordinator is responsible for tracking the entire process. Allow at least a week for this part of the process, depending on the number of issues there are to work through, and staff schedules.

- ❖ The **ADVISORY COUNCIL COORDINATOR** or other appropriate site staff (as determined by the Superintendent) prepares the approval memo from the Superintendent to the ONMS Director for his or her signature and sends the signed and dated memo to the Advisory Council Support Specialist, with a cc: to the National Advisory Council Coordinator. The **ADVISORY COUNCIL COORDINATOR** should also send the signed and dated clearance memo from the Regional Director and the completed applications of the individuals being recommended for selection as members or alternates. Please make sure that the applicant's full name, including middle name or initial, if known, is on the application.
- ❖ The **ADVISORY COUNCIL SUPPORT SPECIALIST** oversees the vetting (Senate Lobbyist Database, LEXIS/NEXUS and departmental bureau checks). The timeframe for the vetting process varies (10 days to one month), depending on the results of the findings. Often, the results warrant consulting with the **SUPERINTENDENT** to determine if a selected applicant would be a qualified council member or alternate in light of the findings.
- ❖ Once any problems have been resolved, the **ADVISORY COUNCIL SUPPORT SPECIALIST** forwards the approval memo to the ONMS Director for signature. After signature, the Advisory Council Support Specialist faxes or emails the signed approval memo to the **ADVISORY COUNCIL COORDINATOR** and mails the original. *Note: Potential members and alternates should not be notified of their acceptance and their names should not appear in any public documents or websites identifying them as council members or alternates until after the vetting is complete and the ONMS Director signs the approval memorandum.*

Applicant Notification

- ❖ It is the **SUPERINTENDENT's** responsibility to notify the applicants if they were selected or not. Model letters to assist in preparing these notifications are available in Appendices 12(h), (i) and (j).
- ❖ It is the **SUPERINTENDENT's** responsibility to develop a press release to announce the new council members (See Appendix 4). He or she may delegate the responsibility to his or her respective Media Coordinator, Advisory Council Coordinator, or other appropriate site staff. Press releases announcing member selections must be developed using the template included in Appendix 4, and submitted to the National Media Coordinator (and West Coast Media Coordinator, for those sites in the West Coast or Pacific Islands Region) for review and approval. The National Media Coordinator will coordinate with the National Advisory Council Coordinator to ensure consistency between member selection and the press release announcing new members.