

## Council Agenda Report

**Date:** May 8, 2017

**Prepared and Submitted by:** Sandra Tripp-Jones, City Manager 

**SUBJECT:** Request from the Healthy Waters Round Table – Chesapeake Bay Foundation for \$6,000 and support of an application to National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for a grant to provide technical assistance and seed funding for clean water projects.

**Recommendation:** That Council:

- A. Deny the request, or
- B. If Council wants to approve the request, then:
  - 1) Approve the request with the condition that the application statement that seed money for pilot projects to match local investment be revised to say seed money for pilot projects that may be matched with local investment, and
  - 2) Appropriate \$6,000 from the Appropriated Reserve of the General Fund and increase the Public Works budget by the same amount.

**Discussion:**

Attached letter and draft grant application sets forth a three-year program of collaboration among contributing counties and cities on the Eastern Shore in hiring a Regional Watershed Manager to provide technical assistance and providing seed money for water quality improvement projects. The three-year program would be funded from a combination of local contributions, State contribution and a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) grant. The request to the City is for \$2,000/year for three years.

To date, the jurisdictions confirming participation include: Salisbury, Oxford, Easton, Talbot County and Queen Anne's County. Dorchester County has not been approached.

The recommendation to not approve the request is based on the following:

- The application states that the NFWF grant would provide seed money for pilot projects to match local investment. The City has already installed a number of pollution reduction projects with grant funds and with local funds, e.g., Maryland Avenue and Long Wharf bio-retention landscape features. However, the current Council Goals and Five-Year Capital program do not include such projects. Participating in a program with a stated purpose of launching projects with local funds would need Council commitment to funding projects. Alan Girard has said that the City would have the option to not pursue projects.

- The application also intends to develop a long-term plan for this organization/program, suggesting funding for a continued program. Again, unless Council is interested in being a financial contributor to a long-term collaborative technical assistance and pollution reduction projects program, supporting the application does not make long term sense.
- If the City were to enter into the project without intent to provide local funding to projects, it would seem inappropriate for the City to be part of a group deciding project priorities for jurisdictions that want to fund their own projects.

**Fiscal Impact:** If Council approves the request, the appropriation of \$6,000 should come from the Appropriated Reserve of General Fund which has a balance \$57,000. If Council approves the request, the Council will be expected to contribute local funding to future water quality improvement projects, as a member of the collaborative, should the grant be awarded unless the application is changed to say pilot projects may be matched with local funds.

## HEALTHY WATERS ROUND TABLE

### DRAFT PROPOSAL FOR TECHNICAL SUPPORT SERVICES

[ REVISED BASED ON 04.07.17 ROUND TABLE WORKSHOP ]

**NFWF FUNDING APPLICATION DUE MAY 9, 2017**

#### GOAL

Provide regional coordination of technical support services including planning and project prioritization, grant management, and contracting assistance for design and engineering to increase local watershed restoration capacity.

#### CONTEXT

County and municipal governments cite technical assistance as a primary need to help meet local WIP targets. In the spring of 2016, 18 Eastern Shore local governments completed a Round Table survey to specifically identify the watershed planning and implementation tasks that are most affected by insufficient technical capacity. While many aspects of each jurisdiction's situation are unique, the survey responses consistently showed that local governments need support to identify and prioritize projects, develop detailed designs, and guide those projects to completion.

#### OPPORTUNITY

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) are prioritizing support for the development and implementation of inter-jurisdictional watershed restoration programs. NFWF is soliciting proposals through May 9<sup>th</sup> to support collaborative watershed restoration efforts through its 2017 Innovative Nutrient & Sediment Reduction RFP via the "Regional-Scale Restoration Program Delivery" track. Grants of up to \$1,000,000 will be awarded, with a 1:1 non-federal match required.

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) is considering methods and funding to support non-MS4 jurisdictions in meeting WIP goals for stormwater. The state has identified reliable capital funding and local staffing support as priorities for these jurisdictions, and is exploring a match for this grant.

#### SCOPE OF SERVICES

This 3-year grant would initiate a regional cooperative structure on the Eastern Shore to assist participating local jurisdictions with coordination of technical services for planning and implementation. At the outset, the cooperative would be staffed by a full-time Regional Watershed Manager who reports to a steering committee of participating jurisdictions and Round Table supporting partners. The manager would support local efforts to evaluate, prioritize and streamline watershed restoration activities by assisting with the following:

- (1) Scoping, grant, and contract management for restoration planning activities, such as:
  - a. Inventories of existing watershed restoration plans
  - b. Accounting of completed projects
  - c. Detailed watershed planning

d. Project prioritization

- (2) Development of joint procurement instruments to support grant applications and streamline local contracting for design, engineering, and construction
- (3) Maintenance of a list of qualified contractors by project type to facilitate procurement
- (4) Development of a uniform, GIS-based tracking tool that is compatible with MDE and EPA's Phase III WIP reporting framework

During the 3-year grant period, the Regional Watershed Manager would pilot the provision of these services by:

- Coordinating and managing resources to complete a specified list of inter-jurisdictional watershed planning tasks, and
- Coordinating bulk procurement for the design, engineering and installation of a specified list of local BMP installations

The Regional Watershed Manager would populate the project lists in consultation with participating local governments and the consent of the Steering Committee, as an initial task. The NFWF grant would provide seed money for the pilot projects to match local investment in this clean water work.

These technical services are intended to complement and expand on existing resource delivery structures at work on the Eastern Shore, including the University of Maryland Sea Grant Extension, Rural Maryland Council, USDA, the Regional Councils, and county Soil Conservation Districts. In particular, Sea Grant Extension, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and others provide complimentary services to Eastern Shore jurisdictions via the Watershed Assistance Collaborative (WAC). The activities described in this scope of services are intended to work in concert with the WAC to fill remaining gaps in technical assistance due to limited staff resources as well as supply expertise in managing detailed design, engineering and procurement contracts. A final task under the NFWF grant would be the development of a long-term sustainability plan for the cooperative framework, including recommendations for a host organization in which to "seat" the framework and any expanded roles or tasks for the cooperative, such as the development of a financing strategy.

## **PARTNER ROLES**

### Healthy Waters Round Table supporting partners

- Manage the NFWF grant
- Staff the steering committee

### Talbot Soil Conservation District

- Serve as the hiring manager for the Regional Watershed Manager

### State of Maryland

- Provide matching funds for the NFWF grant
- Advise on project tracking and reporting

### Participating Eastern Shore counties and towns

- Serve on the steering committee

- Provide matching funds for the NFWF grant (\$10,000 to \$15,000 per jurisdiction annually)
- Support planning, prioritization and reporting activities
- Develop project requests and project funding
- Co-manage sponsored projects

**BUDGET**

Expenses (annual)

Regional Watershed Manager	\$ 95,000
Seed money for pilot projects	\$200,000
Office space, phones, travel, etc.	\$ 10,000
NFWF grant administration	\$ 10,000

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Total \$315,000

Funding (annual)

NFWF INSR grant	\$165,000
State match	\$100,000
Local match	\$ 50,000

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Total \$315,000

Total 3-year budget: \$945,000

NFWF grant request: \$495,000

**LETTERHEAD**

**DATE**

Jake Reilly, Program Director  
Chesapeake Bay Program  
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation  
1133 Fifteenth Street., N.W., Suite 1000  
Washington, DC 20005

Re: Chesapeake Bay Foundation – NFWF Grant Application  
Healthy Waters Round Table Technical Support Services

Dear Mr. Reilly:

The City of Cambridge is pleased to provide this letter in support of the proposal being submitted by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation to aid regional-scale restoration program delivery on Maryland's Eastern Shore. With a rich maritime history and waterfront revitalization plans that hinge on the health of Cambridge Creek, we are committed to doing our part to improve water quality locally and in the Chesapeake Bay. This proposal is a valuable way to join with our neighboring Shore jurisdictions to cost-effectively grow local capacity to implement restoration activities in our rural communities.

The City of Cambridge is fortunate to be supported by organizations that participate in our Cambridge Clean Water Advisory Committee that brings tools and resources to our community to address local pollution problems. The efforts of these organizations, however, generally are not sufficient to help us fully implement the restoration actions identified in the advisory committee's 10-year plan.

Recognizing that efficiency with taxpayer dollars is expected by our constituents, the proposal to NFWF can help us streamline and deploy watershed restoration activities with new resources that provide value above and beyond what we can afford on our own. In addition, sharing resources across jurisdictional boundaries is attractive to Cambridge because it helps us leverage the strengths of other communities on the Shore while minimizing duplication of effort. As part of this proposal, we are committed to cooperating with other potential local Shore partners including the towns of Chestertown, Easton and Oxford; the City of Salisbury; and Caroline, Cecil, Kent, Queen Anne's, and Talbot Counties.

The City of Cambridge is committed to reducing pollution that enters our waterways. We therefore are pleased to commit \$2,000 annually over the 3-year grant term as a cash contribution towards this effort, recognizing that the monetary value of the benefits received will far exceed this amount.

Sincerely,

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