

**§ 143B-135.188. North Carolina Aquariums; fees; fund.**

(a) Fees. – The Secretary of Natural and Cultural Resources may adopt a schedule of fees for the aquariums and piers operated by the North Carolina Aquariums, including:

- (1) Gate admission fees.
- (2) Facility rental fees.
- (3) Educational programs.

(b) Fund. – The North Carolina Aquariums Fund is hereby created as a special fund. The North Carolina Aquariums Fund shall be used for the following purposes with respect to the aquariums and the pier operated by the Division of North Carolina Aquariums:

- (1) Repair, renovation, expansion, maintenance, and educational exhibit construction. Funds used for repair, renovation, and expansion projects may be transferred to a capital projects fund to account for use of the funds for each project.
- (2) Payment of the debt service and lease payments related to the financing of facility expansions, subject to G.S. 143B-135.190.
- (3) Matching of private funds that are raised for these purposes.
- (4) Marketing the North Carolina Aquariums.

(c) Disposition of Receipts. – All receipts derived from the collection of admissions charges and other fees and the lease or rental of property or facilities shall be credited to the aquariums' General Fund operating budget. At the end of each fiscal year, the Secretary may transfer from the North Carolina aquariums' General Fund operating budget to the North Carolina Aquariums Fund an amount not to exceed the sum of the following:

- (1) One million five hundred thousand dollars (\$1,500,000).
- (2) The amount needed to cover the expenses described by subdivision (2) of subsection (b) this section.
- (3) Any donations, gifts, and devises received by the North Carolina aquariums.

(d) Approval. – The Secretary may approve the use of the North Carolina Aquariums Fund for repair and renovation projects at the aquariums-related facilities that comply with the following:

- (1) The total project cost is less than five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000).
- (2) The project meets the requirements of G.S. 143C-8-13(a).
- (3) The project is paid for from funds appropriated to the Fund.
- (4) The project does not obligate the State to provide increased recurring funding for operations.

(e) Repealed by Session Laws 2015-286, s. 4.12(d), effective October 22, 2015.

(f) Report. – The Department shall submit to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Agriculture and Natural and Economic Resources and the Fiscal Research Division by September 30 of each year a report on the North Carolina Aquariums Fund that shall include the source and amounts of all funds credited to the Fund and the purpose and amount of all expenditures from the Fund during the prior fiscal year. (1997-286, s. 5; 1997-400, s. 6.3(b); 1997-443, s. 11A.119(b); 1999-49, s. 2; 2002-159, s. 46; 2005-276, s. 12.10; 2012-142, s. 12.5(a); 2013-413, s. 42(a); 2014-100, s. 14.2C; 2014-115, s. 17; 2015-241, s. 14.30(g), (n); 2015-268, s. 5.4(d); 2015-286, s. 4.12(d); 2016-94, s. 16.6(b); 2017-57, ss. 14.3(h), 36.12(e); 2021-180, ss. 14.3(a), 14.3A(a).)