

Minutes of the 44th Annual Business Meeting of the Florida Chapter American Fisheries Society

May 15, 2024

Guy Harvey Resort, St Augustine Beach, FL

President Ed Camp called the meeting to order at 1630 hours and Secretary/Treasurer Steve Beck established a quorum with approximately 125 Chapter members in attendance including current officers, past presidents, and committee chairs. Past officers were asked to stand to be recognized.

Ed asked for and received approval of the agenda and 2023 business meeting minutes.

After numerous membership requests to shorten the typical business meeting, as a time saving measure, a Chapter Business Update document was distributed to Chapter membership before the business meeting. That document is included as an appendix to these minutes.

Ed provided a background of the purpose of the business meeting.

AFS and Southern Division AFS Business:

Miguel (Toño) Garcia-Bermudez (AFS President-Elect) discussed the upcoming national meeting in Hawaii, progress made with diversity in AFS membership, and thanked the FL Chapter for the invite.

Ed provided SDAFS updates. The upcoming meeting is in Asheville NC in Feb 17-21, 2025. Steve Beck attending the 2024 SDAFS Executive Committee meeting and voted in support of SDAFS providing \$1000 funding to support the Black Bass Symposium at the 2025 national AFS meeting in San Antonio, TX and voted in support of SDAFS providing \$1000 funding to the California Center for Aquaculture Technology to develop Morone SNP panels to facilitate Morone genetics research through fin clips.

Old Chapter Business:

The FL Chapter (Dan Nelson) volunteered to host the SDAFS meeting in 2029. Motion to support: Kerry Flaherty-Wahlia, Angela Collins seconded. Dan Nelson is planning committee chair and those interested in assisting should contact Dan. Planning needs to start soon.

Ed provided brief summaries of the Treasurer's Report and Rottman Memorial Fund.

Committee Reports:

Ed recognized committee members and briefly reviewed committee highlights (included in the Appendix below).

Student Subunit:

Student Subunit President Karli Corey gave an update on subunit activities, promoting the Reefs to Rivers blog, 2024 Sheepshead Shuffle, new Chapter hat designs, and the establishment/refinement of standard operating procedures for the subunit.

Karli then presented the newly elected subunit officers:

President: Cody Eggenberger (FIU)

Vice-President: Andy Distrubell (FIU)

Secretary/Treasurer: Brady Huber (FSC)

University Liaison: Jordan Zulli (NSU)

Awards:

Dennis Punches Memorial Student Travel Awards: Ed reported that awards were given to 22 students this year, covering all meeting costs. The funds provided by the West Palm Beach Fishing Club on behalf of the Punches Family now account for over 50% of student travel funds, hence the award name change. The continued importance of the raffle was also noted.

Roger Rottmann Memorial Scholarship: Dan Nelson presented the 26th Rottmann Scholarships. Ashley Wechsler (UF) received the M.S. Rottman Scholarship and Sarah Webb (FAU) received the Ph.D. Rottman Scholarship. He encouraged more freshwater fisheries students to apply next year, as this year was dominated by marine fisheries students.

Florida Chapter Awards – Eric Nagid presented the history and requirements for the Outstanding Achievement Award, which recognizes individuals for specific and distinct accomplishments and contributions to fisheries, aquatic sciences, and to the Florida Chapter. Ted Lange was named as the 2024 Outstanding Achievement Award winner for his freshwater fish contaminant research in Florida, as well as his research and promotion of bass best management practices.

Eric next presented the history and requirements of the Rich Cailteux Award, which is meant to recognize individuals for their career contributions to the fisheries profession and the Florida Chapter. Debra Murie was then named the 12th recipient of the Rich Cailteux Award for her long career studying (largely offshore) fish population dynamics, dredging and oil spill impacts in Florida, extensive AFS involvement at several levels, and advising numerous fisheries graduate students.

Further details on the accomplishments of Chapter Award recipients are found in the Appendix.

Installation of New Officers:

Due to a single candidate each for the President-Elect and Secretary-Treasurer positions, it was decided to hold a verbal vote instead of a paper ballot vote for simplicity. By unanimous verbal vote, Steve Beck was elected as President-Elect and Sara Menendez was elected as Secretary-Treasurer. It was also noted that a newsletter editor was needed (Bridgette Froeschke volunteered), and an apprentice Webmaster was needed (no volunteers).

Ed presented plaques to Chelsey Crandall for completing her three years of service as Chapter President, Steve Beck for his three years of service as Chapter Secretary/Treasurer, and Karli Corey for her year of service as Student Subunit President.

New Executive Committee:

President: Angela Collins (UF)

President-Elect: Steve Beck (FWC)

Past-President: Ed Camp (UF)

Secretary/Treasurer: Sara Menendez (FWC)

New Business:

- 1) Several Chapter procedures and some bylaws are out of date. Some committees do not exist or function as defined, and new committees are not defined. Steve Beck reviewed the process to update procedures and bylaws. The proposal to for the executive committee to review Chapter bylaws and procedures and provide potential changes to the Chapter, passed with unanimous consent.
- 2) Motion to separate Secretary and Treasurer positions. Given the heavy workload of the Secretary/Treasurer, voluntary nature of the position, and limited time, it was proposed this position be split to allow increased (higher quality) attention be given to each position's tasks and increase participation. There is precedent with other Chapters (TN). Much as with item 1 above, the new positions will require changes to the Chapter bylaws and procedures. The proposal for the executive committee to provide updated position descriptions and potential bylaw/procedure changes to the Chapter passed with unanimous consent.

Next year's meeting venue/date:

The executive committee will notify Chapter membership regarding the 2024 meeting location/date.

Angela Collins thanked membership and adjourned the business meeting at 1730 hours.

APPENDIX:

Business Meeting Update Document distributed to Chapter Membership May 13, 2025:

AFS Updates
From Mark Rogers and Anthony Overton (SDAFS past-president, president respectfully)

Parent Society

- Recruit/hire new Executive director by 8/2024. Doug Austen, current ED, retires Sept 2024.
- Drafting new plan/positioning/visioning document for 2025-2029
 - Continues to work with Strategic Visioning Committee
- Continue DEIJA efforts to create welcoming professional environment to all members
- Upcoming AFS meetings
 - 2024, Honolulu, Hawaii
 - 2025, Houston, Texas
 - 2026, Columbus, Ohio

Governing Board:

- The governing board is the ultimate authority for the operation of the society. More info at: <https://fisheries.org/about/governance/governing-board/>
- Consider reviewing the Winter 2023 Joint Management and Governing Meeting, available at: <https://fisheries.org/about/governance/governing-board/governing-board-minutes/>
- President Cecil Jenning’s Plan of Work available at <https://fisheries.org/about/governance/presidents-plan-of-work/>

Membership Committee:

- Membership in parent society continues to decline (8% decrease over the decade)
 - Please renew your membership at the society level!!

Mark Roger’s goals as SDAFS President:

- Upcoming SDAFS Meetings:
 - 2025, Asheville, North Carolina
 - 2026, New Orleans, Louisiana
 - 2027, Alabama
 - 2028, Mississippi
 - 2029, Florida
 - 2030, Puerto Rico

Treasurers Report

2023 Account Balances (Steve Beck):

| | Cash (MS, WF, PP) | Mutual Fund (Morgan Stanley) | Total |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|---|--------------------|
| January 1, 2023 | \$ 39,416.67 | \$ 28,024.50 | \$ 67,441.17 |
| December 31, 2023 | \$ 36,656.89 | \$ 32,976.71 | \$ 69,633.60 |
| Difference: | \$ -2,759.78 | \$ 4,952.21 | \$ 2,192.43 |

Rottman Memorial Scholarship Fund Report (Larry Connor):

The cash component of the fund experienced a net loss of (\$1,448.50) in 2023 due primarily to the Fund reimbursing the unfunded 2022 Rottmann scholarships in 2023. Including all assets, the Fund gained 3.0% in 2023, as total assets increased from \$48,252.62 on 12/31/2022 to \$49,689.70 on 12/31/2023.

Roger Rottmann Memorial Scholarship Fund
Balance Sheet 31 December 2023
Accrual Basis

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| Assets | |
| Franklin Income Fund A | \$30,594.21 |
| Morgan Stanley Dividend Growth Fund B | \$13,363.92 |
| Cash | \$5,731.57 |
| <hr/> | |
| Total Assets | \$49,689.70 |
| Liabilities | - |
| <hr/> | |
| Total Liabilities | \$0.00 |
| <hr/> | |
| Total Assets – Liabilities | \$49,689.70 |

FLAFS Committee Updates

Website

Committee Chair: Jason O'Connor

Action Items Completed:

- Added a Community and Engagement Committee page
- Routine maintenance

Action Items in Progress/Pending:

- New page needed for the Dennis Punchers Memorial Scholarship
- Create a webform for Rottman Scholarship

Announcements:

- Committee pages? If any committees would find it valuable to have a dedicated page on the website to share information, let me know. We can also set up unlisted/password protected pages to facilitate storing and sharing files/documents among committee members.

- Seeking additional chapter member(s) to join and serve on the web development team. No prior web development experience necessary. If interested in serving on the website committee, contact Jason.

Newsletter

Committee Chair: Kyle Miller

Action Items Completed:

- Quarterly Newsletters

Announcements:

- Thank you to the EXCOM, student subunit, and DEI committee for regularly submitting content to share with the chapter!

Questions or proposals for the Chapter:

- After a thoroughly enjoyed tenure as newsletter editor, Kyle would like to pass on the torch to another member of our chapter. If you are interested in this exciting collaborative role, please let Kyle or the Executive committee know.

Continuing Education

Committee Chair: Jason O'Connor

Committee Members: Allison Durland-Donahou, Nick Trippel, Carissa Gervasi, Kerry Flaherty-Walia, Dan Nelson, Michelle Shaffer, Brittany Hall-Scharf, Bridgette Froeschke, Rachel Liebman

Action Items Completed:

- Organized student-mentor lunch and workshop (Career Panel) for the 2024 Chapter Meeting

Announcements:

- THANK YOU, to our career panel: John Galvez, Eric Nagid, Bridgette Froeschke, Jeff Hill, Matt McKinney, and Lisa Hollensead and moderator: Joy Hazell
- All meeting participants are encouraged to attend (tomorrow, May 16th, 1:15--3:15pm), particularly students and early career professionals. Check the [workshop page](#) which has more information. Chapter members are encouraged to fill out the [mentor survey](#) even if they are not panelists.
- We'd like to acknowledge the following outgoing committee members for their service to the Chapter over the last few years:
 - Carissa Gervasi
 - Dan Nelson
 - Michelle Shaffer
- We are seeking new committee members to help develop and facilitate learning opportunities relevant to our chapter members. The committee generally meets virtually 3-4 times a year, and our goal is organize virtual workshop held during late summer/early fall and an in person workshop held during the annual meeting. This committee is an excellent opportunity to get involved with the chapter. Students welcome!
- Reach out to Jason O'Connor or Allison Durland-Donahou for more information.
- Have a skill or information that other chapter members may benefit from? Please consider hosting a future workshop (either at the annual meeting or virtually)? Pitch your idea to the CE committee! We'll help make it happen.

Community and Engagement

Action Items Completed:

- Change committee name per state compliance
- Created committee page on the Chapter website

- Shellcracker articles published
- Created anonymous question and idea suggestion link

Action Items in Progress/Pending:

- Drafting manuscript on disability inclusivity in the field
- Initiating a “spotlight” series for the Shellcracker
- Drafting a Florida Chapter Dialogue Agreement

Announcements:

- Committee wants to remind members about the anonymous comment or suggestion form, available in the C&E section of our website (<https://units.fisheries.org/fl/about/cec/>)

Membership

2023 Membership Report (Larry Connor/Steve Beck):

| Membership Category | 2022 | 2023 | Change | % Change |
|---------------------|------|------|--------|----------|
| Total | 168 | 253 | +85 | +50.56% |
| Student | 48 | 71 | +23 | +39.4% |
| Society | 133 | 126 | -7 | -5.2% |

Marketing and Membership

Committee Chair: Kerry Walia

Questions or proposals for the Chapter:

- Need for new chair if committee continues
- New logo was processed!

Policy Committee

Committee Chair: Ed Camp

Action Items Completed: None

Action Items in Progress/Pending:

- Ongoing discussion and pending information pieces regarding potential changes to regulatory structure related to aquaculture

Raffle

Committee Co-Chairs: Amanda Croteau, Geoff Smith, and Chelsey Crandall

Action Items Completed:

- Over \$\$\$ of items from XX businesses and individuals were donated to this year's raffle and silent auction.
- The silent auction has a total estimated value >\$\$\$\$
- The raffle has a total estimated value >\$\$\$\$

Action Items in Progress/Pending:

- 100% of money raised by the raffle and silent auction, fund student travel awards so thank you for supporting our students!
- Buy raffle tickets!
- Remember the silent auction closes after the business meeting, so make sure to place your final bids!

Announcements:

- Thanks to Jonathon Freedman and Angela Collins for their help this year!
- Thank you to Alan Collins for his donation to raffle. Even though he wasn't able to attend this year, Alan continues to support FLAFS and our students.
- If you would like to be part of this committee, reach out to Geoff or Chelsey

Questions or proposals for the Chapter:

- Buy raffle tickets!
- Bid on silent auction items!

Aquatic Cleanup:

Committee Chair: Nick Trippel

Action Items Completed:

- 2 cleanup events in the Fall 2023
 - Hernando Beach, Harris Chain of Lakes
 - Total trash removed this year: 1,324 lbs
 - Total trash removed since 2019 start: 12,807 lbs

Outstanding Achievement Award Winner: Ted Lange

Throughout his 35-year career with the Game and Fish Commission and Fish and Wildlife Commission, Ted has been a leader in freshwater fish contaminant research in Florida ecosystems. He and his colleagues have studied the bioaccumulation of mercury in fishes from freshwater resources throughout FL, with research designed to understand the trophic relationships of mercury bioaccumulation, as well as the relationships between physical and chemical characteristics of freshwater waterbodies and mercury bioaccumulation. His findings have been recognized nationally through his participation at conferences, symposia, and workshops, and through publication of scientific articles.

Most notably however, Ted's program and research outcomes have been used to support statewide mercury total maximum daily loads that are set by the FL Dept. of Environmental Protection to list and de-list impaired waterbodies pursuant to the US Clean Water Act., and to directly inform fish consumption advisories published by the FL Dept. of Health.

Ted has also been critical in quantifying stressors and promoting best management practices for bass in Florida. He has worked closely with tournament directors and anglers studying livewell conditions and tournament delayed mortality to promote bass survival. He has researched oxygen dynamics and the relation to vegetation coverage and biovolume in hopes to inform vegetation management for the benefit of both the bass and the anglers that target them.

A *common thread* throughout Ted's career has been collaborative science with a multitude of diverse research partners. He understands how much can be accomplished by harnessing the energy, the knowledge, and the passion of others that are working together to achieve a common goal. He is highly respected by scientists, both by young professionals and those that are aged, across a diverse group of scientific disciplines that include fisheries scientists, ecologists, limnologist, and aquatic toxicologists.

Rich Cailteux Award Winner: Debra Murie

For nearly 30 years, Deb has conducted research on age and growth, diet, reproduction, release mortality, and migratory patterns of many species of ecological and economic importance including Greater Amberjack, Gag Grouper, Goliath Grouper, Sheepshead, White Grunt, Yellow Bullhead, Gray Snapper, and Florida Gar. She has investigated the impacts of the BP oil spill on fish growth and the impacts of dredging on community composition in nearshore waters of Florida. She has authored or co-authored over 60 peer-reviewed publications, written a chapter on sampling commercial fisheries for the third edition of AFS's Fisheries Techniques book, and contributed to the Practical Handbook for Determining Ages of Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Coast Fishes. She has been extremely active in AFS at the chapter, section, division, and parent society levels. She served as the Florida Chapter president from 2009 to 2010. She was a program co-chair for the 2001 Southern Division meeting, a member of the sponsorship and tradeshow committee for the 2011 Southern Division meeting, and poster chair for both the 2011 Southern Division and 2017 Parent Society meetings. She was the Marine Fisheries Section treasurer from 2000 to 2004, president from 2006 to 2008, and newsletter editor from 2010 to 2014. She is a past

subject editor and current editor in chief for the AFS journal Marine and Coastal Fisheries. Beyond her dedication to AFS and her research contributions to Florida's fisheries, she is a faculty member at the University of Florida that has mentored countless undergraduate volunteers and technicians, advised or co-advised over 20 masters and doctoral students, and served on thesis and dissertation committees for numerous other students.

NOTE: These minutes represent an accurate record of business meeting happenings, though the order of these minutes have been arranged to better reflect the Robert Rules of Order.