

**Southern Division American Fisheries Society  
Spring Executive Committee Meeting  
Thursday, 20 February 2020  
Arkansas Ballroom, Marriott Hotel Downtown  
Little Rock, Arkansas**

Secretary-Treasurer Jessica Baumann announced a quorum was present. President Wes Neal called the EXCOM meeting to order at 1501 hrs.

Proxies were identified and included Clint Morgeson for North Carolina and Corbin Hilling for Virginia Tech.

President Neal acknowledged special guests AFS Executive Director, Doug Austen; President-Elect, Brian Murphy; and AFS Past President, Steve McMullin.

President Neal presented the Spring EXCOM Meeting agenda. Past President Craig Bonds made a motion to approve the agenda and Vice President Cindy Williams seconded the motion. No discussion ensued. Motion passed by unanimous consent.

Executive Director Doug Austen noted that he was impressed by quality and growth that was exhibited by Catfish 2020. He gave an update on the agenda for the 2020 AFS Governing Board Meeting that will be held after the conclusion of SDAFS's annual meeting in Little Rock on Sunday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>. Items on the agenda will focus heavily on climate change. There will also be discussion on the 150<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the American Fisheries Society which will focus on the history of the Society and building on our past to direct our future. Other items on the agenda will be supporting AFS's participation in policy programs that partner with other groups to convey science, including (1) the Society hosted the Consortium of Aquatic Science Societies (CASS) which is comprised of 9 groups representing various interests within the aquatic science realm, (2) the Society hosted Joint Aquatic Sciences Meeting to be held in June 2022 in Grand Rapids, MI, and (3) the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership. Executive Director Austen also emphasized that AFS is continually addressing the need to address why membership to the Society is so important.

President-Elect Brian Murphy followed up by stressing that one of his goals for his term as President will be to not only address climate change, but to follow through with action items regarding it.

Attendee introductions were made, including SDAFS officers [President, Wes Neal; Past President, Craig Bonds; President-Elect, Tom Kwak; Vice President, Cindy Williams; Secretary-Treasurer, Jessica Baumann; Student Representative to the EXCOM, Sarah Baker], chapter representatives and host representatives for the 2020 SDAFS Annual Meeting and Catfish 2020.

### **SDAFS President Report**

President Neal's report stands as written in the SDAFS Briefing Book. He noted that for the first time in a while he received a report from every active unit. From that report he highlighted, the updated SDAFS procedures manual and noted it has been posted online, his participation across AFS including serving on The Society's Governing Board for both the Membership committee and the Resource Policy committee and attending multiple chapter meetings, and working with the Technical Committees to fill all open appointments. He noted that the Division fills Technical Committees with members that work for governmental agencies, but he emphasized that membership should not be limited to only agency employees.

### **SDAFS Officer Report**

President-Elect Kwak noted his report stands as written. From that report he highlighted, his participation in the Society's Governing Board including the Management Committee and attending multiple chapter meetings. He also noted his involvement with the planning and co-editing of Catfish 2020 and its proceedings. He will also be hosting the Past President's Lunch in Little Rock and participating in the World Fisheries Conference in Australia.

Vice President Williams noted her report stands as written. From that report she highlighted, her involvement in multiple chapter meetings where she took the opportunity to stress the advantages of AFS membership. She noted that she performed a technical review of the Warm Water Streams Committee and she showed her appreciation to Kevin Mayes and Robby Maxwell for helping her accomplish that task in a short turnaround time.

Past-President Craig Bonds noted his report stands as written. He highlighted his work on the Nominating Committee and his contributions to the revisions of the Division by-laws.

Secretary-Treasurer Jessica Baumann's reports were handled individually. She noted that her report stands as written.

Secretary-Treasurer Baumann provided an overview of the 2019 budget. Several income and expense items were highlighted, including \$19,000+ income from the 2019 SDAFS meeting in Galveston, TX. She noted the line items that went over budget via EXCOM approval, including an additional \$1,500 in AFS donations for Catfish 2020 and officer travel to send President Neal to the Society's annual meeting in Reno, NV. She also noted the historical donations that were overlooked due to the transferring of Secretary-Treasurer duties including donations to the Society's EOS (\$500) and the SFS housing both the Division's webmaster and newsletter editor (\$500 each). These donations will be paid 2020 instead of 2019.

An audit of the 2019 financial information was completed on February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020 by the SDAFS Audit Committee. The Audit Committee report can be found in the briefing book and there

were no errors identified in the 2019 financials. The Division's original investment of \$10,000 in October of 2018 has grown to \$10,669 as of September 2019. It was noted that the Audit Committee suggested the Division look into a more aggressive investment to complement our financial portfolio.

The Proposed 2020 SDAFS Budget was discussed next. Secretary-Treasurer Baumann noted that typical levels of income and expenses were expected in 2020. President Neal inquired about any major funding requests for 2020, and there are none at the present moment. The current bank balance is sufficient to maintain SDAFS operations.

### **Student Representative Report**

Representative Sarah Baker indicated that her report stands as written. She highlighted the low voting participation from students in the election of the 2020 Student Representative. She will be conducting a survey of the students via email to try and understand why turnout was so low and how we can increase participation. Past President Bonds noted that a majority of students who voted had their votes invalidated because they were not actual members of the Society. Also highlighting the need of students to become members of AFS at the Society level.

### **Technical Committee Reports**

**Morone** – No representative present. Stands as written in the 2019 Briefing Book.

**Reservoir** – No representative present. Stands as written in the 2019 Briefing Book.

**Small Impoundments** – Report stands as written in the 2019 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Catfish** – Jason Olive, Symposium Co-Chair for Catfish 2020, noted that the report stands as written and gave an update on the Catfish 2020 meeting held prior to the SDAFS annual meeting in Little Rock, AR. The meeting hosted 200 attendees and had over 80 oral presentations, 17 poster presentations, and 50 manuscripts for the proceedings have been submitted to be published later this year. He also expressed his appreciation of the EXCOM for sponsorship of the meeting.

**Warm Water Streams** – Report stands as written in the 2019 SDAFS Briefing Book. Highlighted was the benefits of having a Technical Committee review done by Vice-President Cindy Williams.

**Alligator Gar** – Report stands as written in the 2019 SDAFS Briefing Book. Highlighted was the bank account that was opened by the Committee and the difficulty that was experienced in process of opening the account.

**Pollution** – Report stands as written in the 2019 SDAFS Briefing Book. Highlighted was the Fish Kill Workshop that was being put on at the 2020 SDAFS annual meeting.

**Trout** – No representative present. Stands as written in the 2019 Briefing Book.

**Aquaculture** – No representative present. Stands as written in the 2019 Briefing Book.

## **Resolutions Committee Report**

Resolutions Committee Chair Dennis Riecke discussed the Warm Water Streams Committee's resolution regarding hydrologic alteration as impairment to water quality standards that was passed during the 2018 SDAFS Business Meeting. Chair Riecke noted that he spoke with Drue Winters, Society Policy Director, and that the resolution went through the Resource Policy Committee, and they are requesting comments from the Water Quality Section. The Resource Policy Committee is requesting that a letter be issued with the Resolution that further explains how to implement the recommended actions regarding the use of water flow volumes to indicate water impairment. Chair Riecke noted that implementation of such a letter is not a common practice within the Division. President Neal noted that this process was going to be a lengthy one, but that the Division could take an active role in sending letters to local and state water quality divisions and encourage them to consider hydrologic alteration as an impairment to water quality.

## **Chapter Reports**

**Host Comments** – 2020 SDAFS General Meeting Chair, Ben Batten, welcomed everyone attending the meeting and expressed his excitement over the successful pairing with the Catfish 2020 symposium. Batten acknowledged the hard work of the entire planning committee and expressed his appreciation of the major donors of the meeting. The meeting attendance is currently reported at 421, with 165 oral presentations and 51 poster presentations. Chair Batten highlighted that meeting rates for Society's members was strictly enforced, and he hoped that encouraged people to join the Society. He also noted that the report stands as written in the 2019 Briefing Book.

**Alabama** – No representative present. Report stands as written in the 2019 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Florida** - No representative present. Report stands as written in the 2019 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Georgia** - No representative present. Report stands as written in the 2019 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Louisiana** – Report stands as written in the 2019 SDAFS Briefing Book. Highlighted was the theme of their upcoming annual meeting “50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Scenic Streams Program”. Also highlighted were the 2 workshops put on this year that were based on aquatic plant ID and management, which were both a huge success. The chapter is moving forward with an alternating schedule of workshops with one year based on traditional fish topics and then the second focusing on a special topic.

**Mississippi** - Report stands as written in the 2019 SDAFS Briefing Book. Highlighted was the highest attendance of an annual meeting which occurred in 2020 with 109 attendees, 82% of which are parent society members. There were 30 oral presentations and 13 poster presentations.

**North Carolina** - Report stands as written in the 2019 SDAFS Briefing Book. Highlighted was the R-workshop that was put on at their annual meeting in 2020.

**Oklahoma** - Report stands as written in the 2019 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Potomac** – No representative present. Report stands as written in the 2019 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Puerto Rico** - Report stands as written in the 2019 SDAFS Briefing Book. Highlighted was the first dam removal in Puerto Rico history, due to research on conservation issues by Division members.

**South Carolina** – No representative present. Report stands as written in the 2019 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Tennessee** - Report stands as written in the 2019 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Texas** - Report stands as written in the 2019 SDAFS Briefing Book. Highlighted was the success of the 2019 annual meeting hosted in Galveston, TX. The Chapter has been working with Drue Winters, AFS Policy Coordinator, to send some letters of support for wildlife funding to multiple Texas Representatives. Their annual meeting hosted two workshops, one covering pond management and the second focusing on students' career development. Highlighted was their Student Endowment and its ending balance of \$465,000. It was also noted that the Texas Chapter received the AFS Outstanding Chapter Award.

**Tidewater** – No representative present. Report stands as written in the 2019 SDAFS Briefing Book.

**Virginia** - Report stands as written in the 2019 SDAFS Briefing Book. Highlighted was that the Chapter will be hosting the 2021 annual SDAFS meeting in Arlington, VA. The completion of Freshwater Fishes of Virginia was also highlighted.

**Virginia Tech** - Report stands as written in the 2019 SDAFS Briefing Book. Highlighted was their recent issues with turnover within the group and taxes not being filed. They are currently working on getting their tax-exempt status back.

### **Student Affairs Committee**

Amanda Rosenberger, chair of the Student Affairs Committee, began by thanking the previous chair, Nicole Rankin, for all of her hard work and dedication to the committee. She also thanked the Arkansas Chapter's Wes Sleeper and Joe Kaiser for all their hard work organizing the student events that took place at the 2020 SDAFS annual meeting. Amanda also reminded everyone to please attend the student poster session and noted that moving forward the grading sheets will be made available to students prior to the meeting.

### **Changes in Division By-Laws Discussion**

President Neal provided an overview of the changes that were made to the SDAFS by-laws and that have been provisionally approved by the Society constitutional consultant. He noted that most were procedural changes including defining the role of the student representative to the EXCOM and amendments to standing committees membership sizes and technical proceedings. These amended by-laws will be presented and voted upon at the 2020 SDAFS Business Meeting. Resolutions Committee Chair Dennis Riecke commented on verbiage in the by-laws that refers to a resolution committee at the AFS level which does not exist. No other comments were received.

### **Splitting Chapter Awards Discussion**

President Neal brought forward the question of splitting the Outstanding Chapter Award at the divisional level into two awards, a Large and Small Chapter Award. This would mirror the awards at the AFS level, with large chapters having over 100 members and small chapters having less than 100 members, which will allow the Division to nominate two chapters for the national level awards. Past President Bonds posed the question of how other division address this issue and if their chapter membership numbers are as skewed as SDAFS? Is the 100 member limit appropriate? President Neal noted that due to the fashion in which chapter dues are collected, the Society does not have accurate membership numbers for all chapters. Executive Director Doug Austen clarified this point noting that if chapter dues are not collected through the AFS website then those memberships are not recorded on a Society level. This brought up further discussion on emphasizing the rebate that chapters receive from AFS if dues are collected with society membership dues and the point that chapters/divisions need to work with the Society's headquarters on confirming total membership numbers. Executive Director Doug Austen agreed that the 100 membership demarcation mark may need to be reevaluated. The discussion ended with an action item of trying to figure out how to define the membership size that would divide Large and Small Chapters on a divisional level.

President Neal brought up that this discussion should happen for the student sub-units as well. Brett Timmons concurred that it would be beneficial for the smaller student sub-units to have their own category.

Both discussions will be brought up at the 2020 SDAFS Business Meeting.

### **Puerto Rico Chapter Housing Mexico AFS Chapter Discussion**

Miguel García, President of the Puerto Rico Chapter, brought forward a discussion that he had with the Mexico Chapter members. The Mexico Chapter is disbanding because it does not have a large enough active membership and it was suggested that the active members merge with the Puerto Rico Chapter. President Neal commented that there are multiple aquatic scientist located in Latin America that want to be involved in AFS, but don't have enough members to sustain an active chapter. Past President Bonds brought up the question of: Would the Puerto Rico Chapter remain within the Southern Division if this were to move forward, since Mexico was formally affiliated with the Western Division? Executive Director Austen noted that the International Section of AFS might be able to support the new group and would probably be interested. President Neal noted that Puerto Rico would "absorb" the others because it is an active chapter. Some logistical aspects, such as future meetings of the prospective newly formed group, were discussed and how that would impact the Puerto Rico Chapter member's attendance levels at the annual Southern Division meetings. Executive Director Austen mentioned that during the Governing Board Meeting they would be discussing an overall name change to American Fisheries Society, since "American" is not being inclusive to members outside of the Americas. Multiple members indicated that they would want to keep the Puerto

Rico Chapter housed in the Southern Division. There was no need for a motion in regard to this discussion. It was brought forward as a point of discussion before further meetings with those interested in merging with the Puerto Rico Chapter.

### **New Business**

A summary was provided for the upcoming 2021 annual meeting to be held in Arlington, VA, on February 18-21, 2021. President Neal noted that the annual meeting of the Society will be held in 2021 in Baltimore, Maryland.

President Neal gave a note of thanks for chapters willing to host future meetings, including South Carolina in 2022, Tennessee in 2023, and North Carolina in 2024. Executive Director Austen inquired if the hosting chapters were utilizing Shawn Johnston, AFS Meeting Manager, and it was confirmed that multiple hosts have been in contact with him. There was some discussion on distributing details of previous meetings including the proposal that is sent to Shawn Johnston and the spreadsheet with final meeting numbers.

President Neal noted that the Louisiana Chapter was recently awarded the 2026 meeting and Dennis Riecke noted that the Mississippi Chapter membership just voted in favor of holding the 2025 annual meeting, but that EXCOM has yet to receive the official request letter.

The Secretary-Treasurer with the Alligator Gar Technical Committee brought up the difficulty of their committee opening a bank account and the need to have some kind of guidance in place for future requests. Division Secretary-Treasurer Baumann noted that one issue is that each bank seems to have different requirements for the establishment of these accounts. It was suggested that it may be beneficial to create a standing Financial Technical Committee that housed a financial expert. Texas Chapter noted they have hired a financial advisor for the chapter. Executive Director Austen, noted that this is an issue across multiple divisions and needs to be an issue that the Society addresses as a whole. He will bring it up at the upcoming Governing Board Meeting.

Past President Craig Bonds made a motion to adjourn the 2020 annual EXOCM meeting and President-Elect Tom Kwak seconded the motion.

Meeting was adjourned by President Wes Neal at 1842 hours.