



American Fisheries Society

Western Division

President Pam Sponholtz, President-elect Hilda Sexauer, Vice-president Jim Bowker, Secretary-Treasurer Travis Neebling, Past-president Tina Swanson

Minutes for Executive Committee Conference Call on Date: **Thursday, January 16, 2014**

Start Time: 8:30 am AK time/ 9:30 am PT / 10:30 am MT

US Toll-Free: 1-866-910-4857

International Toll-Free: 1-719-387-5500

Passcode: 586030

1. Introductions and welcome
 - a. Attendance: Pam Sponholtz (President), Hilda Sexauer (President Elect), Jim Bowker (Vice President), Travis Neebling (Secretary-Treasurer), Tracy Wendt (Student Representative), Jim Hobbs (Cal-Neva), Paul Gerrity (CO-WY), Felipe Amezcua (Mexico), Todd Bucholz (OR), Mark LaRiviere (WA-BC), Bob Gresswell (Student Scholarship committee chair).
2. Determination of quorum
 - a. A quorum was established
3. Secretary-Treasurer report (Travis/Pam)
 - a. Review and approve December 2013 minutes
 - i. Jim moved to approve the minutes as revised, Todd seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved with no objections.
 - b. Finances Update
 - i. Travis gave a brief update on the finances. There were no major changes since last month. Travis explained that former Secretary-Treasurer Mary Buckman has agreed to take the lead on filing the Division's 2013 taxes; she has filed for a three month extension and will assist Travis with the taxes later this spring. Todd advised to make sure to keep track of the extension paperwork because the Oregon Chapter ran into some issues with the IRS relating to that. Pam pointed out an error on the budget tracking worksheet which has been corrected.
4. Draft MOU for Chapter involvement with Endowment Fund (Travis)
 - a. Travis briefly went over the draft MOU he developed for Chapters wishing to invest in the Division's endowment fund. He has received some minor revisions from Jim B. that have not yet been incorporated; Jim suggested revising the text to include all AFS Units, not just Chapters.

Mark has looked it over because the WA-BC chapter is looking to invest as much as \$40,000. He asked what restrictions there might be. Travis explained that he tried to make it as open as possible, with few restrictions. The document is just to make sure everyone is on the same page before money changes hands.

Jim B. said that there is a lot of interest in this program, referencing the Montana Chapter and the Parent Society specifically. He pointed out that without restrictions on the number of withdrawals and deposits per month, that this could become a lot of extra work for the Secretary-Treasurer.

Pam agreed that there should be some restriction on number of deposits and withdrawals; the funds should be easily available, but the endowment is not set up to be a revolving door. She suggested once per month. Travis agreed that he thought this would be a good limit.

Travis will revise the document and send it back out to the Excom by February 1 for comments, with the hope of voting to approve the document at the February conference call.

5. Update on the 2014 WDAFS/Mexico WDAFS meeting (Felipe, Hilda, Pam)
 - a. Felipe gave a brief update on the 2014 meeting in Mexico. Everything is coming together. They are working on the registration gifts at the moment and are getting ready to close the call for papers and start working on the program.
Pam asked about the final social in downtown Mazatlan. Felipe said that he is still working with the Mayor and expects that they will offset some of our costs. Juan Hernandez is the contact person; he says everything is fine and they are willing to support us. They are waiting to finalize details. Unfortunately, the mayor's mother recently passed away so there hasn't been as much contact. Next week Felipe will meet with the Department of Tourism. He is hoping they will partially support the social. He doesn't have confirmation yet, but feels good about the possibility of it happening.
 - b. Hilda gave a brief update. Approximately 100 posters and 350 oral presentations have been submitted thus far. Alison got the meeting registration up and running; please let her know if there are any issues and please let your Chapter members know that they can register. The abstract submission deadline is tomorrow.
 - c. Some meeting participants have been making their hotel reservations without going through the link on the meeting website. This is an issue because they may not be all-inclusive, they will not be able to participate in meeting socials and breaks, and we will not get credit for their stay (i.e., meet our minimum room nights in the contract). Please make your reservations through the link on the meeting website or call the hotel directly and use our group code.
 - d. Bob asked about holding rooms for Federal employees who may have to book late because of travel restrictions. Pam said that El Cid can sometimes be difficult to work with and asked how many rooms he was thinking. Bob wasn't sure, but will do some enquiries. Pam pointed out that El Cid's cancelation policy is pretty strict, but will look into it. Bob will look at speeding up things on his end. Hilda asked if rooms were set aside until a certain date; Pam will check into that.
 - e. Pam gave an update on student travel awards for the meeting. Tracy did a fantastic job of organizing and ranking all the applicants. 50 applications were received with \$7,800 available to allocate. We were able to partially fund 19 applicants with awards between \$300 and \$800. Letters were sent out to the award winners, but we are still waiting on responses from some of the winners.

Tracy asked what we will do with unaccepted funds; Pam responded that we will have to see how things go.

- f. Hilda has been bugging Dave Ward about the professional travel awards. She expects that letters will go out tomorrow.
 - g. Jim B. sent out 29 rejection letters for the student travel funds. He asked about alternates. Pam wants to wait to hear back from everyone before making a decision.
6. Update on 2015 WDAFS/AFS/ORAFS meeting in Portland (Hilda)
- a. Hilda gave a brief update on the 2015 meeting in Portland. Everything is moving along well. Dave Ward says that they are ahead of schedule. Committee Chairs have been selected and the Oregon Chapter is very organized. They may be asking the Division for \$5,000 seed money to bring the total to \$30,000, mostly to cover the May site visit. They will likely put off the request until Hilda's budget, but will see what happens with the Mexico meeting. Jim B. and Hilda will be attending the May site visit meeting, paid for by the meeting planning fund. Donna has lined out plenary speakers including Carl Schreck and Mary Edwards. They are sending out an RFP for artwork.
 - b. Jim B. asked Todd about podcasts. Steve Lochman was in charge of this for the Little Rock meeting. Todd will look into this. Jim H. said that they have looked into it for the Cal-Neva meeting; it looks pretty easy and has the potential to generate revenue.
 - c. Hilda said that they are looking to use radios in each room to reduce the number of volunteers needed. It worked well at the Little Rock meeting. Donna is still unsure of daily plenaries. Jim B. said that it is cost prohibitive and takes additional time and money to setup and take down rooms. Jim B. has provided them with a list of committee responsibilities which he hopes is helpful.
7. WDAFS review comments on final watershed assessment on Bristol Bay (Tina)
- a. Tina was not on the call. Pam said that the Division reviewed the proposal about a year ago. Bob Hughes asked them to do a review of the final document. It will be sent to the Chapter presidents with a deadline and comments will come back to the Division. The Division will draft a letter. Bob Hughes feels the review will be positive; a lot has changed since the original.
 - b. Jim B. suggested that the document also go to the members working on the mining policy statement. Pam will send it to them also.
8. Update from Student Representative (Tracy)
- a. Tracy has been focusing on the 2014 meeting. There is a schedule of events for students. She will work with Travis to get a students tab on the 2014 meeting website. She has sent out emails to the Chapter presidents encouraging students to attend and included a link to the volunteer survey.
 - b. She has been spreading the word about the student scholarship deadline (2/1) via email and Facebook. Bob has one application, but said that most come in right at the end. Last year's response was good; if we get >15 that is excellent. Bob is hoping to get more of an international response.
 - c. Tracy looked into the current awards to see if anything fit as an "Excellence in Education"-type award. Nothing exactly fit that niche. Tracy hopes to have a vote on a new award at the Mazatlan meeting. She has been working with Jessica

Mistak to write-up language for an Education Committee (standing) which would need a change in bylaws. Hilda suggested starting with a special committee as it wouldn't require a bylaws change. Paul pointed out that CO-WY just formed a new aquaculture committee; they went with a special committee so that there were less hoops to jump through. He said try it for a few years then look at making it a standing committee. Jim B. pointed out that the Hutton committee just moved to standing after 10 years.

- d. Bob reminded everyone that student scholarship applications are due on 2/1. The committee will meet the next week and forward selections to Pam and Travis. He asked about increasing the scholarship amount in 2015; this will be discussed in Mazatlan and will be included in Hilda's budget.

9. Chapter roundtable

- a. Cal-Neva – Jim H.: No report
- b. CO-WY – Paul:
 - i. They are planning for their annual meeting, March 4–6. They are hoping to increase participation from fish culture. They have a new aquaculture committee. The opening session will be joint fish culture and fish management with Dr. Jesse Trushenski as a plenary speaker. All of the fish hatcheries in WY and CO will have representatives at the meeting, which will be the first time in 15 years. They are also working on having more informational presentations; there has been concern that the meeting is becoming too technical/academic. Jim B. appreciates all the work to get aquaculture involved and to bridge that longstanding gap.
- c. Mexico – Felipe: No report
- d. WA-BC – Mark:
 - i. Mark is just starting his four year run on the Excom. They are focused on their meeting in Vancouver with outreach to their Canadian members. They are also looking ahead to the 2015 meeting in Richmond. They would like to invest in the Division's endowment fund. They are focusing on a couple of challenges; the vast geographic area of their Chapter and working more with the Feds and Canadians as their involvement has been tepid. They are looking for suggestions on how to get more member involvement; they have 800+ members. They have a number of student subunits, but one seems to be doing all the work. They will be sending several members to Mazatlan.
- e. Oregon – Todd:
 - i. Gearing up for their 2014 meeting, everything is going as planned. They are trying to fill-out committees with members. They have approved a \$10,000 loan for the 2015 meeting.

10. New or other business

- a. Jim B. stated that Montana is **expressed** interested in investing in the Division's endowment fund. He also asked about media presences at meetings. Pam said they always invite the press, but it seems like unless there is some controversy the press doesn't come. She is looking for ideas to address this.
- b. Bob discussed better communicating to students on Facebook and Twitter, and use those to highlight different aspects of the meeting. Pam agreed with this idea.

Jim B. said that Doug Austen is working on a template to engage social media and traditional media.

- c. Jim B. reminded everyone of the emerging leaders program. There is support for up to four people each year, but it is not limited to one from each Division.
- d. Travis is working with Dave Lentz to set up the new listserv. Once that is online there will be a lot of back-logged Mazatlan meeting announcements and a call for newsletter submissions. They next edition of The Tributary will hopefully be out in February (but this depends on when the new listserv is up and running).
- e. Paul asked about Todd's email regarding the Magnuson-Stevens Act. There was lots of discussion within the CO-WY Chapter. They are thinking about letters to the legislature, but thought the Division could take the lead on that. Pam agreed that a letter to support the use of sound science to restore ocean fisheries would be good to send to legislators, but was not included on the original email. Paul asked if the Chapters should act or let others take the lead. Pam will contact the Division's Environmental Policy Committee for their input and discuss this further at the February and March conference calls.

The next conference call will be on February 20. The call adjourned at 11:50 pm MST.