

American Fisheries Society Governing Board Meeting

September 28, 2019

Peppermill, Reno, NV

Minutes of the Meeting

Participants:

Governing Board Members

Jesse Trushenski – AFS President
Scott Bonar – President-Elect
Brian Murphy – 1st Vice President
Leanne Roulson – 2nd Vice President
Steve McMullin – Immediate Past President
Jackie Watson – President Western Division
Daniel Dauwalter – President-Elect Western Division
Todd Pearsons – Vice President Western Division
Heather Hettinger – President North Central Division
Jeffrey Kopaska – President-Elect North Central Division
Tom Kwak – President-Elect Southern Division
Wes Neal – President Southern Division
John Magee – President Northeastern Division
Jud Kratzer – President-Elect Northeastern Division
April Croxton – President Equal Opportunities Section
Steve Lochmann – President Fish Culture Section
Catherine Johnston – Incoming President Estuaries Section
Tom Lang – President Fish Habitat Section
Benjamin Lafrentz – President Fish Health Section
Kimberly Dibble – President-Elect Fish Habitat Section
Joe Larscheid – President Fisheries Administration Section
Rebecca Krogman – President Fisheries Information and Technology Section
Paul Venturelli – President-Elect Fisheries Information and Technology Section
Andrew Whiteley – President Genetics Section
Patrick Cooney – President-Elect International Fisheries Section (proxy for Abby Lynch)
Kevin Irons – President Introduced Fish Section
Richard Methot – President Marine Fisheries Section
Julie Claussen – President-Elect Science Communications Section (proxy for Solomon David)
Chris Myrick – President Physiology Section
Henriette “Yetta” Jager – President-Elect Water Quality Section
Dana Postlewait – President Bioengineering Section
Mark Fincel – President Education Section
Lisa Izzo – President Student Subsection of the Education Section

Guests

Bob Hughes
Brian Missildine

Non-Voting

Randy Schultz – Constitutional Consultant
Doug Austen – Executive Director

Emerging Leaders

Brooke Penaluna
Nick Kramer
Aaron Bunch
Heather Stewart

AFS Staff

Beth Beard, Dan Cassidy, Katrina Dunn, Steve Kambouris, Lauren Maza, Kurt West, Drue Winters

Minutes of the Meeting

- 1. Quorum confirmed by Schultz and called to order at 8:00 AM by Trushenski.**
- 2. Roll Call and Announcement of Proxies**
- 3. Approval of Agenda**
Agenda approved as listed by unanimous consent
- 4. Approval of Minutes – January 30 Mid-Year Governing Board Meeting in Cleveland, Ohio**
The Mid-Year Governing Board Meeting minutes stand unanimously approved
- 5. Approval of Minutes – July 16 Joint Management Committee-Governing Board Meeting**
The Joint Meeting minutes stand approved as distributed
- 6. Review of the Incoming Governing Board Breakfast**
Trushenski encouraged all Board members and their successors to attend and participate in the Incoming Governing Board Breakfast to be held on Thursday morning, 10/3

7. Report on the State of the Society and Financial Review

Executive Director Austen began the report by giving a brief history of the Society's investments and resulting actions. He stated that the goal of AFS is to make an impact in fisheries science, but programmatically there were deficiencies in AFS operations – it was not a voice on Capitol Hill, staff salaries were not up to par, and old technology and infrastructure hampered meaningful progress. In 2016, AFS adopted an “investment budget” when the society was in a relatively healthy financial state. New staff were brought on to address operating deficiencies, AFS became a sought-after voice in Washington, D.C., Continuing Education opportunities were expanded, and a new Communications Program was established that helped expand the voice of AFS in an unprecedented way. Austen acknowledged that the program expansions were great successes for the money spent, but the trade-off was that the Society spent more money than revenue.

Summary of Progress in the Following AFS Programs:

- Journals – the Special Committee on the Journals program led to changes with the establishment of editors-in-chief, adding Wiley as a co-publisher, and new AFS staff to address needs and take journals to new levels; this hasn't translated into new subscriptions yet
- Communications – AFS is distributing communications better with the e-newsletter, the website, and through social media
- Meetings Management – units and divisions are now getting better value with meeting administration; better deals are being negotiated through Shawn Johnston and Steve Kambouris
- Policy – AFS is now considered a highly sought-after group to work with in DC and has benefitted from new partnerships such as CASS (Consortium of Aquatic Science Societies) while engaging in important policy on the Hill (see Policy report)
- Staff and Infrastructure – previously staff benefits had been below level and staff had been locked in place; now the office is more efficient as a management organization

Summary of Revenue Gains and Lack of Progress:

- Membership/Education – membership numbers have been relatively stable for the past decade; there has been a low percentage of membership renewals for those who come to an annual meeting; there is a need to find out how to gain and retain members better
- Grants/Contracts – AFS has been doing well in these but could be doing better
- Publications and Policy – work is required to figure out how to change revenue streams to make these programs profitable

Questions for Translating Programs and Products into Revenue and Engagement:

- Are programs being developed responding to an accurate understanding of membership issues and needs?
- Are members aware of the AFS programs and products? How do we get these

- messages out better?
- Can we create an “attitude of giving” to support programs and products? What is the realistic potential of giving?
 - Do we need to be more aggressive in our business affairs? How do we do our meetings better and more efficiently?

Questions/Comments

Questions and discussion focused on how to reach potential members at the local chapter and section levels; it was generally agreed that unit leaders are better positioned to communicate the values and benefits of AFS membership to chapter members. Julie Classen suggested that the benefit of Section involvement be communicated to potential members, as Sections can give members a home and a place to be involved in the Society.

Financial and Investment Report

Deputy Executive Director Cassidy provided a brief update on the Society’s financial state (see **Attachments E1–E5**). The financial audit of AFS is completed every year by a private audit firm. This year, the auditor provided AFS with several documents, including the audit report (AFS’ finances are in order), a Board Letter (stating there were no issues with the completion of the audit), a Management Letter (containing considerations of internal controls and business recommendations), and exempt tax returns (AFS is normally exempt from taxes except in the case of receiving income for Wiley advertising space).

Cassidy also reported that the Audit Committee has been restarted, chaired by Tim Copeland, who is also currently the only committee member. Additional members are needed to participate in the Audit Committee. Immediate Past President McMullin recommended to the Board to solicit past secretary treasurers of units to participate in the committee since they will already have had skills and experience in this arena.

Other figures that Cassidy reported on included the 3% increase in membership dues this year; the new journal benefits for members have been catching on and funds to support staff and editors as part of that shift have been secured; Annual Meeting deposits have also shifted with the normal meeting time shifted (due to meeting in September–October in agreement with TWS); and there are staff positions still needing to be filled. Otherwise, the Society’s assets from previous years as well as its investment portfolio performance have been on track.

2020 Budget Proposal

Deputy Executive Director Cassidy briefly summarized the 2020 Budget Proposal (see **Attachments F1–F2**). The proposal presents a positive net income of \$40,000. Key assumptions include a membership growth of about 2.5%, book sales remaining at the

same level, a marginally lower journals income, Hutton funding for students, current grants in place, and other program income (such as website advertising and webinars), and also takes into account the 1870 Society donor program efforts ramping up. Some changes for the upcoming budget allow for staff benefit increases and vacant staff positions that may not be filled.

The Columbus 2020 Annual Meeting was projected to have less income and expenses than the Reno meeting due to a smaller venue. The meeting budget included staff time and slightly increased registration rates. The Columbus meeting is projected to bring in a revenue of \$329,000.

What is NOT in the Budget

These items are not included in factoring the 2020 Budget:

- AFS member dues increase
- 150th anniversary activities and sponsorship opportunities costs
- Strategic Partnerships
- Potential e-book subscriptions
- Journals page charge waivers – there is a need to moderate/mange the process better
- High school and student memberships – this has not been built up yet
- Growing Hutton – currently only a limited number of applicants can be accepted
- TIA Alliance
- Revising the AFS newsletter and associated advertising income
- Miscellaneous activities such as redeveloping the AFS website, the potential for a D.C. policy event, Continuing Education initiatives, etc.

President Trushenski informed the Board that the Management Committee had approved the budget proposal the previous day.

Questions/Comments

Questions centered around the pricing of meetings fees and registration costs, which largely depended on various factors such as location considerations. Wes Neal suggested the possibility of state agencies paying for employees' memberships so that they can save money on paying for employees meeting registration costs, but Trushenski pointed out that that would also bring with it the possibility of state agencies not being willing to send as many employees.

8. Unit Tax Exempt Status

Cassidy reported to the Board on the Unit Tax Filing Review (see **Attachment G**). Even though AFS is a non-profit organization, each unit of AFS needs to file a tax information return annually. Unfortunately communication from Bethesda has fallen through on this issue, and it was discovered that about 22 units have let their tax filing lapse (generally a reporting gap of 3 years or more according to the IRS). Due to the filing lapse, these units have fallen outside of AFS tax exemption status. AFS has retained an attorney to

help sort out this problem. The lapsed units would likely have to reapply for their own tax exemption, which could be costly. The Bethesda office is currently looking into the possibility of reincorporating these units in the future.

Questions/Comments

President Trushenski noted that the Governing Board already has a mandate to look into units with waning attendance and decide whether to reinvigorate or dissolve them, so tax reporting information and training could possibly be worked into this effort.

Many clarification questions arose about the mechanics of tax filing for various subsections and other units and what entity would be responsible for them. Cassidy suggested that it may be possible for dormant chapters can be recreated to fall under the AFS umbrella. Richard Methot asked if there was a way that AFS HQ could file on behalf of all of the units, but according to Cassidy the file requirements vary by state and the Society Procedures would have to be consulted as to whether Bethesda would have the mandate to do so. Kimberly Dibble asked if there were any penalties for units that had not filed (such as back-taxes), but Cassidy replied that the attorney was not aware of any penalties that would need to be assessed.

9. AFS Strategic Plan (2020–2025)

President Trushenski set the background for the adoption of the 2020–2025 Strategic Plan, reminding the Board that the Society goes through a Strategic Plan update every 5 years. While the core mission of AFS remains the same, the vision has been articulated differently to match the times. Under the direction of the Strategic Planning Committee, AFS Book Production Editor Debby Lehman created a new Strategic Plan document, which is intended to be a catchy, attractive document to share with AFS members, partners, donors, and others.

There was some discussion about further defining the role of partnerships and principles of investments and spending of the Society. Austen noted that management structures are not included within the Plan since it is intended to be broad and inclusive and lay the foundation for putting priorities into place in order to make the Society work. Rebecca Krogman suggested varying the format of the document to coincide with the different audiences that it is being shared with (members, partner, state affiliates, etc.) to highlight different features that would be important to those audiences.

The motion to approve the adoption of the 2020–2025 Strategic Plan was advanced by Steve Lochmann and seconded by Jeff Kopaska. With no objection to the Plan's approval, the motion passed by unanimous consent.

10. Climate Change Outreach

President-Elect Bonar spoke on the subject of climate change awareness and outreach, which is a centerpiece of his Presidential Plan of Work. Bonar shared some background information and statistics on the issue, noting that it is a problem agreed upon by multiple, reliable peer-reviewed sources, and that human causes are most responsible for climate change, the heat of which is stored mostly in the oceans. Studies found that CO² emissions need to be reduced by 2030 in order to avoid drastic consequences in the future. Bonar called for AFS to take action on this due to the many effects on fish populations, making it a significant fisheries issue.

Bonar set the following goals for his presidency to address this issue:

- Designate a special committee to update the science for policy makers and the public (Craig Paukert, Committee chair)
- Charge AFS staff and members to develop emissions reduction policy for decision makers (Drue Winters, staff)
- Combine efforts with other groups (CASS, others)

The President-Elect charged Board members to begin addressing the issue by making strides to step outside their comfort zones and talk with others about climate change, ask everyone in their units to do the same with at least 10 acquaintances, respectfully discuss what the science shows, ask the people they've talked with to talk to others, and then congratulate themselves for the work already accomplished.

Questions/Comments

President Trushenski agreed that AFS needs to partner with other societies to make a bigger impact in addressing the issue. Most of the discussion revolved around how to communicate science to lay people in an understandable and tangible way. Some suggestions included connecting with others by highlighting human stories and local impacts as well as targeting younger generations with memorable forms and slogans. For the fisheries community, it was suggested that a future climate change issue of *Fisheries* magazine as well as future symposia/workshops could be useful for spreading awareness and education.

11. Governing Board Reporting Tool Report on 2018–2019 Activities

The report on the GBRT was canceled from its scheduled spot on the agenda due to AFS Membership Services Manager Eva Przygodzki being unable to attend the Board meeting due to weather-related travel complications.

12. Books Program Special Committee Update

Executive Director Austen provided an update and background information on the Books Program Special Committee, which was formed and started meeting this past year. The special committee on books came out of the Journals retreat that took place in Reno in 2017—at that time only journals were focused on, with the decision to follow up on the books program later. The books program has been active since 1948 and has had 195 titles for sale, 95 of which are also sold as PDFs. AFS books are published in-house, making them cost effective and priced to be affordable. In recent years the number of book proposals has been down, sales have declined, and although PDFs of chapters and whole books are offered, there are currently no e-books offered, and minimal effort has been put into soliciting book proposals outside of AFS. The Special Committee was charged with the task of analyzing the state of the books program and recommending improvements to the Governing Board. Since its inception, the Committee has only met a couple times via phone conference and has no recommendations for the Board at this time.

Key issues the Committee is considering include:

- How can AFS solicit more proposals?
- How can AFS better market our books?
- Should AFS partner with commercial publishers?
- Should we offer e-books?
- Should we target new audiences?
- How do we identify new/needed titles?
- Should we add digital object identifiers (DOIs) to increase discoverability?

Austen went into more detail on what the Committee was discussing for each of these issues:

Soliciting Proposals

- A brochure was developed to highlight the benefits of publishing with AFS; the books program will need stronger advertising to attract new titles

Better Marketing Books

- Using external outlets (Amazon, etc.) has been discussed as has doing a survey of book purchasers to help identify their needs

Partnering with Commercial Publishers

- Partnering with commercial publishers could help AFS books gain visibility and sales; currently AFS books are produced in house and we retain all the profits

e-books

- This format is attractive to students as it is portable and interactive

Target New Audiences

- Pursuing lay audiences would mean heavy competition from mainstream publishers
- AFS could possibly target educational outlets outside of universities

Identifying New/Needed Titles

- We need to be more responsive to what authors are coming to us for in publishing books with us

Adding DOIs

- DOIs are appealing for potential authors as they would make their papers/books more discoverable; this wouldn't be difficult to do though there is a cost associated with it; the Book Endowment Fund could be utilized to cover the cost of this

Questions/Comments

Comments and suggestions on the books program were varied:

- Immediate Past-President McMullin advocated for using e-book formats since they are the current trend
- There were questions about how to incentivize AFS books to compete with bigger publishers—there are options for AFS book authors to receive royalties and possibly advances through the Book Endowment Fund; it was also suggested that book reviewers should be given incentives, capitalizing on the more niche subject matter
- Julie Claussen suggested that supplemental material from books should be separately available for sale (CDs, software, etc.)
- Exploring the option of selling through Amazon or other sources that students get books from was also suggested, though Wes Neal pointed out that Amazon already sells some AFS books at twice the cover price and books can also receive lower ratings for trivial things (such as using metric measurements)
- It was also suggested that symposia papers should be funneled to journals as special issues to make them easier to access, especially for international readers

13. Standard Methods Discussion

President Trushenski, who is also the chair of the Special Committee on Standard Methods, led the discussion on the adoption of Standard Methods in AFS practice. Moving to standardized methodologies would be attractive in that it provides greater confidence in fisheries science in using methods that are standardized and formally accepted by an overseeing body of professionals. Trushenski admitted that the Committee had to address questions about the process, such as who would be involved in the decision-making process, what happens when a method is approved, and what happens to those that don't use the standard methods. She noted the AOAC as an example of standardizing methods of analysis, which involves an expert panel reviewing a new method and passing it onto their board to be published in a new edition of accepted methods. The Fish Health Section has followed a similar structure in creating the Fish Blue Book, and this structure would also be similar to how the Resource Policy Committee has assessed policy statements for the Society.

Other challenges included how to secure adequate expertise to serve for the new standardized methods process, how to retain volunteers and keep them engaged. There were also questions about how to prioritize the method standardization and how to allow for those who develop new cutting edge methods. There was recognition that there could be some resistance to standardization and other unintended consequences could result – such as how the FHS Blue Book was designed to help scientists identify fish pathogens but then became used as a de facto regulation document.

Questions/Comments

Most of the comments centered around how best to communicate and promote Standard Methods to the Society, with suggestions to include notes at the front of publications about the use of standard methods and clearly stating the difference between expression of fact and opinion. President-Elect Bonar admitted that it would take some time for standard methods to be accepted, but that they would catch on over the natural progression of time and use.

14. The Future of Continuing Education

Director of Student & Professional Development, Lauren Maza, presented on the progress challenges of the Continuing Education (CE) program. Maza shared that the Education Committee has been taking a more active role in course planning while encouraging thematic 'tracks' that would tie meeting symposia to CE courses and the President's Plan of Work (e.g. Climate Change). Maza expressed the challenge of CE planning to discovering what "Phase 2" is – the link that ties together CE planning for every annual meeting to tying the courses into the President's Plan of Work, other symposia, and policy matters.

There were also lingering questions about what courses should be taught and what the main audiences should be (college/grad students?), and what would be the appropriate

mix of new courses and perennial favorites. Other questions needing to be answered were how to ensure continuous content development and how to repurpose the content for use at other Division/Chapter meetings.

Questions/Comments

Comments and suggestions were varied and included the following:

- AFS has a diverse membership, and CE courses should help to advance careers in each membership segment
- There has been a positive response to Emerging Leaders taking on webinars; it was suggested that the Emerging Leaders work with Lauren to create topics for new webinars
- The difference between a CE course and a workshop needs to be better defined
- It was suggested that a survey should be created to solicit topics that members would be interested in
- The Committee should find out what students are lacking from their university programs and what certification professionals would need, potentially creating extra incentives for employers to send their employees/students to take certification courses
- Offering a mix of soft skills and professional skills might be attractive; state agencies may be willing to pay the cost of the course and for traveling

15. AFS Policy Update

AFS Policy Director Drue Winters gave a brief update on 5 policy topics that AFS has been involved in:

Waters of the U.S. Rule (WOTUS)

- The Trump Administration is taking steps to repeal and replace the 2015 Clean Waters Act rule. At this stage, they are waiting for a new rule to be put out so the committee can respond to it.
- AFS has been working with CASS and TWS on the issue, using all opportunities to talk about the importance of clean waters and its importance to fish

Recovering America's Wildlife Act (RAWA)

- This Act addresses imperiled species; the committee is engaging AFS members to support the bill and get it passed; currently there are 118 co-sponsors to the bill
- Another Hill briefing is forthcoming

Marine Aquaculture

- The Hill briefing on Marine Aquaculture brought in experts to challenge the outdated social perceptions of aquaculture; Winters shared that the briefing

was well attended and the experts spoke in clear, non-science talk to a non-science audience

- Now for consideration is where AFS should go with this; should the Society take a position on the bill?

Pebble Mine comment period

- AFS has submitted a joint-comment letter in conjunction with the Western Division and the Alaska Chapter, responding to the government's report that lacked details and critical data
- AFS has been engaged in policy on the science side of the issue, taking a strong position that an appropriations bill involving Pebble Mine needs to be science-based

Climate

- There are currently a limited number of people willing to work on the policy side of climate science; Winters put forth the questions of how the Society should be engaged and make a statement on this issue; climate experts are needed in order to engage in the policy

Questions/Comments

Both President Trushenski and Jackie Watson expressed appreciation for working with Winters on policy engagement. Kevin Irons stated that as being a part of a state agency, it can be difficult to engage in policy issues unless they are invited to the table, asking if there are opportunities for state agencies to be invited. Winters responded that state agency employees can supply information, but currently the resources are not in place to fly people into D.C.

16. Membership Committee Report and Strategic Partners Program

President-Elect of the International Fisheries Section Patrick Cooney and President of the Student Subsection of the Education Section Lisa Izzo presented the report of the Membership Committee before discussing the proposal of the Strategic Partners Program. The Membership Committee met monthly, and all of the motions that it put forward have been passed – mostly in the change of membership level names (from Young Professionals to Early Career Professionals, etc.). Changes to the Early Career Professionals (ECP) led to increased numbers in that category of the past 5 years, and the Society voting level of that group is comparable to all other membership levels. The conversion of ECP to regular membership is increasing, but students are also remaining at the student level longer.

Cooney and Izzo put the question forward of what else AFS can do to engage ECP and Student members and offered the following suggestions:

- Offer short term volunteer opportunities (i.e. micro-volunteering)
- Create a robust online career center

- Offer more success skills courses targeted at those particular career levels

Questions/Comments

The majority of discussion focused on how to move members from the Student level to the ECP level and beyond and what limits were in place (the website currently states that there is a 7-year max limit on members identifying as Students). Jeff Kopaska posited that it would be preferable to have an individual remain a student longer to keep their AFS membership and their involvement rather than risk losing them and trying to get them back later. However, Paul Venturelli pointed out that this could lead to a broken system of “cheaters and suckers” where some can abuse the grace-period while honest members are taken advantage of. This will need to be further looked into.

There were also questions about how students can change their membership type, with the preference for students changing it themselves online, though there was some question about this process being automatic.

Strategic Partners Program (see **Attachments K1–K2**)

Cooney spoke on the inefficiencies of the current Institutional levels of membership; the current naming system makes it difficult to determine what the levels mean and if they are higher or lower than others. They also present a challenge in that there is no active engagement with AFS leadership and no clear growth path to increase membership levels; those institutional members are at risk of being lost.

Several points of direction were proposed:

- Establish a Strategic Partners Program
- Enhance the benefits program
- Redefine institutional membership based on growth pathways
- Establish a Partnership Advisory Council

There is also a need to redefine the “affiliate membership” title, and a possible change could be providing training/standardization opportunities for the members. Cooney proposed changing membership level names to Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Sustaining. With the new pricing structure and discounted rates, these changes are projected to earn AFS another \$10,000.

Questions/Comments

There were questions about the timing of implementing these changes (the target is January 2021) and if affiliate membership has been in decline, to which Cooney responded that there has been questions and disgruntled attitudes among vendors, so these changes are a response to head off setbacks. Julie Claussen asked about the possibility of signing multi-year memberships and how it would affect

Canadian memberships; Austen responded that this would have to be looked into further.

17. 150th Celebration and Columbus Meeting Planning

Columbus Planning Committee chair Steve Lochmann led a brief presentation on the progress of the Committee in preparing for the 150th celebration. According to Lochmann, the Committee met monthly via conference calls and has planned to use *Fisheries* to talk about the Society's 150th anniversary. A special exhibit has also been planned for units and sections to put historical fisheries items on display. There will be special plenary speakers and symposia to specifically address the anniversary celebration. Lochmann also shared the vision of having a panel of fisheries professionals from different generations talking about their experiences and creating a dialogue on the past and future of fisheries; nominations are needed for panelists who would be a good fit.

Other activities meant to engage membership include the nomination of 150 interesting fish and also a timeline on the website that members can add to – this would then be on display in the hall at the meeting. The idea for the celebration is to have activities that would be ongoing through the year and that would culminate at the meeting. Additionally, the 150th anniversary celebrations are an opportunity to reach out to the public; there may be opportunities in some meeting events or symposia for local school teachers to get involved in.

Questions/Comments

President-Elect Bonar praised Lochmann for his work leading the planning committee. There was a lot of discussion about the difficulty of choosing 150 fish to nominate, to which Austen replied that it was being taken too seriously, and it was intended as an activity to have fun with. He also suggested that every state fish should be listed. Kim Dibble asked if there would be more opportunities for remote (online) attendance in Columbus. Austen replied that a well thought-out business model still needs to be put in place to execute that, though the technology is there.

18. 1870 Society and AFS Development Programs

AFS Development Director Katrina Dunn gave an overview of Society contributions, reporting a steady increase in donor funds. Updates are broken down by program:

1870 Society (began in April/May 2019)

- 25 individuals are a part of the 1870 Society, with 15 of those being Founding Members (the 1870 Society is not limited to AFS members)

Hutton

- \$119,605 was raised to support 29 scholars this year
- Additional funding is being sought after to evaluate the program

AFS-TWS Meeting Sponsorship

- The sponsorship goal for the Reno meeting was \$100,000; the actual amount raised was \$84,882 due to challenges with regional/local support, time and availability, time of year, and overlapping sponsors and partners with TWS

2020 Meeting Sponsorship

- The sponsorship goal for the Columbus meeting is \$110–114K; the strength is on the time and the ability to start the process earlier

Outreach and Partners

- Outreach to corporations (strategic partners, exhibitors, non-traditional partners) has increased
- Non-members are being recruited to be a part of the 1870 Society; a mail campaign of booklets and bookmarks has begun in an effort to increase awareness of AFS programs

Strategic Partners Program

- (Previously discussed above)

Questions/Comments

Tom Lang prompted the discussion of retired members having legacy plans to give to AFS. First Vice President Brian Murphy suggested looking into the Society's membership life insurance policy that used to be active as a possible blueprint. Retirement and will/estate planning could also be another type of CE course offered to members.

19. World Council of Fisheries Societies and World Fisheries Congress 2024 Update

Patrick Cooney gave an update on the bid for the International Fisheries Section to host the 9th World Fisheries Congress (WFC) meeting in 2024 (see **Attachment N**). The upcoming 8th WFC meeting will be hosted in Adelaide, Australia in 2020. Last year, the Governing Board approved the motion to allow the IFS to put in a bid to host the 2024 WFC in the USA; this process will be led by IFS with guidance by the Society. Next steps include releasing RFI to various convention centers and visitors' bureaus, select sites, and submit a formal bid to the WFC. To continue with this work, the following motion was proposed:

Motion: The Governing Board approves continued work by the International Fisheries Section on the proposal to host the Ninth World Fisheries Congress

with the understanding that the final full bid package would be reviewed and approved by the Management Committee prior to submission to the World Council of Fisheries Societies (deadline of January 15, 2020).

The proposal was seconded by Richard Methot. Though general support for this motion was expressed, there was also concern that hosting WFC9 could split attendance of the 2024 AFS meeting in Honolulu. There was much discussion about the location of meeting, with some suggesting WFC should take place in Hawaii and possibly follow or precede the AFS annual meeting there to make travel easier, but this did not seem to be financially viable and would make for long absences for attendees of both meetings. However a West Coast location seemed preferable due to the number of Asian countries participating.

The motion was passed by unanimous consent.

20. Future AFS Annual Meetings

Executive Director Austen gave a brief update on upcoming AFS meetings being planned over the next 5 years:

2020 – Columbus

- This is the Society's 150th anniversary meeting, the challenge being that there is less time to prepare from the current meeting, since Reno began a month later than normal
- AFS will also host the International Large Rivers Symposium; presentations on the topic of rivers worldwide are invited (see **Attachment L**)

2020 – WFC; Adelaide, Australia

2021 – Baltimore

- This is jointly hosted by multiple chapters and also the Northeastern and Southern Divisions of AFS

2022 – Spokane, Washington

2023 – Grand Rapids, Michigan

2024 – Honolulu, Hawaii

- The challenge for this meeting is that there is no AFS host chapter in Hawaii
- This meeting will hopefully give opportunity to reengage and reignite an interest in fisheries in Hawaii

2022 – JASM (Joint Aquatic Sciences Meetings), Grand Rapids, Michigan

- The first meeting took place in 2014 with about 3,000 attendees
- AFS will host the second meeting in 2022; 8 more societies are now involved, and attendance is projected to be around 5,000

- A planning team is currently in place; they will be putting together a program team
- The meeting should be a great opportunity for aquatic societies to work together and pool resources and research; AFS will be benefitting from members coming to either JASM or the annual meeting, so there shouldn't be a concern of the Society losing revenue

21. Meetings Oversight Committee Revitalization

President Trushenski talked briefly about the reformation of the previously defunct Meetings Oversight Committee, citing a growing need for a body to provide insight and guidance for the types of meetings that the Society plans, as well as the themes surrounding the meetings. First Vice President Brian Murphy and Second Vice President Leanne Roulson also added to the discussion. Roulson advocated for the continued discussion of why do we meet and what are the goals, emphasizing the recommendations to have an active engagement for local representatives and preserving the rotational structure of the meetings. Murphy added that AFS meeting planning has become a Top-Down structure where a location is chosen and a local team is needed to help plan; the approach used to be Bottom-Up with having an enthusiastic local team wanting to host and make the meeting happen ... a middle ground between the two is needed. Trushenski also added that the Society has good meeting planning resources in Shawn Johnston and Steven Kambouris on staff, but the Governing Board hasn't provided them with good guidance about what they are looking for in a meeting.

Richard Methot suggested that the Committee will need to address how symposia is organized and selected, as the current process seems more chaotic. Trushenski alluded to the possibility of forming subcommittees to tackle these individual issues, though more members are needed to join the Committee first.

22. Proposed Annual Meeting Sponsorship Committee (Attachment M)

Cassidy and Dunn shared some background information on the proposed committee: annual meetings usually have very different levels of engagement based on the meeting location and the local team; this creates a challenge for fundraising and varying levels of finance. The proposal is to create a National Sponsorship Committee to help build a broader base of support for the annual meetings by utilizing existing relationships throughout the country. In the past, the Sponsorship Committee has typically been a few local members and AFS staff, but a strong base and a diverse committee is needed to help reach fundraising goals. As has been seen in past successful meetings, those involved were committed to starting the process a few years out and build upon it, utilizing their expertise. This new committee would also provide an opportunity for young or early career members looking to get involved in the Society. Sixteen participants would be the minimum number required to make the committee effective.

There was general support for this initiative among the Board. President-Elect Bonar will appoint a Special Committee to this task as AFS President, so no action was required on the part of the Board at this time.

23. Report of the Constitutional Consultant

Constitutional Consultant Randy Schultz brought forward two motions for the Board to vote on: 1) to accept the Joint Statement of AFS and TWS, and 2) to vote on the Investment Committee proposed motions.

1) Joint Statement of AFS and TWS (see **Attachment O)**

The Joint Statement is to be put forward at the historic Joint Meeting in Reno, with both societies pledging to commit to sound science and the appointment competent and diverse professionals to work towards conserving natural resources.

Jeff Kopaska moved to accept the motion, seconded by Steve Lochmann. With no objection, the motion passed by unanimous consent.

2) Proposed Motions of the Investment Committee (see **Attachment O-1)**

In their annual Governing Board report, the Investment Committee provided several motions for the Board to vote on:

Recommended Motion 1: Unrestricted funds in the Reserve Fund shall be sufficient to cover 1 year of Society operations (based on the average of the previous 3 years).

Recommended Motion 2: The Executive Director shall prepare balanced calendar-year operational budgets as a minimum, and excess revenue shall be contributed to the Reserve Fund for long-term capital appreciation.

Recommended Motion 3: The AFS Investment Committee's responsibilities shall include increased focus on oversight of AFS investment and Reserve Fund withdrawal decisions.

Recommended Motion 4: AFS staff shall provide the Investment Committee, the Audit Committee and the Management Committee with monthly financial reports that also include discrimination of restricted and unrestricted assets in the Reserve Fund.

President Trushenski provided some background, stating that the Management Committee had approved to recommend to the Board to refrain from voting on these motions during this meeting, as the motions have come in short order and would have far-reaching effects on the Society. Therefore additional time is required and further information needs to be ascertained from the Investment Committee.

Substitute Motion: In agreement with the Management Committee's recommendation, Tom Kwak moved to make a Substitute Motion for the Governing Board to recommend to the Investment Committee to propose these motions to the Management Committee, to be implemented with the consultation of the Investment Committee and the Audit Committee. The Substitute Motion was seconded by Heather Hettinger.

Discussion

It was agreed that the issue of having more financial transparency contained in these motions was important and should be voted on, but also that the timing for voting on the motions was not appropriate given the significance they will have on how the Society does business, and more information and discussion would be needed, and a new Management Committee was about to be empaneled. The vote being sent on to the Management Committee was also favored since the MC is the body that makes Society financial decisions.

As a member of the Investment Committee, Past AFS President Bob Hughes spoke up in favor of the motions, saying that 20 years ago the Society was in a similar situation of being in a deficit and the Society was nearly broke. The Investment Committee has tracked the trends of the last five years of AFS being in debt; Hughes asked how much longer can AFS take money out of the investment fund and where will the society get its money when it's gone?

Director Austen respectfully disagreed with Hughes' assessment that the Society's financial state is the same as it was 20 years ago, stating that the organization's finances were a mess when he came on board as Executive Director. Now the AFS office is tracking expenses and is better equipped to make prudent decisions about where the ship is heading.

Rebecca Krogman brought up the issue of timeliness with such an important issue, advocating the addition of a deadline into the Substitute Motion. Trushenski stated that a deadline of no later than the December Management Committee call had been discussed in the Management Committee meeting. In order to add the deadline to the Substitute Motion, the current Substitute Motion had to be withdrawn. Scott Bonar moved to withdraw the current Substitute Motion, April Croxton seconded. With no objection the first Substitute Motion was withdrawn.

Substitute Motion: Wes Neal proposed the Substitute Motion for the Governing Board to recommend to the Investment Committee to propose these motions to the Management Committee, to be implemented with the consultation of the Investment Committee and the Audit Committee with a deadline of no later than the mid-year Governing Board meeting (January 22–24, 2020). Krogman seconded.

With no objection, the Substitute Motion passes; the Investment Committee's motions will be referred to the newly empaneled Management Committee.

24. President's Report

President Trushenski gave a very brief report on her time in office, citing the important work that AFS has done over the past year with the Journals program revitalization, Strategic Planning, the partnership with AFWA, the start of the Books program revitalization, the historic Joint Meeting with TWS, and more.

25. Report on the Executive Director's Annual Review

President Trushenski again made a few brief comments about Executive Director Austen's performance review, that feedback had been solicited, an in-camera review had been done in the Management Committee meeting the day prior, and that Austen would be receiving feedback later in the week.

26. Approval of President-Elect Bonar's Plan-of-Work (Attachment P)

President-Elect Bonar briefly summarized the four, high priority areas of focus for his presidency:

- 1) Increase AFS development of standards for the fisheries profession
- 2) Preside over the 150th Anniversary and associated celebrations
- 3) Increase AFS engagement and interactions with other professional societies on large-scale issues such as climate change
- 4) Continue the work of past presidents to encourage outreach and communication of fisheries science by fisheries professionals to the general public and policy makers

Brian Murphy motioned to accept the plan of work; Patrick Cooney seconded.

There was no further discussion and no objection. The motion passes.

27. Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Austen gave a brief report on office activities, referring to the Director's Plan of Work (see **Attachment Q**) for specific details. Austen stated that his goal was to tie together Society objectives (with the Strategic Plan) and the President's Plan of Work to make a comprehensive plan of where we are going and said that there are good opportunities going forward. He also admitted that there was an element of unpredictability in the Plan of Work and fisheries science in general with the U.S. presidential election season coming next year.

President-Elect Bonar expressed appreciation for Austen's work with the Co-op units. Tom Lang also praised Austen for his work in securing multi-state grants, which displays that strong reputation AFS has.

28. Additional Old Business

NONE

29. New Business

Jeff Kopaska had two items to bring to the Board's attention:

- 1) The Membership Committee will be taking time to look over the membership data and would like to create a *Fisheries* article from the data; having a bigger team to help with the work would be welcome.
- 2) Kopaska asked the Board to be cognizant of the fact that when April Croxton finishes her term as president, the Society will have had 20 consecutive presidents who have not spent the balance of their careers in state agencies.
 - Bonar responded that all recent presidents have had state backgrounds, though probably not at the time of election, so perhaps this information needs to be stated better

Governing Board Meeting Adjourned at 4:30 PM