



American Fisheries Society
Joint Governing Board and Management
Committee Meeting
Wednesday, December 16, 2020

Summary of Action Items:

1. Baltimore meeting survey of Governing Board will assess possible impacts of meeting date change on unit officer transitions and also to ascertain other challenges with the new meeting date.
2. Climate change – Letter to Biden administration will be developed by Drue Winter and Austen.
3. High School membership - Murphy will distribute Sutton memo to the Governing Board and establish an intersectional committee to address high school membership.
4. High School content for the AFS website will be developed as part of the intersectional committee with support from Education Section and the Student Subsection.
5. Establish working group of ESAB, Education Section and AFS staff to explore development of a webtool to provide information on undergraduate programs.
6. Identify volunteers to participate in the Strategic Positioning working group. Follow-up email will be sent to the Governing Board and specific people will be identified to solicit participation.

Participants

Governing Board Members

Society Officers

President	Brian Murphy
President-Elect	Leanne Roulson
First Vice President	April Croxton
Second Vice President	Cecil Jennings
Past President	Scott Bonar
Constitutional Consultant (non-voting)	Randy Schultz
Executive Director (non-voting)	Doug Austen

Division Officers

Western Division	Todd Pearsons, President
Western Division	Dan Brauch, President Elect
Southern Division	Cindy Williams, President
Southern Division	Jason Olive, President Elect
North Central Division	Joe Conroy, President
North Central Division	Mark Fincel, President Elect

Northeastern Division
Northeastern Division

Ed Hale, President
Patrick Shirey, President Elect

Section Presidents

Bioengineering
Canadian Aquatic Resources
Early Life History
Education
Student and Early Career Prof. Subsection
Estuaries
Equal Opportunities
Fish Culture
Fish Habitat
Fish Health
Fish History
Fisheries Administration
Fisheries Information and Technology
Fisheries Law
Fisheries Management
Genetics
Imperiled Aquatic Species Section
International Fisheries
Invasive and Introduced Fisheries
Marine Fisheries
Native Peoples Fisheries
Physiology
Science Communications
Socioeconomics
Water Quality

Dan Giza, President
Caleb Hasler, President
absent
Melissa Wuellner, Proxy, for Trent Sutton,
Macey Rowan, President
Catherine Johnston, President
Shivonne Nesbit, President
Michelle Walsh, President
Kim Dibble, President
Tom Loch, President
absent
Gary Whelan, Proxy, for Jim Fredericks, President
Paul Venturelli, President
absent
Jeff Koch, President
Marlis Douglas, President
absent
Karin Limburg, President
Marybeth Brey, President
Jessica Miller, President
absent
absent
Sean Landsman, President
Gabiella Marafino, Proxy, for Mackenzie Mazur, Pres.
Yetta Jager, President

Emerging Leaders

Corbin Hilling
Mike Lawrence

AFS Staff

Dan Cassidy
Lauren Maza
Shawn Cassidy
Drue Winters
Eva Przygodzki
Beth Beard
Jackie Machado

Minutes of the Meeting

(note that a recording of the meeting is available upon request to the AFS office)

1. **Quorum establish** by Randy Schultz and the meeting was called to order at 3:03 p.m. by AFS President Brian Murphy
2. **Agenda approved** without changes
3. **Review of meeting minutes** from the Incoming Governing Board meeting on September 24, 2020. Moved that they be accepted by Bonar; 2nd by Roulson. Approved with unanimous consent.
4. **AFS 2020 annual meeting in Baltimore** – Discussion of proposed date change.
 - a. Review of Baltimore meeting planning and general discussion of 2020 Virtual Annual Meeting (VAM). Cassidy reviewed the current meeting planning situation (Attachment A) including new contract with cvent for meeting management software package. Various topics were discussed including:
 - i. Although the meeting resulted in a financial gain for AFS the inability to accurately assess the true costs of staff time and other financial impacts of the transition from in-person in Columbus to virtual causes the true financial results to be difficult to ascertain
 - ii. The remote participation nature of the VAM did provide for substantial virtual attendance in some events (e.g. Section meeting and some workshops) at a level far greater than we have experienced with live events.
 - b. The current situation with Covid-19 vaccinations and anticipated level of coverage by the early August scheduled date for the annual meeting would make holding an in-person meeting unsafe and possibly in violation of local, state or federal CDC guidance for large gatherings. Motivated by the desire to host an in-person meeting, AFS meeting staff approached the host hotel about options for a delayed meeting. One workable option was available for November 6-10, 2021. Other options either didn't provide sufficient delay to be considered of value (early September) or moved into early 2022 where it would compete directly with AFS chapter and division meetings as well as causing substantial planning and workload management issues with the May 2022 JASM conference.
 - c. Issues identified with the November 6-10 date include overlapping with the Coastal and Estuarine Research Foundation (CERF) biennial meeting currently scheduled for November 7-11 in Richmond but which is being moved to a fully virtual format. Other issues raised by Governing Board members included: (a) Need to address unit leader officer transitions that are suggested to be frequently tied with the annual meeting, (b) student exam date conflicts prior to Thanksgiving break, (c) mid-semester challenges by students with travel, (d) state agency budget issues and possible travel restrictions still in place from Covid-19 effects.
 - d. Positive aspects of the move to November, particularly with the inclusion of virtual participation, include possible increased access by state agency staff encumbered by travel or time limitations. Not being impacted by field season challenges that the August date seems to present. It was also recommended that we fully include

- virtual participation options in addition to in-person events (i.e., employ a hybrid meeting model).
- e. Question posed as to whether we would prefer to host a fully virtual meeting in August or a possible hybrid event in November. Several suggested that the possibility of an in-person meeting would be preferred.
 - f. Are there decision criteria for moving from in-person to virtual?
 - i. Social distancing regulations, if in effect, would make an in-person meeting not workable.
 - ii. Maryland or Baltimore regulation on crowd size limitations
 - iii. Safety of attendees will be the primary criteria.
 - iv. Will there be any financial risk of moving to November and then needing to cancel due to Covid-19? The hotel is open to cancellation with rescheduling to 2025 where AFS currently does not have any meeting location selected. The hotel is asking that we don't make any decision until April. Complete cancellation with not alternative date scheduling would result in substantial cancellation costs to AFS. However, these current options have been presented by the Hilton but need to be verified with the Marriott.
 - g. Required approval for move to November. This is generally a decision made by the Governing Board. Constitutional Consultant Randy Schultz stated that such a change in the authority of the AFS and noted that Article IV of the Constitution states that, "In an emergency, the Management Committee may cancel or change the place of an annual Society Meeting". A draft motion was developed by Schultz
 - h. **Proposed Motion:** Governing Board approval to allow the AFS officers leeway to change the dates of the 2021 annual AFS meeting to November 6 – 10, 2021.
 - i. **Background:** In order to create an on-site meeting, the AFS officers may need to work quickly with the Baltimore venues to change the annual meeting date. If such occurs, there may not be time for consultation with the Governing Board.
 - ii. **Discussion:**
 1. This is a major issue and, as such, being presented to the Governing Board on such short notice does not support good decision making. Does this establish a precedent for making similar momentous decisions without due respect for the process?
 2. This was suggested as more accurately being reflective of unprecedented times and such decisions are quite unique and not to be anticipated in the future.
 3. Can we verify and give more full consideration the full suite of options? Response was that the motion does not make an immediate decision but, rather, allows the Officers to make a decision after more consideration.
 4. **Jason Olive moves the motion stated above. Seconded by Whelan.**
 5. Request that the officers consider impacts on chapters and divisions on unit officer transition and unit meetings early in 2022. Todd Pearsons requested that AFS research such impacts. Austen stated that staff will conduct a survey of units to determine such impacts. This will also be impacted if the

units have the officer changes in their constitution as opposed to procedures or other more flexible documents.

6. **Motion approved with two abstentions** (Conroy and Limburg)
 7. It was suggested that a full membership survey might be helpful in better understanding the impacts of the meeting date change
5. **Agenda modification** – Due to the substantial time invested in the annual meeting date change, the agenda was modified to provide only a brief summary on “Strengthening Unit Collaboration and Support”. Cassidy provided a brief overview of the working group that has been addressing the chapter affiliate issue but that has expanded discussions to other issues relevant to the relationship between units and AFS. A full report will be presented in early 2021.
6. **Virtual Annual Meeting Revenue Sharing Proposal**
- a. Cassidy reviewed a proposal for revenue sharing from the Virtual Annual Meeting that reflects a modification from the original MOU that was based upon an in-person meeting (Attachment C). This has been presented to NCD and Ohio Chapter for discussion and review.
 - b. Discussion: Why the change from the original MOU? The revised revenue sharing proposal reflected the substantial shift in duties from the Ohio Chapter and NCD to AFS staff. Essentially, once the meeting was moved to virtual, other than the Program Committee, all local planning committees were terminated and little to no additional work was contributed by those committees to the VAM.
 - c. **Motion to accept the revenue sharing proposal as specified in Attachment C** made by Conroy; 2nd by Roulson. Question was raised as to the appropriateness of this being considered by the Governing Board as opposed to the Management Committee. Schultz stated that because this is defined as a joint meeting, this body encompasses the Management Committee and is thus an appropriate motion. It was also stated that this motion applies only to this 2020 Virtual Annual Meeting and no other event. Any future meetings that are held virtually would require a new MOU. This is in effect only applicable to the 2020 Virtual Annual Meeting and no other AFS annual meeting.
 - d. **Motion adopted by unanimous consent.**
7. **Liability Insurance update** (Cassidy)
- a. New policy coverage (2021) will not require unit contribution of \$150/year. The policy provides sufficient coverage for unit events such that there will be no bills for insurance sent out for 2021.
8. **Actions supportive of Brian Murphy’s Presidential Plan of Work** (Attachment D). Murphy will focus, for this discussion, on two key components of this POW
- a. Task 1: Increase public visibility and trust in the work of our profession and of our Society

- i. Statement of the world's aquatic societies (Bonar) – reported on the international press pickup on the statement as well as the Arizona Republic (largest newspaper in Arizona) and subsequently in *U.S. Today*. It has also been included in *Nature Briefings* and possibly *Nature*.
 - ii. Climate Ambassador Program (CAP) – initial orientation meeting for CAP was completed this morning. Full information on CAP, including short introductions of all 30 participants, is found on the AFS Climate Change website (www.climate.fisheries.org)
 - iii. Climate change review paper (Craig Paukert et al.) is to be submitted to Fisheries before the end of the year. The Climate Change Policy Statement is still in progress and needs substantial work, particularly with marine recommendations. AFS needs to re-establish a working group to specifically address marine issues. It is important to establish emissions as a leading and fundamental component of any AFS statement.
 - iv. Letter on World Statement to the Biden administration. Drue Winters will work with Austen on letter to be sent in early 2021.
 - v. AFS needs to continuously push the primary need of emissions reductions as a key issue at the federal and, importantly, the state level where there still seems to be pushback in many places.
 - vi. AFS needs to better define how to select the key issues that will be addressed as policy priorities in the new administration. For example, offshore wind will be likely a high priority in the Biden administration and will have potentially significant fisheries impacts.
 - vii. Standing Committee on Climate Change has been established by a vote of the membership. Murphy is seeking additional comments on the committee charge.
- b. Task 2. To redouble our efforts to increase diversity and improve equity and inclusion within or profession and our Society.
- i. Brooke Penaluna chairs the newly established committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI). She has been charged to help develop accountability measures for the society potentially based, at least in part, on the Fisheries article authored by Penaluna and others (Penaluna et al published in *Fisheries* in the August 2017 issue)
 - ii. Shivonne Nesbit reported on Equal Opportunities Section (EOS) activities during the Diversity and Inclusion Day from the Virtual Annual Meeting. A full report and recommended actions will be provided on the EOS website and shared with all AFS units as an effort to encourage them to apply best practices.
 - iii. High School Membership – Melissa Wuellner reported on Education Section discussions on High School Membership. Recommendation is that this is an issue that impacts multiple AFS units and an Ad hoc inter-sectional committee should be convened to identify actions (a full response was submitted by Trent Sutton to President Murphy). This will likely be a multi-year effort to

achieve reasonable success. **(Action – Murphy will distribute Sutton memo to the Governing Board).**

- iv. High School membership is currently not on the AFS web page. It was noted that we have no content, no information or no benefits listed on the webpage. Macey Rowan and the Student Subsection offered to provide assistance on the intersectional committee. NED (Ed Hale) noted that the MATES program in New Jersey is a high school program focused specifically on fisheries training for high school students.
- v. Development of database or other informational tool to collect university program information and allow interested students and parents to search for programs and link to information. This could be a joint project of ESAB and Education Section.
- vi. AFS needs a better “landing page” on the AFS website that provides a much better introduction to the fisheries profession and basic information about education, jobs, etc.
- vii. Suggestion that AFS explore the 4H and Extension Programs to determine if there are any existing programs that might support AFS high school membership. Others noted that extension activities and 4H have declined and have become less relevant in recent years.
- viii. AFS should continue to evaluate any business and legal issues associated with the high school membership.
- ix. Cindy Williams reported that the Steve Harvey program is a good example of programs that expose youth to fisheries and careers in fisheries and aquatic ecology. Cindy also noted that many aquariums have outreach programs focused on youth.

9. Mid-Year Governing Board meeting set for March 3-4, 2021, with a 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. EST plan for the two sessions

Attachment A – Baltimore meeting update

Background & Planning

- Meeting Dates August 8-12, 2021
- Inner Harbor Baltimore, MD, Hilton and Marriott Hotels
- Planning and program teams in place with representatives from
 - Southern, Northeastern Divisions; Potomac and Mid-Atlantic Chapters
- 150th Activities - carried over from 2020 Columbus Meeting (Virtual)
- AFS Officers, Planning Team, Staff regularly monitoring situation ICW hotel and service providers



2021 Baltimore Meeting

Key Considerations under Covid-19
MC/GB Call December 16, 2020

Meeting Format

- Working towards a hybrid meeting format
- New contract with Cvent,
 - premier integrator of abstract management / attendee experience
- Immense uncertainty makes 2021 planning as challenging as last year
 - Vaccine distribution, public health guidance, agency travel restrictions, social distancing, group congregation limits, etc

Contractual Obligations

- Hotel agreements allow for deferment to 2025
 - Request a decision by no sooner than April
- Room block and F&B adjustments exist
 - With lower anticipated attendance, hotels scale back meeting space
- Service providers
 - A smaller meeting may carry higher pp fixed costs- audio-visual (based on meeting rooms); registration contractor; abstract system; child-care; etc
- Pivoting to an all-virtual meeting, should be less taxing on staff
 - Using Cvent tools; with staff prior experience; Integration with iMIS

Financial Considerations

- The 2020 Virtual meeting was financially successful
 - income proportionally same as 2019 80% reg; 10% each exhibit / sponsors
 - lower direct costs
- Yet, challenges exist for 2021
 - Attendance projections / speaker coordination / Live vs. Recorded content
 - Time zones / Length of meeting / time of year / virtual meeting fatigue???
 - Maintaining relationships with sponsors, exhibitors, Strategic Partners
- ~\$60,000 initial investment in Cvent / iMIS integration
 - Most costs amortized over 5-years; system available for Units' meetings

Next Steps

- Survey members / key partners
- Continue situation monitoring
- Consider alternate 2021 dates
- Prepare for Hybrid event, with possibility of full Virtual
- Welcome your input and ideas!



Attachment B – Annual Meeting Location History

	City	WD	NCD	NED	SD
2027	TBD				
2026	Columbus		X		
2025	TBD				
2024	Honolulu, HI	X			
2023	Grand Rapids, MI		X		
2022	Spokane WA	X			
2021	Baltimore, MD			X	X
2020	Columbus, OH		X		
2019	Reno, NV (w/TWS)	X			
2018	Atlantic City, NJ			X	
2017	Tampa, FL				X
2016	Kansas City, MO		X		
2015	Portland, OR	X			
2014	Quebec, Canada			X	
2013	Little Rock, AR				X

Attachment C – Revenue sharing proposal from 2020 Virtual Annual Meeting

Topic: Virtual Annual Meeting net revenue share

Background. The 2020 annual meeting was held virtually this year in response to the coronavirus shutdown of many aspects of the U.S. economy and the inability for many fisheries students and professionals to attend meetings. The virtual meeting was reasonably successful generating \$200,000 of net revenue on \$254,000 of income and \$54,000 of expense. By comparison, the 2020 budgeted meeting net revenue was \$400,000+ (reflecting higher anticipated attendance pertaining to 150th celebration and activities and significantly more sponsorship and exhibits income) and also included a significant portion of meeting staff time).

AFS wishes to recognize work of the Ohio Chapter and other groups contributing to both in-person meeting planning and helping organize the virtual event. The memorandum of understanding (MOU) AFS completed with the Ohio Chapter and North Central Division defined sharing meeting net revenue at 10% to the Ohio Chapter, 5.5% to the North Central Division and 4.5% to the other divisions.

Applying the agreed on allocation percentages to the actual virtual meeting net revenue, the calculated revenue share comes to \$40,000 based on \$200,000 of net revenue (exclusive of any staff costs which comes to \$100,000 for the meetings staff or \$162,000 for all staff). Staff is proposing a revision to net revenue share as defined below recognizing the contributions of the Ohio Chapter and NCD while also taking into account AFS’s financial challenges this year.

Unit	Applying the MOU		Proposed Revised Revenue Share
	Allocation % to 2020	\$ amount	
Ohio Chapter	10%	\$20,000	\$8,000
NCD Division	5.5%	\$11,000	\$2,000
Other 3 Divisions (a)	4.5%	\$9,000	\$6,000
Clemson coop (b)	0.0%	n/a	\$1,000
Totals		\$40,000	\$17,000

Notes

- (a) 2020 was the first year under the new Divisional net-revenue share model and given the circumstances, it is proposed all divisions share equally in net revenue for contributions to virtual meeting planning and development.
- (b) Arron Bunch and other members of the Coop unit contributed importantly to meeting planning

Attachment D – Actions on Brian Murphy Presidential Plan of Work

Presidential Plan of Work Review of status, re-evaluation of priorities and discussion of issues needing expansion, modification or deletion

Four Key Priority Areas of Focus:

1. To increase public visibility and trust in the work of our profession and of our Society.
2. To redouble our efforts to increase diversity and improve equity and inclusion within our profession and our Society.
3. To help AFS members further their careers by: a) developing or enhancing critical professional skills; and b) enhancing the benefits of professional certification.
4. To move forward from research to planning and action related to rebranding needs for AFS as we celebrate our 150th anniversary.

Please note that this is a working document and the current entries are only meant as a starting point for conversation.

1. To increase public visibility and trust in the work of our profession and of our Society		
Review Area	Description	Next steps, assignments
Key Accomplishments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WOTUS related statements, Amici briefs, testimony 2. Climate communications, Climate Ambassadors Program (CAP), World Statement (Scott Bonar), development of policy statement and science review paper 	<p>Establishment of the Climate Change Committee.</p> <p>How do we translate World Statement into actionable recommendations? (and the need for the AFS policy statement)</p>
Revised priorities		
Issues needing expansion, modification or deletion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Build CE training program for other communications areas (e.g. writing) 2. 3. 	
2. To redouble our efforts to increase diversity and improve equity and inclusion within our profession and our Society.		
Review Area	Description	Next steps

Key Accomplishments	1. Establishment of DEI Committee 2.	
Revised priorities		
Issues needing expansion, modification or deletion	1. High school membership options needs to be addressed 2.	
3. To help AFS members further their careers by: a) developing or enhancing critical professional skills; and b) enhancing the benefits of professional certification.		
Review Area	Description	Next steps
Key Accomplishments		
Revised priorities		
Issues needing expansion, modification or deletion		
4. To move forward from research to planning and action related to rebranding needs for AFS as we celebrate our 150th anniversary.		
Review Area	Description	Next steps
Key Accomplishments		
Revised priorities		
Issues needing expansion, modification or deletion		