



Ohio Chapter of the American Fisheries Society

Annual Business Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 14th, 2024

1:00 pm – 2:15 pm

Deer Creek State Park Lodge and Conference Center, Mt. Sterling, OH

1) Call to Order

- Determination of quorum: Yes – 8+ members
- Meeting called to order at: 1:01 PM
- Attendance – (36 in attendance, see Appendix 1)

2) Welcome by Steven Gratz, OCAFS President

- Thanks to those attending in-person
- If you have questions, please raise hand or interrupt – desire for open discussion

3) AFS Report – Gary Whelan (First Vice-President) on behalf of Cecil Jennings

- Plan of work
 - Continue to advance and enhance Fisheries Science, including engagement with other aquatic societies.
 - Evaluate how Society messaging is perceived by young professionals who are nonmembers and their potential employers and adjust messaging breadth, as appropriate.
 - Prepare/update standard operation procedures for: recruiting an Executive Director under planned and unplanned scenarios and for preparation of strategic plans.
 - Increase efficiency of communications about unit activities among AFS units at all levels and better convey the value of the Society to its members and their employers.
 - Build on strong foundation of diversity initiatives within the Society as well as improve message to membership about the value of diversity of all kinds.
- Society still trying to navigate sale of office building in Bethesda, MD
- AFS is starting 3 year Program Reviews. Will look at efficiencies, effectiveness and

financial performance as some generate revenue and other programs cost more to maintain than the revenue the programs generate

- Programs Identified for now are: Communications, Hutton, DEIJA, Development/Sponsorship, Education/Professional Development, Meetings, Human Resources, Membership, Policy and Advocacy, Journals, Books, Governance and Unit Coordination/Service
- In the last year, AFS had policy statement on:
 - Pebble Mine Project and Bristol Bay Salmon Fisheries
 - Upholding 2023 Waters of the US Rule
 - Supported increased USGS stream gauge network funding
 - Supporting programs to address climate change
 - RAWA
 - Calling for more coordination of planning and implementation of infrastructure improvements for fish passage
 - Supporting removal of Snake River dams
 - Urge ballast water mgt. for GL shipping to limit spread of AIS
- Consider membership to AFS Parent Society - Many of the members of AFS chapters are not parent society members. Although great things happen at the chapter level, there are many benefits to also joining the parent society. In addition to online access to all of the AFS journals, you also support AFS policy efforts that benefit the resource and our profession such as on the Pebble Mine in Alaska or on climate change, provide continuing education opportunities at meetings and online, support the Hutton Junior Biologist program that is recruiting a diverse set of future professionals, and all of the other ways that the parent society supports what we do at the local level. I would suggest that without the parent society, our state chapters would not be nearly as effective. We need support at the parent society level to make that happen.
 - AFS now has gift memberships – keep this in mind as idea for students and others
- *Zak's presentation notes:*
 - Three pillars of fisheries – we are the people
 - Who/what is AFS
 - networking and building LTR in fish sci
 - Sci comm and training
 - Source of science for policy makers
 - Develop future leaders
 - 15 paid staff; there to help you
 - Org, structure, and function
 - Split by geography (chapters), expertise (sections), operations (staff, committees), and governance (officers, gov. board)
 - Review of current parent society officers
 - AFS is 154 years old
 - 4 divisions (5th being considered)
 - 6-7K members
 - 44% Regular
 - 17% Students
 - 15% Life members

- 14% Early career
- President Cecil's Plan of work
 - Recruit/hire new Exec. Director (Doug Austen retires in Sept)
 - 2024 Meeting (Honolulu)
 - Theme: Conserving fishes and fishing through knowledge co-production
 - Attendance ~1500-2000
 - Native Hawaiian plenaries (4)
 - DEI session, Traditional Ecological Knowledge, service project
 - World Fisheries Congress
 - 1630 attendees, 82 countries
 - New strategic plan for 2025-29
 - AFS ambassadors
 - Membership
 - Down since COVID – retirements and slow rehiring
 - Key area – retention of young pros and retirees
 - DEIJA
 - Improving the society
 - Program reviews; 6 special committees; officer outreach (which is why Gary is here)
 - Reviewing Professional Dev. Cert – workshop in April, Scott Hale is 1/25 attendees (per Conroy)
 - Capital/assets
 - \$5.8 mil assets; annual budget flat
 - Publication contract ~20% of revenue; new contract with candidate publishers under review
- Miguel Garcia-Bermudez's Plan of Work
 - Reach out to non-traditional fisheries folks
 - Improve communications (continuing)
 - DEI – make AFS welcoming
- Gary's musings/Plan of Work
 - 2026 Columbus meeting
 - Previous Ohio meetings: 2 Put-in-Bay meetings (1890, 1902), Toledo (1909), Columbus (1933)
 - Habitat theme; sessions w/ habitat and history of fisheries in Ohio)
 - Plenaries: National Fish Habitat Board Chair (20th anniversary); Ohio's fisheries resources
 - Opportunities to help: lots of committees, student events, sponsorships/donations
 - Reactivate sections (history and law); Retiree Corps of Excellence
 - Transparency, diversity, and comm. efforts – esp. employers
 - Strengthen relationships w/Acc. Of Fisheries and Wildlife Agencies – coalition of state and provincial agencies

4) NCD Report - Gratz (on behalf of Dan Isermann, NCD President)

- Dan Isermann is now president
- Drew Holloway voted President-Elect, formerly Secretary/Treasurer
- We would like to highlight the excellent work that occurs within our technical committees. These groups serve as venues for information exchange between professionals who work on similar areas of focus, from groups focused on walleye or Esocid management to urban fisheries. They also regularly sponsor symposia at meetings where proceedings are sometimes published, such as the symposium on zebra mussel impacts on percid populations at the 2021 Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference. These are a great way to become more involved with AFS and serve as a venue for information exchange that is the hallmark of AFS. Joint tech-committee summer meetings are a great opportunity to attend workshops, talks and meet new people working on similar issues.
- 2023 annual meeting in Grand Rapids, Michigan
 - Thank you to everyone who played a role in the planning and executing of this meeting hosted by NCD chapter Michigan.
 - Total in-person attendees came in at 1,433 from 34 different countries!
- 2024 Annual Meeting in Honolulu, HI *Conserving Fishes and Fishing Traditions Through Knowledge Co-production*
 - Symposium proposal deadline is February 23. Abstract submission opens in March and closes in May.
 - Look for travel grant opportunities through AFS Sections

5) President's Officer Reports

- President (Steven Gratz)
 - Midwest recap – 600 attendees, sessions (panfish mgt./first-time presenters), good food (chislic, pheasant chowder, bison meatballs), hockey game, fire alarm
 - OCAFS apparel available by Threadless on the NCD website – second design in works
 - Need to fix Paypal kinks on OCAFS website and create automatic reply that abstract was received
 - Awarded two scholarships to the Stone Lab Fish Sampling Techniques Workshop in October that Eugene leads
 - Awarded the Joan Duffy Student Travel Award for the first time in multiple years – recipient was Jacob Bentley
 - OCAFS won the NCD-AFS Best Chapter Communications Award
- President-Elect (Taylor Hunkins) - none
- Past President (Jeremy Pritt) - none
- Secretary/Treasurer (Zak Slagle) – see report (Appendix 2). OCAFS has \$11,160.94 available.
- Student Subunits
 - UT Rockets (Dillon Weik) – no report
 - BGSU – no report
 - OSU Fish and Wildlife Society (Gratz on behalf of Dylan Wilson)
 - Meet biweekly – combination of AFS and TWS
 - Steam fish ID in 2023 fall in Olentangy River at Highbanks Metro Park

- Trivia nights
- Megan Seymour (FWS) was guest speaker talking about her job and applying to federal jobs
- Planning trip to Ohio Wildlife Center end of March/early April
- Potential new student subunits (Gratz)
 - Hocking College – fisheries program postponed with departure of Grant Scholten to Owens Community College
 - University of Rio Grande – nothing to add at this time.

6) Standing Committee Reports

- Ohio Fisheries Leadership/Webmaster (Nick Radabaugh)
 - Thanks from Gratz for updating minutes, peoples' roles, and such on website
- Education/Continuing Education (Eugene Braig)
 - Milt Austin Award, State Science Fair – **judges needed!** Contact Eugene if interested.
- Value of Member/Social Media (Brian Alford)
 - Brian Alford resigning from position and Kylee Wilson will take over after this meeting
 - Looking for president-elect still for this year
 - 1,100 engagements on Facebook
 - Recommend getting rid of X/Twitter; start Instagram?
 - Brian is Water Quality Section President-Elect; symposium in San Antonio
 - Join the parent society!

7) North Central Division Technical Committee Reports –*submitted via email in the interest of time*

- Centrarchid (Zak Slagle)
 - Joint Tech Committee Meeting – July 23-25, 2024 at the Alice L. Kibbe Life Science Research Station (Warsaw, IL). Call for abstracts in May.
 - Thanks for travel grant support from OCAFS (\$100)
 - Regional *Micropterus* recruitment trend paper in works (OH not part of this as we lacked comparable data)
- Esocid (Curt Wagner) – none submitted
- Ictalurid (Jacob Bentley) – none submitted
- Reservoirs (Joe Conroy) – none submitted
- Rivers and Streams (Taylor Hunkins) – none submitted
- Salmonid Technical Committee (Paul Pira) – none submitted
- Student and Early Career Professionals Affairs Committee (SECPAC; Steven Gratz)
 - Organized hockey game at Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference
 - Sending out weekly job postings that are sent on to OCAFS members
 - Informing people of professional development webinars/opportunities
 - Organizing conclave event scheduled for next year in conjunction with the Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference in St. Louis, Missouri. We will also be asking for input on current plans, ideas for the types of events folks are interested in, and volunteers to help with the planning process going forward.

- Urban & Community Fisheries (Tory Gabriel)
 - The first Urban and Community Fisheries report was submitted to the NCD ([link](#))
- Walleye (Jeremy Pritt) – none submitted

8) New Business

- Vote to extend presidency of current OCAFS President
 - Taylor to return in May, need to postpone her presidency until she is ready
 - **Motion** (Gratz, Slagle seconds): Jeremy and Steve to extend current position until July 1, find President-Elect; all in favor, none against, no discussion.
Motion passes.
- Vote on creation/proposal of OCAFS awards
 - **Motion** (Gratz, Slagle seconds): Create Fisheries Excellence and Meritorious Service awards following guidelines sent out by Gratz.
 - Discussion: Minor asks how they are differentiated. Gratz: one is more administrative.
 - **Motion** (Kinter, Minor seconds?): amend the Fisheries Excellence award to include OCAFS member or organization
 - All in favor, **motion passes**
 - **Motion passes** (all in favor, no opposition).
- Fiscal analysis (Zak Slagle)
 - Presented; see attached for report.

9) Wrap up

- Meeting adjourned at: 2:17 PM

Appendix 1 – Attendance

Name	Affiliation
Joe Conroy	ODNR-DOW
MiKayla Kindler	U Toledo
Dillon Weik	U Toledo
Katie Abbuhl	EnviroScience Inc.
Adam Daniels	U Cincinnati
Caitlin Black	U Cincinnati
Eugene Braig	OSU Extension
Michael Booth	U Cincinnati
Brian Alford	OSU Stone Lab
Tory Gabriel	Ohio Sea Grant
Jake Shandler	Solitude Lake Management
Stephen Tyszko	ODNR-DOW
Kevin Page	ODNR-DOW
Stuart Welsh	USGS/WVCFWRU
Cole Hoffman	USGS/WVU
Izzy Leisgang	U Cincinnati
Augustus McAnally	U Cincinnati
Ryan Hudson	ORSANCO
Krystal Polock	OSU/Olentangy River Wetland Research Park
William Bell	BGSU
Alex Marshall	BGSU
Nakiah Dague	BGSU
Joe Toth	BGSU
Jeff Miner	BGSU
Mike Sovic	Freedom Genomics
Casey Pennock	OSU
Lindsey Bruckerhoff	OSU
Stu Ludsin	OSU
Jacob Bentley	OSU
Madeline Schumacher	OSU
Steve Gratz	OSU
Bryan Kinter	ODNR-DOW
Nick Radabaugh	ODNR-DOW
Jeremy Pritt	ODNR-DOW
Zak Slagle	ODNR-DOW
Gary Whelan	AFS

Appendix 2 - Secretary-Treasurer Report

Transaction Category	Total Expenses
<i>Beginning Account Balance*</i>	\$ 9,235.46
Awards	\$ (825.00)
Donations	\$ (500.00)
Donations (outstanding)*	\$ (450.00)
Meeting expenses (to date)	\$ (1,301.49)
Chapter dues and meeting registrations	\$ 3,909.53
Account Balances	
OSU Student Subunit Funds (in Huntington Acct)	\$ 419.00
Paypal Balance	\$ 452.14
Current Huntington Account Balance	\$ 11,577.80
OCAFS Available Funds*	\$ 11,160.94

Notes:

- **Awards** represent Milt Austin awards for the State Science Fair and two scholarships for the Stone Lab Fisheries Workshop
- **Donation** represents a donation to the Equal Opportunity Section of the AFS and a donation to the NCD Centrarchid Committee Travel Award.
- **Donation (outstanding)** represents the Joan Duffy Award and support for the OCAFS President of travel to the Midwest Fish & Wildlife Meeting.
- **OSU Student Subunit Funds** represent money raised in Silent Auction at the 2019 Midwest Meeting.
- **OCAFS Available Funds** represents closing balance in Huntington account plus the Paypal balance and minus the OSU Student Subunit Funds *and* the outstanding donation checks

Membership:

- 175 members as of Dec 2023
 - 70 parent society members, 105 non-members
 - 95 students, 80 non-students

Submitted March 14, 2024

Zak Slagle

OCAFS Secretary/Treasurer