

**Southern Division American Fisheries Society
Spring Executive Committee Meeting - Virtual
Tuesday, 06 April 2021**

President Tom Kwak introduced himself and welcomed everyone in attendance.

Secretary-Treasurer Jessica Baumann announced a quorum was present. President Tom Kwak called the EXCOM meeting to order at 1505 hrs.

Proxies were identified and included Robby Maxwell for the Warmwater Streams Committee.

President Kwak acknowledged special guests including all past SDAFS presidents in attendance and AFS Presidential candidate, Miguel Garcia-Bermudez.

President Kwak presented the Spring EXCOM meeting agenda.

Executive Director Doug Austen was not present at the time he was scheduled to provide remarks, therefore the meeting moved on to Officer's Reports.

SDAFS President Report

President Kwak notes that this was a long and strange year. He reports that the Virginia Chapter had an excellent spring meeting planned for Arlington, VA in 2021 but that due to COVID-19 we were not able to safely hold an in-person meeting. President Kwak also notes the difficulty that was faced when trying to cancel our meeting contract through the hotel. He acknowledges the hard work of members from the VA Chapter and Shawn Johnston with AFS in Bethesda that resulted in the cancellation of our contract without the need for legal action. Due to these contractual issues, SDAFS could not announce any plans for a spring 2021 meeting until we were officially cleared from the hotel's contract. President Kwak acknowledges that the VA Chapter did a fantastic job switching meeting modes and putting together this virtual meeting in a short period of time. President Kwak notes all the hard work and leadership of Brad Fink with the VA Chapter in running this virtual meeting.

President Kwak highlighted his presidential duties on the AFS Governing Board, the Management Committee, and the Awards Committee. President Kwak also participates on an AFS committee that is looking at affiliate members and chapters and trying to find ways to encourage people to not only join at the chapter level of AFS but also at the parent society level.

President Kwak notes that despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, some of the normal divisional activities have continued due to the leadership of our members. EXCOM

members still attended annual meetings conducted by our division's chapters and EXCOM continued to hold regular meetings to discuss divisional issues. President Kwak acknowledges Caitlin Carey for her excellent job as newsletter editor and her efforts to release high quality issues. He also announces that planning for the 2022 SDAFS annual meeting in Charleston, SC is already underway and that it is currently being planned as an in-person meeting.

President Kwak notes that he serves as a co-editor for the North American Journal of Fisheries Management in order to help publish a special edition for the Catfish 2020 International Symposium. He is also involved in organizing an Anguillid Eel symposium for the World's Fisheries Congress. And finally, he has been involved in helping form a Latin American and Caribbean Fisheries Congress and has helped plan their first meeting that will occur sometime during the spring of 2023.

President Kwak announced that he is looking for two volunteers to help serve on the Program and Fundraising Committees for the 2021 Annual Parent Society Meeting in Baltimore, MD. He also requested volunteers to serve on the Diversity and Inclusion Committee that is being formed at the divisional level.

SDAFS Officer Report

President-Elect Williams thanked President Kwak for all his hard work in assisting with the process of getting the 2021 SDAFS annual meeting hotel contract canceled. She also acknowledges that the VA Chapter has been awesome to work with during the meeting planning process. President-Elect Williams notes her involvement with the Society's Governing Board and in planning the SDAFS Past President's Lunch. She also highlighted her attendance at the Tennessee chapter meeting.

Vice President Olive introduced himself. He noted that he performed a technical review of the Reservoir Committee as part of his Vice Presidential duties. He was able to give his review to the committee during their annual technical committee meeting. Vice President Olive highlighted his attendance at several virtual and in-person chapter meetings including Alabama, Arkansas, and Louisiana. He noted that he was one of the General Chairs of the 2020 Catfish International Symposium in Little Rock. The meeting had 200 attendees, 74 oral presentations, 17 poster presentations, and the symposium proceedings will be released as a special edition of the North American Journal of Fisheries Management. Vice President Olive acknowledges all of President Kwak's hard work as editor of those symposium proceedings. Vice President Olive also noted his involvement with the Parent Society's Governing Board and Management Committee.

Past-President Wes Neal highlighted his work as the chair of the Nominating Committee. He noted that two excellent candidates were on the ballot for Vice President, Miguel Garcia-

Bermudez and Mark Rodgers. Past-President Neal announced that Mark Rodgers will be filling the upcoming role of Vice President. He also noted that there were two excellent candidates on the ballot for Student Representative, Zach Moran and Bonnie Myers. Past-President Neal announced that Zach Moran will be filling the upcoming role of Student Representative. He noted that voter turn out was low for Student Representative due to the fact that students must be members of the parent society in order to have their vote counted and that this should be addressed.

Secretary-Treasurer Jessica Baumann's reports were handled individually. She noted that the meeting minutes from the 2020 EXCOM meeting are posted on the SDAFS website and were released in the SDAFS newsletter.

Secretary-Treasurer Baumann provided an overview of the 2020 budget. Several income and expense items were highlighted, including \$12,000+ income from the 2020 SDAFS meeting in Little Rock, AR. She noted several budgetary line items, including going over budget for the award plaques due to a technical error in ordering. Two orders for plaques were placed through Amazon and those additional plaques will be held and used for upcoming meetings. Secretary-Treasurer Baumann noted that travel funds for the Podcasting Coordinator have not been utilized the last few years due to Baumann's double role as both Secretary-Treasurer and Podcasting Coordinator. She expressed her excitement and gratitude that Hunter Hatcher with the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources has accepted the role of SDAFS Podcasting Coordinator moving forward and that those funds will be utilized again at future meetings. Secretary-Treasurer Baumann noted that the SDAFS is holding funds for the Pollution Committee and highlighted the issues that are encountered by committee's trying to establish individual bank accounts. The ending SDAFS balance for 2020 totaled \$40,934.46 and included \$10,972 in the strategic reserve funds.

An audit of the 2020 financial information was completed on March 10th, 2021 by the SDAFS Audit Committee Chair Kelsey Roberts. Due to COVID-19 precautions, the committee was unable to meet in person with all members present. The 2020 financials will be reviewed by the entire committee once in-person meetings can safely resume. The Audit Committee report can be found in the briefing book and there were no errors identified in the 2020 financials. Chair Roberts did highlight one missing receipt for FedEx shipping costs, but noted that this purchase was accounted for by including the email correspondence confirming shipping. The Division's original investment into AFS's managed investment program of \$10,000 in October of 2018 has grown to \$10,972 as of September 2020. It was noted that the Audit Committee Chair suggested the Division look into a more aggressive investment to complement our financial portfolio.

The proposed 2021 SDAFS budget was discussed. Secretary-Treasurer Baumann noted that typical levels of income and expenses were expected in 2021. The current bank balance is sufficient to maintain SDAFS operations.

President Kwak added that due to SDAFS's role as co-hosts, we will receive funds from the 2021 Parent Society meeting to be held in Baltimore, MD later this year. He also noted that the 2021 SDAFS virtual annual meeting will likely turn a profit with funds acquired through registration and fundraising. However, those funds will be rolled over into the funds for an in-person SDAFS annual meeting to be held in Virginia in 2023.

Student Representative Report

Representative Henry Hersey indicated that his report stands as written. He highlighted the major challenge he faced over the past year was communication with the student sub-unit presidents and advisors. He noted that the frequency of officer turnover is very high, but there is no system in place to report those changes to the student representative. One solution was to create Gmail accounts for the sub-unit officers, but those accounts have gone unchecked. Representative Hersey noted that he would like to assist the upcoming student representative in building a better student representative election infrastructure. He highlighted that he participated in the EXCOM discussions on meeting safety and conduct. He noted that since students are usually involved with issues regarding safety and conduct, he hopes these types of discussions continue.

President Kwak and President Elect Williams followed up on Representative Hersey's comment regarding meeting conduct. They reported a member of SDAFS was disciplined for their behavior at the 2020 annual meeting in Little Rock, AR. They noted that inappropriate behavior at meetings carries a punishment of being kicked out of The American Fisheries Society for up to 5 years.

Technical Committee Reports

Alligator Gar – Report stands as written in the 2021SDAFS Briefing Book. Highlighted was the special section in the North American Journal of Fisheries Management that was a follow up to the Alligator Gar symposium held at the 2019 annual SDAFS meeting.

Aquaculture – No representative present. Stands as written in the 2021 Briefing Book.

Catfish – Report stands as written in the 2021 SDAFS Briefing Book. Noted was the committee's work being done to increase their online presence and to also accommodate the EXCOM's request for an open forum meeting format. Highlighted was the possible changes regarding the 2022 student travel award from a single \$300 award to two \$500 awards.

Morone – No representative present. Stands as written in the 2021 Briefing Book.

Pollution – No representative present. Stands as written in the 2021 Briefing Book.

Reservoir –Report stands as written in the 2021 Briefing Book. Highlighted was two scholarships awarded by the committee and their partnership with the North Central Division to host a Reservoir Symposium at the 2021 annual Parent Society meeting.

Small Impoundments – Report stands as written in the 2021 SDAFS Briefing Book. Highlighted was the attendance level at the committee’s open forum, including a student presentation focused on the mechanical removal rates for rehabilitating Largemouth Bass populations. It was noted that this presentation sparked discussion on the future goals and direction of the committee.

Trout – The report stands as written in the 2021 Briefing Book. Highlighted was work being done to update the committee’s website and membership list.

Warm Water Streams – Report stands as written in the 2021 SDAFS Briefing Book. Highlighted was the attendance level at the committee’s open forum and the discussion on a future symposium. Also noted was the occurrence of the American Eel subcommittee meeting at the 2021 SDAFS virtual annual meeting.

Resolutions Committee Report

Resolutions Committee Chair Dennis Riecke noted that no resolutions were brought forward to the Resolutions Committee in 2020. Chair Riecke highlighted the internal resolution of appreciation to the host chapter, Virginia, for planning the 2021 annual meeting. President Kwak noted that Chair Riecke is also the SDAFS representative on the society level resource policy committee.

Chapter Reports

Host Comments – Virginia Chapter President, Brad Fink, highlighted that the Chapter has been focused on hosting the 2021 SDAFS annual meeting for most of the year. He noted that the virtual meeting format has gone smoothly, with 7 committee meetings, 4 workshops, 5 symposia, a past-president’s lunch, and a women’s leadership group session. The attendance level was 487 registrants, including 140 students, with 107 oral presentations and 23 poster presentations. Brad acknowledged Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources staff members, chairs for the student affairs committee, and Shawn Johnston with AFS for their efforts towards a successful meeting. Brad then requested that the Program Chair, Dr. Eric Hallerman, update the group. Dr. Eric Hallerman acknowledged members of the program committee, Brad Fink, and SDAFS President Tom Kwak for their contributions towards a successful meeting. He noted that the meeting ended up being much larger than expected and it was a lot of work, but he is happy that it is turning out to be better than anticipated.

Alabama – Report stands as written in the 2021 SDAFS Briefing Book. Highlighted was their ability to hold an in-person 2020 annual meeting prior to the COVID-19 pandemic shutdown. Noted was their efforts towards updating the chapter’s website and social media pages.

Arkansas – Report stands as written in the 2021 SDAFS Briefing Book. Highlighted was their virtual 2021 annual chapter meeting that included 11 student presentations.

Florida - Report stands as written in the 2021 SDAFS Briefing Book. Highlighted was the cancellation of their 2020 annual meeting due to the COVID-19 pandemic shutdown. The chapter noted that the business meeting, workshop, and fundraising were all successfully held virtually.

Georgia - Report stands as written in the 2021 SDAFS Briefing Book. Highlighted was their ability to have the chapter's 2020 meeting in person prior to the pandemic. Noted was the expansion of their social media presence and website, collaboration with GADNR on educational material related to aquatic invasive species, donation to Go Fish GA educational center, and the chapters focus on diversity and inclusion issues.

Kentucky – Currently inactive. President Kwak noted discussions on giving AFS members in Kentucky the ability to participate in other active state chapters.

Louisiana – Report stands as written in the 2021 SDAFS Briefing Book. Highlighted was the cancellation of the 2020 annual meeting and their annual Ichthyology Daycamp. Noted was the reduction of their listserv membership from 500+ to 257 and the postponement of officer elections by a year.

Mississippi - Report stands as written in the 2021 SDAFS Briefing Book. Highlighted was the occurrence of their successful virtual 2020 annual meeting and the awarding of two \$500 student research awards.

North Carolina - Report stands as written in the 2021 SDAFS Briefing Book, however meeting information needs to be updated to reflect 2020, not 2021, and annual meeting details. Highlighted was the occurrence of the chapter's in person 2020 annual meeting and a successful occupancy modeling workshop.

Oklahoma – No representative present. Report stands as written in the 2021 SDAFS Briefing Book.

Potomac - No representative present. Report stands as written in the 2021 SDAFS Briefing Book.

Puerto Rico - Report stands as written in the 2021 SDAFS Briefing Book. Highlighted was the chapter's successful virtual 2020 annual meeting, their facilitation of the Latin American and Caribbean Congress and the challenges that were encountered, the updating of the chapter's website, and the work being planned to address the newly discovered Walking Catfish in Puerto Rico.

South Carolina – No representative present. Report stands as written in the 2021 SDAFS Briefing Book.

Tennessee - Report stands as written in the 2021 SDAFS Briefing Book. Highlighted was the cancellation of their 2020 annual meeting.

Texas - Report stands as written in the 2021 SDAFS Briefing Book. Highlighted was the successful occurrence of their virtual 2020 annual meeting, including the student participation of 25% of registrants and 50% of presentations given, and the chapter's fundraising efforts.

Tidewater – No representative present. Report stands as written in the 2021 SDAFS Briefing Book.

West Virginia - Report stands as written in the 2021 SDAFS Briefing Book. Highlighted was the cancellation of the 2020 annual meeting and the occurrence of a virtual 2020 business meeting. Noted was the updating of the chapter's website.

Splitting Chapter Awards Discussion

President Kwak noted EXCOM's discussion of how to appropriately split the Outstanding Chapter Award at the divisional level into two awards, a Large and Small Chapter Award. EXCOM decided to move forward with the 100 member threshold in order to be in line with the Outstanding Chapter awards given at the parent society level, with large chapters having over 100 members and small chapters having less than 100 members. This would allow the Division to nominate two chapters for the national level awards. President Kwak noted that only two chapters meet the 100 member threshold (TX and FL) and encouraged chapters close to the 100 member mark to increase membership in order to compete for that large chapter award.

President Kwak noted that splitting the student sub-units into small and large units will not occur at this time. He highlighted the difficulty in determining membership levels due to the high level of turnover within those units.

Dennie Reicke expressed his support for splitting the chapters based on the parent society criteria.

Formation of Diversity and Inclusion Committee

EXCOM has decided to create an ad-hoc committee focused on diversity and inclusion issues. The EXCOM would like to use this committee to help coordinate all efforts directed towards D&I issues across AFS. President Kwak requested volunteers to help develop this ad-hoc committee. President Kwak also suggested that chairs of chapter D&I be contacted for the divisional level committee. Miguel Garcia-Bermudez volunteered to serve on the committee.

New Business

President Kwak reviews the upcoming annual meeting locations. 2022 – Charleston, SC; 2023 – Virginia; 2024 – Tennessee; 2025 – Raleigh, NC; 2026 – New Orleans, LA; 2027/2028 – Mississippi.

President Kwak thanks everyone for their leadership within the society.

Meeting was adjourned by President Tom Kwak at 17:05 hours.