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Minutes, Business Meeting, 36th Annual Meeting, Southeastern Fishes Council

Southeastern Fishes Council

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Minutes, Business Meeting, 36th Annual Meeting, Southeastern Fishes Council

Business Meeting

36th Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Fishes Council

November 11th & 12th, 2010 Athens, Georgia

The 2010 business meeting of the Southeastern Fishes Council was called to order by Chair Gerry Dinkins at 4:21 p.m. One hundred and three people attended the meeting.

Report of the Secretary

Secretary Rebecca Blanton reported that the 2009 minutes were unanimously accepted by electronic vote of the membership with 25 members submitting a vote by e-mail. She noted that the 2009 minutes would be posted on the SFC website.

Report of the Treasurer

Treasurer Anna George presented the society's overall financial standing and the financial status of the 2010 meeting, noting that the society was financially steady. Details of the Treasurer's Report are given below. Jim Williams moved and Hank Bart seconded the motion to accept the report, which was unanimously approved by the membership.

Report of the Committees

Nominating Committee – Carol Johnston.

Chair Dinkins noted that Carol Johnston as chair-elect would be the head of the nominating committee, and beginning sometime next year she would be approaching individuals to assemble a slate of candidates for chair, secretary, and treasurer. He also explained that all three executive committee positions would be coming up for election because Treasurer George and Secretary Blanton were currently serving their second term. He thanked both George and Blanton for their service and asked that if anyone was interested in running for any of these offices, that they contact Carol Johnston.

Program Committee – Mary Freeman, Anna George and Jim Williams.

The committee provided brief comments on the 2010 meeting and Chair Dinkins thanked the committee and all others involved in organizing the 2010 meeting for their hard work.

Chair Dinkins also provided details on the location and dates for 2011 SFC Annual Meeting. He reminded the membership that through a previous agreement of the membership, every third year the meeting would be held Chattanooga, TN, thus the site for the 2011 meeting. He also noted that in the subsequent year the meeting would be held at a state park (such as Guntersville State Park), and then return again to a local college or university. Several members initiated discussion regarding the need to keep the meeting locale as centralized to the membership as possible. Hank Bart initiated discussion regarding hosting a future upcoming meeting in New Orleans, which would serve as a good venue because it would also be a place in which we could have a suitable memorial to Royal D. Suttkus.

Constitution Committee – Bernie Kuhajda (no action, no report)

Proceedings Committee – David Neely and Chris Skelton

Editor Neely discussed the status of online issues of the Proceedings and noted that he had received one and was anticipating a second manuscript for consideration for publication in the 2011 Proceedings. Brett Albanese requested that the password for accessing online issues of the Proceedings be re-distributed to the membership.

Awards Committee – Anna George

Anna George presented awards of appreciation to Mary Freeman and Jim Williams for organizing the 2011 meeting. Jake Schaefer was presented with an Amazon gift certificate in appreciation of his hard work on the SFC website.

Technical Advisory Committee –

Chair Dinkins noted that this was a newly created committee, and that the constitution stated that it must be composed of the following: the Executive Committee, two active field biologists from separate states, three active faculty members involved with southeastern fish research, and three people from the membership at large and must be assembled by the

Chair. The following people agreed to serve on the Technical Advisory Committee: Pat Rakes (Conservation Fisheries), Charlie Saylor (Tennessee Valley Authority), Steve Powers (Roanoke College), Ginny Adams (U. of Central Arkansas), Hank Bart (Tulane), Mel Warren (U.S. Forest Service), Jim Williams (U.S. Geological Survey, retired), and Brett Albanese (Georgia Department of Natural Resources).

Membership Committee – Rebecca Blanton

Blanton reported a slight decline in membership in 2011. The total membership at the time of the meeting was 141 members including 5 life, 98 regular, 6 family, and 32 student memberships compared to a total of 167 members in the previous year and 192 in 2008. She noted however, that the total did not reflect those that had joined at or just prior to the meeting.

Website Committee – Jake Schaefer

Schaefer provided a brief update on the SFC website, asking members to submit pictures and indicated that the online submission of abstracts worked well and that this mode of submission would be used for future meetings.

Old Business

Status of electronic only Proceedings.

Chair Dinkins noted that after careful consideration, the executive committee had decided that the Proceedings will not be a paperless publication (electronic only). Instead, the membership will be allowed to opt out of receiving the paper version, and receive only the electronic version if they so choose. A discussion was held on how this option would be installed. Treasurer George noted that an option would be added to the membership renewal/new membership forms to select preference of journal format.

Formal partnership with SARP.

Chair Dinkins explained to the membership that the partnership with SARP had been formalized.

Petition to list *Elassoma alabamae*.

Chair Dinkins noted a petition had been submitted to FWS, but no action had been taken as of the meeting date.

SFC history.

Jake Schaefer indicated that the history (1992 to present) of SFC officers, meeting places, etc. was nearly finished and would soon be posted on SFC webpage. Chair Dinkins confirmed that he was continuing to work on the historical information and would soon have this completed and ready for posting on the website.

Petition to list aquatic species by Center for Biological Diversity.

Jim Williams summarized this issue, providing an overview of SFC's review of list of fish species included. He explained that in conjunction with several members, SFC had proposed a 'trimmed' version of the list that removed those species of fishes that did not warrant immediate action for protection by the federal government. He noted that through their efforts, they had reduced the list by 20-30 species of fishes. This revised version was given to the CBD, but D. Neely noted that many, if not most, of the SFC recommendations had been ignored. Williams explained to the membership that the petition had not been filed as of the date of the meeting.

New Business

Monitoring the federal register.

Chair Dinkins noted that someone in the membership should monitor the federal register to identify actions that pertain to SFC. In doing so, the membership could be alerted to any actions that are related to the mission of the society and thus become involved as needed. The membership discussed the best mode of monitoring the register and disseminating information to the membership (email, Facebook, and other options were considered). Jim Williams asked U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service members present if SFC could be added to the e-mail list for Regions 4 and 5. Robin Goodloe of FWS said yes, but this would mean that members would also receive non-fish related actions as well. Williams volunteered to receive e-mails and pass on only those actions that were related to southeastern fishes to the membership.

Continuation of 'themed' meetings.

Chair Dinkins asked the membership to consider whether themes for subsequent meetings should be continued or if we should eliminate themes and have only submitted papers in the oral presentation sessions. This discussion was raised due to the large number of papers submitted for the 2010 orals sessions, which resulted in several members being asked to present as posters. He noted that the executive committee felt strongly that a symposium theme be continued as part of the annual meeting, rather than submitted papers only, and that the theme session take up the first half of the first morning session (1/8 of total meeting time). This decision was supported by the membership.

Payment of meeting registration.

Mel Warren asked if the cost of membership could be included in the meeting registration cost. Treasurer George explained that doing such caused confusion for members as to which year was being paid. She

indicated that the SFC membership was an annual membership and should be renewed in January each year. She concluded that it would be possible to add an option to pay for the meeting registration and membership simultaneously, but members would have to indicate which year they were paying for and that she would revise the payment form to include a way of indicating the year of membership paid.

Passing of Dr. Royal D. Suttkus.

Chair Dinkins noted the passing of one of the society's founding members, Dr. Royal D. Suttkus in December, and Hank Bart's obituary that appeared in the spring issue of Copeia.

Bart told the membership that he was working with the family of Dr. Suttkus to plan a memorial service and celebration of his life. As the organizer of the service, Bart asked the membership to consider making a financial contribution to help pay for the expenses. Carol Johnston suggested that a future SFC meeting and memorial to Suttkus be held in conjunction in New Orleans, LA. Anna George expressed concerns with holding a meeting in New Orleans, because it would move the meeting from a central location and possibly prohibit many members from attending. Greg Moyer suggested that the society have a 'Suttkus-themed' meeting, but to do so in one of the selected central locations.

Establishing a relationship with Patagonia –

Anna George told the membership that she had been approached by Patagonia to see if the society might have an interest in establishing a relationship with them. Patagonia had seen the Desperate Dozen list produced by the society and was interested in an updated and possibly a geographically expanded list. Discussion ensued regarding the potential financial and/or public outreach benefits to the society. George noted that it would not likely involve a financial gain, but would be more of a public relations outreach relationship. Mollie Cashner noted that this relationship may provide a long-term potential for money through recognition of SFC on the Patagonia

website. Discussion was also initiated regarding the request to modify or expand the original Desperate Dozen list. The conclusion by the membership was to use the existing Desperate Dozen publication and restrict our geographic focus to the southeastern US. George suggested that we indicate that SFC would regularly review and update or add to the list as needed. She also asked that the Technical Advisory Committee review the potential collaboration.

New FWS position and upcoming federal register actions involving SFC.

Cindy Williams announced the creation of a new FWS position that will be housed at the Tennessee Aquarium in Chattanooga. She also requested that the SFC Technical Advisory Committee look over the federal register and provide comments on the recent listing of the Atlantic Sturgeon. She also indicated that FWS may propose expansion of some refuges and may request SFC to provide comments.

Fishes in need reports.

Anna George presented a new initiative in collaboration with SARP to identify and provide updated species accounts for Tier I, II, and III species in the Mobile and Cumberland drainages of the southeastern United States. She identified experts and asked those identified to volunteer to write a species account, including conservation status, threats, and needed conservation actions of each identified species. Brett Albanese asked the purpose of this endeavor. George replied that it would provide updated information of threatened and endangered fishes of these regions to the USFWS and she also discussed the possible public outreach potential of the project.

State reports

Chair Dinkins and Editor Neely noted the State Reports would soon be posted on the SFC webpage and would only be published online in the future.

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Dinkins at 5:31 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted, Secretary Rebecca Blanton
Johansen*