

**NEW YORK STATE BASS CHAPTER FEDERATION
MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING
JANUARY 18, 2003
LEMOYNE MANOR, SYRACUSE, NEW YORK**

Meeting was called to order by President, Wayne Tomassi at 11:17 a.m. Officers present were: President, Wayne Tomassi; Vice-President, Paul Tomeo; Treasurer, Sal Pennini and Secretary, Rose Maher. Committee people present were: Publicity - Bob Green; Tournament Director and Scholarship - Sharon Green; Membership - Meg Corbett-Bates; Youth Director - Mickey Fortunato.

Pledge of Allegiance led by Melody Tennity.

Moment of Silence was observed for the Federation's good friend and past Marketing Director and fellow fisherman, Ken Charbonneau.

Roll Call of Clubs was taken. Those present were: After Breakfast Bass Anglers, Albany Area, Black Rock, Capital District, Chautauqua Lake, Crown City, Eastern New York, Finger Lakes, Greylock Bass, Hudson Valley, Lake Champlain, Niagara Frontier, Orange County, Port City, Predators, Rochester, Salt City, Southern Tier, South-Western and Western New York.

Wayne welcomed everyone and announced that representatives from DEC, Doug Stang and Pat Festa, would be here at 1:00 p.m. to address certain issues, including catch and release. Wayne asked that we keep all discussions friendly, because we want to continue our good working relationship.

Minutes of the December 8, 2002 Executive Board Meeting were presented for acceptance. **MOTION Made** by Larry Dupere and **Seconded** by Melody Tennity to accept the Minutes as presented. **MOTION PASSED.**

Calendar of Events: Wayne announced that the Casting Kids State Finals would be held March 1st in Syracuse at Breese Chevrolet. After that we will be having an Executive Committee Meeting and then an Executive Board Meeting on Sunday, March 2nd.

Announcements:

- Sharon Green is now the Tournament Director.
- Pam Bliss was congratulated for a job well done. Pam will be taking over other duties and plans to start a Left on Shore Committee to come up with things of interest for those attending the tournaments but not fishing.
- Dominic DiGirolamo will be taking over the Scholarship Chair vacated by Sharon Green.
- Meg Corbett-Bates from Rochester Bass will be the Chairperson of the Membership Committee. Meg has been given the goal of raising membership to 1,000 in 2003.
- Individual and Club Dues now go to Sharon Green.

B.A.S.S.:

- Nationals will be in Tuscaloosa, Alabama in May.
- Membership drive is still going on. If your club gets a new member to join BASS for \$10.00, your club will get \$6.00 back. Apparently this program is going well but we do not have any information on how NYState is doing.
- Insurance - make sure all your club anglers are registered. Money can be sent in at any time. If BASS sends the money back because their books are closed, that angler is still covered.
- Waiting Lists - clubs with anglers on these lists can allow them to fish open tournaments and be covered under their blanket insurance without a problem. The problem arises when these anglers on a waiting list fish more than one club tournament. If they fish more than one, there might be a problem with coverage. Suggest that clubs collect state and national dues for those on waiting list and send them in.
- National Award Packets - Salt City Bass was congratulated for submitting a packet this year.

Triton - has come up with a Golden Cup Program involving State Championships. If you pay a \$20.00 entry and you win your State Championship, then Triton will pay you \$1,000.00. We are not sure how this would apply to NY State since we do not have a championship tournament. We will have to get clarification on this. Skeeter also has a program similar to this but it is not as well documented as Triton's. This year we received \$2,500 from Skeeter/Triton Alliance Package for last year's Divisional Team members. This year we have one person going to the Divisional with a Skeeter.

TREASURER'S REPORT - Sal Pennini presented the report. A copy is enclosed. The main highlights were an ending balance of \$8,463.87 in checking account; \$25,838.52 in savings account (\$18,020.53 - Boat Raffle; \$1,796.25 - Junior Federation Savings and \$6,021.74 - Scholarship). There were still Auction 2002 money outstanding. These checks were sent in and were sent to Sal but never made it there. These people were contacted and almost all the checks have been resent. There are also monies from some advertisers that are still outstanding. The inventory has all been reconciled. The bottom line is that the Federation's Net Worth in cash, receivables and inventory amounts to \$16,761.38 as of December 31, 2002. Wayne stated that the money we received from the Divisional Team's win was a big help to us. **MOTION MADE** by Larry Dupere and by **Seconded** Rick Kazmierczak to accept the Treasurer's Report as Presented. **MOTION PASSED.**

Boat Raffle - with 50 clubs it should have been no problem to sell 500 tickets but we did not sell all 500. We are presently up to 334. There seems to have been a duel going on between Salt City and Southern Tier. An announcement will be made as to the winner after the banquet. We will be raffling off more tickets during the banquet and that would change the numbers as well as people wanting to upgrade at the door. Questions were raised concerning tax consequences. Sal advised if the winner takes the cash, taxes would be taken out (about 30%) prior to their receiving the cash and they would be sent a 1099 for 2003. If we do not take out the taxes, the winner would run into a "under withholding" problem on their 2003 taxes. Frank Tenny asked about the value of the boat and how the taxes would be figured on this. Sal stated that the IRS rules list "fair market value" figures need to be used for determining this. Frank Tenny wanted to know if this is based on the whole boat package or if it is broken down by boat, motor and trailer. Since you would save on the taxes if it were broken down. Sal stated that we would do everything possible, within the limits of the law, to work with the winner on how to best approach this. If the winner of the boat raffle elects to take the money, the Federation can auction off two boats this year through the Alliance Package. Clubs should watch the message board if this is kicked off before the March meeting.

Banquet Auction - Paul Tomeo announced that he has 25-30 items for the Silent Auction and about 30 items for the Verbal Auction. There are items from trolling motors to hockey tickets to framed prints to handbags. There were not many responses through the Web for donations. Everyone was reminded, for next year, that the items do not have to be big. They can be a pack of lures if clubs want to put them together and then donate them. Paul thanked everyone who did donate items or went and collected them, as it was very hard for him to get around this year.

Fishlines - Advertising rates were reviewed and a proposed commission payback to clubs and individuals was presented to the Exec Board. Copy of the prices and commissions are attached. The Member Commission was made lower than the Club Commission to get members to go through a club, especially if he is not a member of a club, it might give him incentive to join one. It was also stressed that if you run across someone who is interested in giving you an ad but the prices might be too high for him, check with the Marketing Director to see about lowering them for that one person. We do not have a Marketing Director at this time but we are working on getting this position filled. **MOTION MADE** by Mike Cusano and **Seconded** by Bob Green to accept the Federation Advertising and Commission rates as presented. Larry Dupere asked if vendors selling items at the tournaments if they had to reimburse the Federation in money or in merchandise. Pam stated that we prefer to get merchandise and it comes to about 10% of retail value sold. **MOTION Passed.**

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE - Meg Corbett-Bates reported that we have 20 clubs having paid their dues for 2003 and 195 anglers. Goal this year is to reach 1000 members. Meg asked if we could approve the lowering of angler dues to \$15.00 for first time members or those who have not been members for 3 years. This discount amount still covers everything that the Federation has to pay. Wayne reminded all that this was done during the Federation's 25th Anniversary year. **MOTION MADE** by Meg Corbett-Bates and **Seconded** by Mike Cusano to lower first time member and returning members to \$15.00 for the this year. **MOTION Passed.**

Pam started that membership for 2002 was 833 members, 173 new members and three new clubs.

Wayne asked Sharon Green and Meg to look at new clubs joining our Federation from another state just to fish the CTE. National BASS does not allow a club to be a member of more than one Federation at a time. Question was raised if a number of "ringers" start a new club and join our Federation should they be allowed to fish that year's CTE. This issue will go to the Tournament Advisory Board for their feeling and Sharon will report back at the March Meeting.

TOURNAMENTS - Sharon Green reported that all four tournaments and the CTE are sponsored. Hudson Tournament was changed to Oneida and all were notified. For 2004 we asked Hudson to give us first pick since they messed up by scheduling another tournament on the day that we were to have ours. They are considering this. Sharon asked everyone if they have any ideas about future tournament sites or sponsors to let her or a member of the Tournament Advisory Board know. Frank Tenny brought up the fact that in the past entry fees for each angler were raised \$10.00 a tournament for the purpose of putting this money aside in case there was a body of water that the Federation wanted to fish but could not find a sponsor for that particular tournament. Frank asked about this money. Sal reported that Pam accounted for all monies, down to the last postage stamp. This money is apparently still being collected but being used for tournament expenses, i.e., fixing of Fishcare, supplies, etc. Frank stated he did not raise this issue because he thought the money was being misused but was curious as to if it was being kept separate or not. Sharon stated that we are trying to move tournaments around to make it fair to everyone. The TAB lists bodies of water that they feel we should look at. The next approach is getting sponsorship. If we cannot get it for that body of water, but the facility meets all our other requirements to hold a tournament, then it is reported back to the TAB to see if we really want to go there. If they answer "yes" then it goes on the schedule. CTE is different and it has to be funded. The TAB is working on 2004 Schedule, as sponsors have to be approached now so they can work it into their budgets for 2004. Bob Green proposed to raise the CTE entry to \$375.00 and then we can go anywhere we want. Scott Bliss stated that it might not be only a money issue but a date issue. The site might already have something else going on when we want to hold our event.

Tournament Advisory Board - Ted Barth, Rose LaValley, Joe Matt and Mark Ventra will again serve.

Tournament Crew - Stephanie Miura, Sharon Rice, Robyn Good and Sue Good will be this season's crew.

CONSERVATION - Mike Cusano stated that he only had 7 clubs respond to his survey on early catch and release. Five were in favor; one wanted to keep it as is and one did not care. Mike wants Federation position with DEC to be that we are in favor of catch-and-release.

Berkley Line UPC Labels - Only has three labels from clubs if you take out what he got from Salt City and Southern Tier members. Clubs get those labels to Mike. Just the labels, not the whole box.

There will be a Public Forum regarding Lake Ontario and it is posted on the Web. Power Loading - Mike sent out a questionnaire on this but has not had any responses.

Chautauqua Lake - DEC wants to limit tournaments on Chautauqua. Mike Cusano called and he could not get them to give him permission to have a tournament. Mike was told it is a DEC site and that they had the support of all the local clubs on Chautauqua Lake with respect to limiting tournaments. They use fish mortality rate as an excuse.

There are 350 ramps in the State and they are run by the DEC, the State or the City. We have never had to apply to the DEC for a permit to use one of their ramps.

A five-minute break was called at 1:10 p.m. The Meeting resumed at 1:25 p.m.

DEC - Wayne introduced Doug Stang and Pat Festa from DEC. Their presentation consisted of a Region by Region study of Bass Bits from around New York.

REGION 1 - Long Island - Now evaluating No-Kill Regulations on all Nassau County waters that was instituted in 1999.

- 4 out of 5 ponds surveyed in 2002 had a doubling in the proportion of bass over 12" and an increase in the proportion of bass over 15"
- the catch rate of bass over 12" increased in all 5 ponds
- in 35 surveys conducted in Nassau County since 1991, 11 of the largest bass collected were caught in 2002.

Lake Ronkonkoma reef project

- 1500 Christmas trees placed by DEC and LI Bassmasters in 1980's appear to have now disintegrated
- Tree stump project last year placed 160 stumps in 8 locations (GPS locations available). DEC-Long Island

Bassmasters-Army Air National Guard, 40 Blackhawk lifts

(Note: to get approval to put in the trees and stumps there were a number of permits that had to be obtained. This is not something that a club can just decide and do on their own.)

Continuing walleye programs in Ronkonkoma and Fort Pond to reduce white perch populations. If successful should improve overall predator prey balance and improve bass recruitment and growth.

REGION 2 - New York City

- Now have fisheries biologist in our NYC office, Chris VanMaaaren. Actively surveying ponds and supporting "I Fish NY" outreach initiative.
- Lots of bass in Prospect Park Lake. 68% over 12", 24% over 15". Bass anglers caught 0.37 bass/hr.
- Dredging work did not appear to have long- term impacts on bass in VanCortland Lake. Some reduction in electrofishing catch rate of larger bass.
- No-Kill regulations for all species now officially in place for all NYC Park Ponds.

REGION 3 and 4 - Southeastern NY

- Hudson River. Reports in preparation for two major studies.
- River wide creel census ran from March 2001 to February 2002. Will produce the most comprehensive estimate ever of fishing distribution on the river. Preliminary report due this spring.
- Over 8,000 bass were jaw tagged and 60 smb were radio tagged. Substantial data were obtained on the movement of bass, tournament effort and catch and fishing mortality rates. (Graph of Estimates of Hudson River Largemouth Bass Population is enclosed.)

REGION 5 and 6 - Adirondacks

- Ray Brook office involved with major Lake Champlain (Wal-Mart) and Saranac Lakes (ESPN) tournaments - provided permits for bass transport.
- No complaints received concerning dead fish or specific tournament activities -some local anglers are complaining about the increase in fishing pressure (and their perceived decline in bass fishing success) that the ESPN tournament publicity has brought to Lake Flower and the Saranac chain.
- Both electrofishing and angler catches show that the special 15" bass regulation on Black Lake has been successful in increasing the number of larger bass. Locals are now advertising the lake as trophy bass water. Reports that smallmouth fishing last fall was spectacular.
- Some likely bass hotspots for 2003
- Stillwater Reservoir, Cranberry Lake, Horseshoe Lake (St. Lawrence Co.), Mohawk River/Barge Canal

St. Lawrence River - Lake Ontario

- Cormorants still a concern on eastern L. Ontario and upper St. Lawrence.
- some indication that annual egg oiling project on Little Galoo Island (94% reduction in chick production) is improving survival of 3 to 5 year old bass, but increasing cormorant populations on Canadian islands (cormorants forage in NY waters) will be a problem.

- The Federal EIS on allowable cormorant control options is due out soon and this may provide more flexibility for corm population management. (Doug informed us that the EIS will shift the management of corms from Federal to State Governments.)
- A creel census is planned for 2003 to compare current bass angling status with 1998 data.
- Index netting in the Thousand Islands and Lake St. Lawrence regions of the St. Lawrence River show smb populations are lower than historic levels but are stable in recent years and continue to provide for successful tournament events.
- Regulation change proposed for St. Lawrence River to start bass season fourth Saturday in June to match Province of Ontario. Ontario will enact minimum size limits on bass (12"), walleye and northern pike. Ontario currently has no minimum size limits for these gamefish. Overall should improve fishing in St. Lawrence River.
- Smb populations in central L. Ontario appear to be at an all-time high based both on netting surveys and angler reports. Include a higher proportion of older, larger fish than seen in historic records.
- Central Lake embayments like Sodus Bay are providing Lmb fishing and remain relatively lightly fished.

REGION 9/Lake Erie - Western NY

- Chautauqua Lake bass fishing very good in 2002 Abundant bass in 16" range Cassadaga Lake slot limit (12' to 15" protected) is functioning as 15" minimum size limit Increased numbers of bass in 12-15" range and more bass over 15". Very popular with anglers.
- Lake Erie Early season (1st Saturday in May - 3rd Saturday in June, 15", 1) continues to be very popular Angler catch rates are down somewhat over the last two years but netting surveys indicate bass population as high as ever. Abundance of gobies may be reducing bass catchability. Botulism outbreak is killing some bass - studies underway

Early Season Bass Fishing

- Early season catch and release bass season initiated in 2001 in western Finger Lakes (Seneca, Keuka, Canandaigua, Honeoye, Hemlock, Canadice and Conesus Lakes).
- 1st Saturday in May through the Friday before the third Saturday in June
- catch and release only - no possession allowed
- evaluation based primarily on angler satisfaction, use, perceived fishing success and angler diary catch rates. Will finalize in 2005.

Proportion of anglers having a "good" or "excellent" perception of bass fishery was 67% in 1998; 65% in 1999, and, 69% in 2001.

Proportion of anglers that have a favorable opinion of the early catch and release fishery in 1998

Year	All Anglers	Targeting Bass
1998	60%	64%
1999	63%	65%
2001	73%	84%

Estimated hours of near shore casting activity during early season on Conesus Lake was 1998 and 1999 average of 1038 hours and in 2001 count 1680 hours.

Catch rates by Honeoye Lake angler diary cooperators

1996-1998 average was	0.88 bass/hour
1999	0.97 bass/hour
2001	1.31 bass/hour
2002	1.06 bass/hour

Michigan DNR Study 1988-1990

- Evaluated a Catch and Release Special Season (April 1 -Opening Day) on 5 major lakes
- 82%anglers would approve continuing special season
- anglers reported 40% increase in their spring bass fishing but not obvious increase was observed by researchers
- catch rates were equivalent to regular season
- no obvious harm to recruitment of young bass
- to a large extent special season was only legalizing a widely existing activity
- did not recommend allowing wide - open tournament policy

Early Season Consideration for New York

- Possible problems in low fertility waters with low recruitment rates those listed were: Adirondacks, Catskills, Hudson River and Smallmouth
- Operating policy of equal treatment for all anglers (No special restrictions, no special privileges for tournament anglers)
- catch and release only would mean no possession for weigh-ins
- option for "golden rule" tournaments only
- Tournament "permits"

After the presentation, the floor was open for questions. John Argo raised the issue with respect to the Hudson. Apparently bait fishermen come in November and fish certain holes. The locals catch their five fish and go to their cars and dump their fish and come back and catch five more. John stated he did not care what the DEC numbers showed the fish population has gone down. DEC was not aware that these fish were being harvested in the creeks in November. We have clubs in the area that can show members of the DEC the targeted areas.

Don Staszczyk asked if it was, technically, necessary to get a permit to use a DEC launch. DEC responded that a permit was not needed but you could run into a problem so it was always better to get one for a club tournament. Each Region is different and has different regulations that they enforce religiously. Before holding a tournament, it is best to call the Region Office of the DEC and ask if a permit is needed where you will be fishing. State parks are another matter entirely.

Wayne asked whom we could get in contact with to push the catch and release issue along. Doug and Pat informed us that they were the two driving forces behind getting this approved. Wayne asked whom else

we could get a hold of to push this along. Doug stated the earliest this could become a Statewide regulation would be 10/1/2006. Now the regulations for 2004 are out to all regions for changes. There are still a number of traditionalists against this issue. Don Staszczyk proposed two options - one to run from the 1st Saturday in May until the 3rd Saturday in June; or, when the season ends up until the 1st Saturday in May.

Doug stated that regulation changes were first proposed on 7/1/2002 for finalization 10/1/2004. Regulation proposals go on the Website for all to access. It is better that the new regulation proposals come from the individual Regions to DEC. We should have started really pushing this issue in July of 2002 to have it approved for the 10/1/2004 regulations.

Mike Cusano asked about the Chautauqua Lake issue with regard to his being told by Paul McQuire that bass fishing would not be allowed from 7/15 to 8/15. Doug and Pat do not want this to happen but Paul wants to have this happen. Mike stated this was a level of discrimination based on DEC's policy of "equal treatment of all anglers". Doug and Pat agreed it was discrimination. They apparently have no control over this. They recommended that Mike speak with the Regional Director.

Power Loading - Mike asked if DEC was issuing tickets for power loading. Doug stated they had no intention of issuing tickets for this. They have put up flyers to get around this. The problem is the ramps. If the ramp can allow for this, then fine. Mike Gann of the DEC has list of ramps to be fixed and when they are slated to be fixed. There are a number of very costly ramps coming up for repairs. One of these will be the ramp at Ticonderoga and Freeman's Bridge on the Mohawk.

Pam Bliss asked if there was any survey that DEC had showing each lake and how many boats it could hold for a tournament. Doug stated there was no such survey but if she knew the acreage of the lakes in question and e-mailed it to them, they could tell her how many boats it could hold.

There being no other questions of Doug and Pat, Wayne thanked them for coming and being honest with their answers and hopes our relationship continues to grow and be beneficial to both DEC and the Federation.

NEW BUSINESS

Meg Corbett-Bates asked each Club Rep to send her a copy of the rooster their respective clubs received from National in September before they return it to National. Meg would also like each Club President to select one person in the Club that could be contacted before tournaments in case there is some kind of problem. This person's name and e-mail address should be sent to Meg.

Banquet - Wayne reminded everyone that it was Nick Giamei's night and to make sure to congratulate him. Rose Maher told everyone of the shuttle that would be running from Knight's Inn to LeMoyne Manor before the Cocktail Hour started and then going back to Knight's Inn from 1:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. Wayne stated that because of the state of the Federation budget, beer tickets would be sold for \$5.00 per person to be good for the entire evening.

Boat Raffle - Wayne let everyone know that the Executive Committee decided that since enough tickets had been sold to have it be a break-even raffle, it would be held. There was one club that voted against having the boat raffle because most of their members had been laid off. The club Port City, a small club. They in turn ended up selling 12 tickets - a commendable feat. We many other clubs out there that didn't sell any. A list will be prepared of what each club sold.

There being no further business, the Meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m. by a **MOTION MADE** by Mike Cusano and **Seconded** by Joe Matt. **MOTION Passed**. The next Meeting of the Executive Committee will be March 1, 2003 from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. The next Meeting of the Executive Board will be March 2, 2003 from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. They will be held at the Quality Inn in North Syracuse.

Respectfully submitted,
Rose Maher, Secretary