

**NEW YORK STATE BASS CHAPTER FEDERATION
MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING JANUARY 19, 2002
RAMADA INN, SYRACUSE, NEW YORK**

Meeting was called to order by President Wayne Tomassi at 11:05AM. Officers present: Wayne Tomassi, President, Paul Tomeo, Vice President, and Rose Maher, Secretary. Sal Pennini Treasurer could not make the meeting. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Ron Kelly.

Roll call of clubs was taken. Those present were: Albany Area, Chautauqua Lk., Crown City, Finger Lakes, Greylock BASS, Hudson Valley, Lk. Champlain, Millennium, Niagara Frontier, North Jersey Hawg Hunters, Port City, Predator, Salt City, Southern Tier, Statewide, Westchester, Western New York, and Eastern New York. Wayne welcomed all of the new faces and introduced Al Smith, B.A.S.S. Federation Director. Paul Tomeo was welcomed as the new duly elected Vice President.

President's Message: Wayne started by reviewing committee appointments. Tournament Director Pam Bliss, Assistant Tournament Director Stephanie Miura, Marketing Chairperson Ken Charbonneau, Publicity Bob Green, Webmaster Ted Barth, Fishlines Melody Sanson, Youth Mickey Fortunato, Guide Association Frank Tenny, Promotions Mike Kreloff, Scholarship Sharon Green and PVA Ken Anderson from Orange County B/M. Wayne pointed out that the success of 2001 was due mainly to the large number of volunteers and chairpersons that were willing to become involved and overwhelming support of the membership. We set up a Disaster Relief Fund and a Scholarship Fund and these will be distributed shortly. The Scholarship recipients will be attending our banquet this evening. The theme for the coming year will be getting back to "Grass Roots" and getting back to basics. ESPN has purchased BASS and there is a lot going on there. The Divisional team worked together and it was a great experience for all of them. I am looking forward to next year's tournament. Anthony Savino will be going on to the Federation Championship, which will begin on April 15th. Nate Laskiewicz is our 2001 Angler of the Year. Joanne Davis will be getting married February 2nd. Wayne asked any clubs that have done anything noteworthy to submit to BASS for a possible award. Don Staszczyk stated that he has a packet and will be submitting it to BASS for award consideration on behalf of his club, Millennium Bassmasters. Wayne will be preparing a packet for submission on behalf of the Federation for numerous awards. All of this exposure helped to make the Federation more visible and to increase membership.

Executive Committee minutes of December 1st were asked to be approved as presented. **Motion** made by Melody Tenny and seconded by Dan Morgan to accept the minutes as presented. **Motion** passed.

Executive Board minutes of December 2nd were asked to be approved as presented. **Motion** made by Melody Tenny and seconded by Dan Morgan to accept the minutes as presented. **Motion** passed.

Treasurer's Report: Sal could not be here so Wayne gave the following breakdown.

Balance as of 1-1-01 was \$19,383.76. 2001 Income was 114,272.78. Expenses for 2001 were \$121,003.28. Our year-end total is \$12,653.26. There were 775 members and 515 tournament entries. One tournament was cancelled. Disaster relief has \$2,452.50. This will be distributed shortly to an incoming Junior Federation member whose father died. A \$1,000.00 Type I Savings Bond will be purchased for this Junior member. The remainder will be given to the World Trade Center Fund.

Scholarship fund has \$1,400. One-half or 50% of these monies will be given out tonight at the banquet to our two recipients. This fund needs to be built up for the years to come. All operating expenses come out of the General Fund. None of these monies can be used for anything besides awarding to scholarship winners unless approved by the membership.

Fishlines had 292 pages at \$10.25 a page. Wayne asked those present if they had any suggestions regarding Fishlines. All were pleased with how it looked and the only suggestion was to have more articles like the one written by Chris Loftus. The income from Fishlines was \$23,267.65 and the expenses were \$22,642.55.

The apparel line had income of \$8,297.78 and expenses of \$7,218.10 for a profit of \$1,079.68. Rick Gulla suggested better patches for the Team Jackets.

Boat Raffle - Tickets for the raffle will go on sale today. Five Hundred tickets will be made available at \$100.00 each. Wayne again explained how the raffle would work. (Please refer to the December Minutes.) Paul Tomeo reported that some clubs were incorporating the purchase of the ticket in their dues. They can be given as gifts. Buyers can make weekly or monthly payments. Clubs can buy tickets and then raffle them off. Money and ticket stubs go to Pam

Bliss. Money will go into CD's until the drawing.

IRS Issue - Wayne reported that this has been resolved. Records were checked and the errors arose from the information that we had. This was corrected and the correct information was reported to the IRS. All were reminded

that any winnings over \$600.00 must be reported. If you receive a 1099 be sure to check that all the information is correct.

Scholarship - Sharon Green reported that we had \$1,400.00 in the fund to date. Sharon and her committee - Melody Tennity, Mickey Fortunato, and Sal Pennini - will be discussing ways to increase the donations to this fund. (For a recap of this fund, check the December minutes.) Information with respect to this fund can be found on our website and the final guidelines will be presented at the March meeting. This year the full 50% will not be given out due to the amount in the fund. Sharon urged all reps to speak to their clubs about making donations to this fund. Sharon thanked Wayne for getting this started.

Website - Ted Barth had nothing new to report. Information is given to Ted and he posts it. The new message board should be up and running by February 1st.

Audit Committee - This committee is needed for the March meeting to review our financial records and make a report to the Executive Board. Wayne asked if anyone was interested to be on this committee and if not, Wayne will personally appoint volunteers.

Membership - Pam Bliss reported that so far in 2002 we have 272 paid members, 14 are new, but only 17 clubs have paid. One new club: Eastern New York.

PVA Tournament - (Paralyzed Veterans of America) August 18th at Cayuga Lake has been set. Fifty boats will be needed there are no special rule. Al Smith reported that he went to a tournament and the only problem the anglers have is getting in and out of the boats. Once they are in the boat everything seems to work out. Ken Anderson will be calling local clubs for help.

Tournaments - Discounts will be given if you sign up for all four tournaments and pay in advance at least 2 weeks prior to the first tournament. The tournament advisory board will be meeting today and again in February to review the rules and language to make it more understandable. Frank Tennity asked if there is 15,000 BASS members in New York State then how come we only have 775 federation members last year. He asked Al Smith if he could put a notice in Bassmaster Magazine regarding our federation. Al stated that they have and add that they use as filler that lists the States that have federations and they are given the National number to call to get information. Ron Kelly asked if there was any way for the New York State Bass Chapter Federation to obtain the list of BASS members from New York. Al stated that he could not make this list available but it would be possible to do a mailing out of BASS headquarters at a very reasonable cost. It might even be possible to do this while mailing out Bassmaster Magazine with a card in the plastic liner informing New York state residents about the Federation and include information on how officers could be reached. Dennis Smith then congratulated Wayne on doing a lot more for the clubs than had been done in the past. Dennis stated that 65% of club members do not fish the trail. We are doing more to reach these people and make them aware of what is going on. Dennis then proposed that the qualifying slots from the Club Team Event be changed from the top angler on the winning team and the top angler on the 2nd place team to the top 2 anglers overall in the tournament. He stated that the federation needs to look at all of the anglers and not just the ones that fish the trail. There were several ideas brought forth including a suggestion about wild card slots and special tournaments. Wayne again pointed out that any changes involving tournaments had to go through the Tournament Advisory Board. The TAB is comprised of Pam Bliss, Joe Matt, Ted Barth, Mark Ventra and Chris Loftus. Any of these people can be contacted with ideas that an angler wants to have reviewed.

Conservation - Wayne mentioned that we still do not have a Conservation Director. Our goal this year is to do a better job with conservation and fishcare.

Break for Lunch - 30 minutes.

Meeting resumed at 1:15 p.m.

Wayne announced that Mike Kreloff was here selling Federation s apparel if anyone was interested.

Meeting Location - Paul Tomeo and Pam Bliss reported on findings for a centralized, permanent location for the meetings. Many people had issued complaints as to the switching from Syracuse to Albany and it was felt that the same city location would end the confusion.

Pam did an analysis using different calculations to determine the central location - by distance that each club rep would have to travel; one vote per club member in each club and using the club rep's address as location; one vote per club that had been going to meetings for the past two years; and, one vote per member for each club that had been going to meetings for the past two years - to arrive at Binghamton being the central location three out of four, with Syracuse winning out only once. Ted Barth **Made a Motion** to have all three meetings of the Federation in Binghamton. **Seconded** by Melody Tennity. Discussion followed possibly rotating between Syracuse and Binghamton; or even rotating between Albany, Binghamton and Western part of the State. It was felt this would really confuse things. Vote was taken of those present for Binghamton as the meeting location spot - 10 no and 6 yes and two absentees. Vote taken of those present for Syracuse as the meeting location spot - 10 yes and 5 no and three absentees. **Motion Made** by Rich Kazmierczak to have all three meetings in Syracuse. **Seconded** by Melody

Tennity. Discussion followed about taking it back to the clubs and about trying this for a year and seeing how it worked. **Motion Passed.** It was decided to make Syracuse the meeting location for all Federation meetings beginning next December and all banquets would be in the Syracuse area as well. The next meeting will be in Albany because of the State Finals for the Casting Kids Competition had already been set.

Youth - Mickey Fortunato reported on the success of Leadership Camp. Both clubs sent members. The Youth Committee again presented their proposal for forming a Youth Federation.

(See December Minutes for details). Issues were again raised regarding the CTE and the Tournament Advisory Board will determine this. Pam asked for an "advisement vote" of those present on how they felt about the Juniors participating in our tournament trail and in the CTE. A hand vote of those present was 16 yes and 9 no for the Juniors to participate in the Tournament Trail. A hand vote of those present was 21 yes and 12 no for the Juniors to participate in the CTE. Pam will take all this information back to the Tournament Advisory Board. A decision will be reported at the March Meeting.

Mickey reported that Casting Kids' Championship would be March 16 at the Albany Sport's Show. We have room to sell things and volunteers are needed to work.

Mr/Miss will be June 29-30th on Lake George.

Only three clubs have Junior chapters - Hudson Valley, Southern Tier and Orange County. Mickey stated he would like to have two more junior chapters if possible.

Mickey reminded everyone that if they have a Casting Kids' competition between now and March, they will get a ticket for a possible free entry in the CTE.

OLD BUSINESS

Issue of new clubs being allowed to fish the CTE was sent to the Tournament Advisory Board for their consideration and will be reported on at the March meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Wayne asked if there was any New Business to be discussed. None was forthcoming.

Wayne introduced Al Smith from National BASS. Al gave a background of his involvement with fishing and BASS. Al was a New England BASS member for fifteen years and has been with BASS for the past ten years and has held every job but Treasurer. Al reported that the PVA might not fish out of Eastern Divisional. Their trail spans thirteen states and they could be turning into their own Federation. They might fish with the North or South Divisional Teams. BASS is looking into restructuring the Divisions. The Eastern Divisional Winner has to beat anglers from eleven other states, where the Southern Divisional Winner has to beat anglers from only six other states.

Federation Dues - Al states that some dues were not paid until February or March or just before their 1st event. Al stressed that insurance coverage ends on 12/31 and does not begin again until the angler has sent in his dues. They are trying to get the angler more for their \$15.00. They will be increasing the insurance policy. (Junior policy is worth more.) In April the new policy will come into effect with extended coverage and no deductible.

150 Tournaments - next fall they hope to have twice as many events with 50% of the amateur slots going to Federation members. The local Federation anglers will be drawn first for the open slots and then they will go down the line. There are normally 500 to 3000 applicants for the 150 slots.

Open Events - Proposal to have these become pro/ams with 50% of the amateur slots going to Federation anglers. Might increase number of tournaments so that those interested can fish. Pros like the pro-am format because they do not have to share their boat with another pro. The key is to get enough amateurs to want to fish the event. One way to do this might be to increase the number of slots from 300 to 330. Make it so the top five go to the Classic. May even create a year round trail. Pros have indicated that if this were created they would fish it. Will know in one month or possibly sooner.

Disney wants to provide Federation members with travel services. If a Federation member is going to Disney, they will have a number of discounts available to them for travel and for part admissions as well.

Al asked Wayne since this was his third year in office what he has not done that he should have done? Wayne asked for some time to think about this. Al also asked those present - What National and Wayne Tomassi have not done to help the Federation grow? One issue raised was if National had actual dollar amounts for what a Federation tournament actually brings into a community when they host a tournament there. These numbers are available and can be given to us if we ask for them. When National went to Mobile with it's 51 anglers and the Federation Presidents, it brought \$3 million in direct revenue. Mobile provided these numbers to National. Chris Loftus mentioned that we have to do a better job of marketing the Federation because he would hate to see it someday become extinct because it has provided him with many opportunities. Al did report that since the reorganization at National, we no longer stand alone. They now report to the Marketing Department. Another issue raised was that Bassmaster Magazine does not list the various state federations or phone numbers. Apparently they do as filler when space permits. Bass Times in February will have a pullout section on Federations. Bassmaster will also have a few

pages trying to pump up Federations. Bass Times will have a new format. Writers will now be paid per column of Federation news that they submit.

ABC will be airing the Classic this year.

The only bad part of the merger was that a lot of the people that have been with BASS for a long time - Helen, Carl, Ken - were let go before Thanksgiving. They all had two year contracts. They were all given severance packages including Don Cochran. WCF did not work out and Don had no where to go when it failed. Don is not bitter. Helen had 17 people reporting to her directly. People have been restructured into different areas. ESPN is the only outdoor network that is on 24 hours a day. They will televise the Divisional Championships. The payouts will be increased. Divisional Championship had turned into an individual rather than a team event. Al has seen teams leave hating each other and it is not bringing people together. Divisional Advisory Board consists of five men and Al and they will be looking into changes. Now the budget for this board is to bring Divisional Presidents to Montgomery is provided by National but there may come a time when the individual Federations as asked to help pay for this. Eastern Division communicates with Al the most. Al stated he was very proud of us for trying to take the Junior program up to the level of being their own Federation and registering them. This has never been done. Once this has become a reality, Al urged us to get the information and pictures into Bass Times and Bassmaster for publication.

Al stressed getting information into National about all the new things the Federation is doing and has done to apply for the awards offered. National has received only 28 applicants for awards to date across the country. Mike Cusano stressed that club presidents and reps need to promote the Federation more from the club level. Mike feels the biggest reason we lose Federation members is because the Federation Trail is too competitive and there is not a lot of sharing of information for new anglers that want to learn so they do not come back. The average age of present Federation anglers is 48/49. The present trend is to older aged anglers. We are not attracting young anglers.

Al also pointed out that some states are trying to eliminate small club tournaments. They are proposing legislation that would require having a safety boat in attendance at all times with a regular EMT present. There are also proposals for \$250 licensing fee to be paid to the state in order to hold a tournament. They are not opposed to the big State tournaments but the smaller ones. Utah for example is trying to limit tournaments to weekdays. If the respective Federations are not there to fight these issues, they will pass. Everyone needs to be involved. And getting kids involved is the answer to stop a lot of these issues because they find out how much fun it is to fish and they will be there to continue the fight when the present members are too tired to continue fighting.

Al then asked Wayne what he had not done and what he should have done. Wayne pointed out that he has asked his Committee people to do the same things every year with greater results each year. Wayne has opened up the Federation on issues that were never open for discussion before such as where to hold meetings. One of last year's tournaments had a record number of anglers participating. The only thing he has always wanted to attempt has been regionalization.

Anglers do not support this because they enjoy fishing other bodies of water and seeing anglers they normally would not see even if it were only once or twice a year. Wayne did not feel that regionalization could ever work because he was not sure he would be able to get enough volunteers. This is no longer an issue. If this ever comes up as a possibility because the Federation grows to such a large extend, he would form a committee and have them figure out the feasibility. Ted Barth stated he was a die-hard regionalization supporter but now has gone the other way. He enjoys going places that he would not ordinarily go. Ted feels this would be a detriment to the Federation. Wayne went on to state he enjoyed the job, even during those times when it is a lot of work. This year all banquet participates will get a "pen" stating that they all "make a difference". Wayne feels that everyone does just by doing the "little things". Wayne pointed out things like Don Staszczyk's club's Make A Wish Tournament to Melody Tenny's Mudlines all help the Federation to grow. Rick Kazmierczak pointed out that the Federation has reached out to the Western part of the State and though he could not fish this year's trail he did like the bodies of water that were picked. Wayne stated that there have been a lot of changes that were made and there is a lot more that will be going on. Wayne has tried to bring the camaraderie back and to give members a feeling that they are cared about and that their opinions matter.

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m. **Motion Made** by Melody Tenny. **Seconded** by Bob Mabee to adjourn. **Motion Passed.**

Next meeting will be March 17, 2002 at the Quality Inn in Albany, New York starting at 11:00 a.m. Lunch will be served.

Respectfully submitted,
Rose Maher, Secretary