

**NEW YORK STATE BASS CHAPTER FEDERATION
MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING DECEMBER 8, 2002
LEMOYNE MANOR, SYRACUSE, NEW YORK**

Meeting was called to order by President Wayne Tomassi at 11:10AM. Officers present: Wayne Tomassi, President, and Frank Maher volunteered to take the minutes of the meeting in place of Secretary Rose Maher. Paul Tomeo, Vice President was in a car accident and would not attend. Sal Pennini couldn't make it.

Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Those present were asked to bow their heads in prayer in memory of Ken Charbonneau a member of the Capital District Bassmasters, the Federation and chairman of the Marketing Committee who passed away this fall.

Roll call of clubs was taken. Those present were: Albany Area, Barge Canal, Berkshire, Chatauqua Lk., Finger Lakes, Greylock BASS, Orange County, Port City, Rochester, Salt City, Southern Tier, Southwestern, and Westchester. Orange County and Southern Tier Jr. Chapters were also represented.

Motion to accept minutes of the March 2002 Board meeting by Mike Cusano and a Second by Bill Pigott, Motion passed.

Motion to accept the minutes of the March 2002 Executive Committee meeting by Mike Cusano and a Second by Bill Pigott. Motion Passed.

President's Message: President Tomassi started by thanking all of the committee chairs for their hard work the past year. He announced that Dominic DiGirolamo would head the Scholarship committee. Frank Maher was asked to pass Dominic's resume around so those present could peruse his qualifications. Dominic will take over Sharon Green's duties who will be moving to Tournament Director.

President Tomassi stated that his president's message would be different this time, a little stronger. He explained that he wanted to stimulate the Executive Board so that the Federation continues to improve. For the past few years, he has been listening to the membership, but would like take this time to reflect on some of his thoughts, and hope that the members of the Executive Board would listen in return.

President Tomassi started by reflecting on our history making year:

- Open communications with the membership is good and is a good reflection of our members.
- Well-attended banquet with 97 guests in attendance.
- Starting the NYSBCF Scholarship Fund was a Federation Milestone and he appreciates the success of donations, but encouraged more support to make it strong.
- New York won the Federation of the year award from BASS was historical.
- New York was able to start the first ever recognized Junior Federation of B.A.S.S. Membership grew to over 800.
- There was a 50% increase in NYSBCF membership to the National Federation since 1999.
- The 2002 Divisional Team won the Eastern Divisional on the Connecticut River.

President Tomassi stated that he had taken the membership's concerns to Al Smith about the sponsorship of Busch Beer. Many members felt that the ad in B.A.S.S. Times was inappropriate for our sport. After some discussion, we learned that the ad will be changed in the future.

President Tomassi shared that the By-Division President's Council Reps of the BASS Federation meets with ESPN regularly and relations are very good. Federation members shouldn't have any concerns about ESPN's support of the Federation program.

President Tomassi stated that the Tournament Advisory Board (TAB) continues to do a great job. He further stated that they truly do represent the best interests of the federation's anglers. They opening bring forward our angler's concerns and act as devil's advocate between themselves to insure that the best decision is being made. He asked the TAB to better address the repeating or continuing concerns of the members such as Points vs. Weight scoring system, Off Limits periods, scheduling around BFL events and Boater vs. Non Boater ratios. He asked that they somehow better document for all to understand why each decision was made. He urged the TAB as they work to think "outside the box" when dealing with these issues and make adjustments to satisfy the majority of the anglers. "Thinking outside the Box" might fix some of the repetitive issues that come up every year. He highlighted his "thoughts" on some of them, noting that during his "President's Message", it doesn't mean that they have to be agreed to. It's simply his time to stimulate the Executive Board and the TAB, and ask them to put some thought in their decisions.

- Points vs Points/Weight: If anglers knew the history of how and when we got to where we were today, they might better understand why our Federation ranks its anglers this way. Our previous system of points based

on number of participants, i.e. an opening tournament winner getting 200 plus points, frequently made that team based on that tournament alone, and didn't even have to fish all four. All know that a Points Only system does result in the most consistent anglers at the top, but the points / weight system results in the best participation with consistency as a secondary benefit. He hears many anglers at the last tournament trying to catch pounds to make the team, and knows that if our trail was based on a points only system, they wouldn't be there. Better documentation of the history would help communicate our reasons and possibly eliminate or reduce this repetitive request. Also if the standings list showed both the anglers points and weight, one could compare and see that the standings are really not that different if we went to a total points system. The benefit of additional participation is important.

- BFL: President Tomassi understands the proposal to schedule our tournaments around BFL's tournament trail. Wayne noted that there are a handful of anglers that fish both, traveling late Saturday to make our tournament. Wayne said that his brain, says that it's a good idea, but his gut, based on his experience at a Redman tourney, tells him that BFL's participants are a different type of angler than our Federation anglers. They're more individuals, not caring about clubs, and the other Federation activities. Will we really gain more participation? Are they Federation members? He noted that if our Federation was going to consider scheduling around other trails, that we should do so for Foxwoods and Northeastern Bass Trails, because both are very good sponsors and advertisers with our Federation and also work around our schedule. We can't schedule around all the trails. The TAB would make the call on this issue and document it soundly.
- Boater/Non-Boater Ratio and the Angler/Co-Angler Idea: Both repeat items that need "thinking outside the box". The boater/non-boater ratio is never going to get better unless the boaters recruit traveling companions and bring them to the tournaments or NYSBCF does something different or "above the current call" to encourage non-boater participation. Some suggest the Angler/Co-Angler idea to solution it. Wayne noted that having experiencing it while fishing the Redman in their first year of implementing it, that forcing the Co-Angler to stay in the back of the boat, and the Angler must be in the front to catch fish is not what he believes the Federation is about. "Do we really want to treat our Federation non-boaters this way?" He hopes not. "Thinking outside the box" he next demonstrated how "outside the box" the TAB could be. How about reserving one, two or three slots on the Divisional Team for non-boaters?
- Off Limits: President Tomassi can't go back past 1990, but believes that NYSBCF has had the current off limits period for over 20 years, and this issue has been repeatedly brought up most of them. It's time to "think outside the box" and try to solution it once and for all. A few years ago, we tested raising the entry fee \$10 to the current \$65 to see if it impacted participation. It didn't, so we kept it, and didn't raise the fee the following year. He understands both sides of the off limits issue, but suggested that "thinking outside the box" might find a compromise that could work and eliminate forever this repetitive issue. Possibly the compromise should be tested for one year. Those proposing opening fishing on Friday, are thinking at "safe flight". President Tomassi asked, "Could the compromise be ending the off-limits at Friday noon?" This allows any angler to still take only Friday off and get some time on the water, to do some preliminary pre-fishing. A one year test will tell us if this works. If we do nothing, we will be discussing this again next year.

President Tomassi asked the Executive Board when they deal with their clubs to express that they should be receptive to ideas that could benefit all, that change can be good, and that we have to work together to do the best for the majority, while still listening to the minority. "New ideas has made us the Federation we are today." If an issue keeps coming up over and over, let's either find a solution, temporarily test a new one, or fully document our current practice.

President Tomassi then went on to say that with the success of this past year, we have to be careful to not become apathetic. The same people are working on the committees for years and the same faces are at the meetings. President Tomassi apologized for "preaching to the choir." There are committee chairperson positions open that have to be filled. He demonstrated an interesting principle of the "glass is half empty" being a pessimistic point of view while the same "glass is half full" being the optimists viewpoint. He reminded all that three years ago, the half full glass represented his goal to fill the half-full glass with Federation programs and successes. When the glass continues to have content added it eventually overflows. He pointed out that the federation now has a full small glass and is now ready for a new and bigger glass. A new glass that again is half full that can now be filled with additional programs and successes. All of the New York Bass Chapter Federation numbers are bigger and "It is time for this federation to move on and continue its improvement! The best way to develop the Federation into what you want is to be part of the team to define it."

B.A.S.S. and National Federation

President Tomassi next congratulated Billy Alexander who is New York's representative at the National Championship tournament in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. This tournament will be in May.

Lou Rizzotti now spoke about how wonderful the 2003 Eastern Divisional was and how he enjoyed being part of the New York team.

President Tomassi reminded all of the fund drive by BASS. For each \$10 membership sold to a new member your Bass club gets \$6.

President Tomassi urges all clubs that if they have a membership cap, they should do all they can to end that practice. We have to help the B.A.S.S. Federation grow and become strong. President Tomassi mentioned that insurance issues continue to be brought forth and companies are much stricter. All clubs must send in the names of new members and roster updates along with the \$15 for each person added to the roster to the BASS Federation. There is the possibility that a club member, who is not on the roster, might be cause for the club to not be covered by the insurance should an accident occur.

Any club representative changes or contact updates must be submitted to Sharon Green who will distribute to Rose and Melody.

Treasury Report: President Tomassi delivered the financial report.

- 811 Paid members according to Sal's numbers
- Federation net worth is \$14,695.64
- All bills left from 2001 were paid in full.

No motion to accept as this report was not a final 2002 close out.

A short discussion ensued on the banquet. It will be at the Lemoyne Manor in Syracuse on January something or other. If you bought a boat raffle ticket you may attend the banquet for no charge. If you are bringing a guest the charge is \$25 per person. Reservations still must be made through Rose Maher. Frank stated that Rose had only 28 reservations as of this morning. President Tomassi stated that Paul Tomeo is still looking for items for the auction. President Tomassi further went on to praise Charlie Curcurito for how well he handled the auction in 2002.

Fishlines: President Tomassi stated that Fishlines is a financial drain during the fall season after our tournaments are over. He noted that the price per page went down this year based on some of the adjustments made. (See Financial Report) A survey was posted on the website and in the last issue of Fishlines. President Tomassi stated that 20 surveys were returned to Rose Maher who tallied the results. A discussion ensued as to content of each magazine and whether entry forms, data sheets and such items should be included with each issue.

Motion: An official tournament entry form should be in each issue of Fishlines consistent with the form on the website. **Second:** Melody Tenny. **Motion** passed on a voice vote.

Motion: A single-page membership data sheet with consistent format should be on the web and within Fishlines.

Second: Melody Tenny. **Motion** passed on a voice vote.

- A discussion on the number of issues to be published ensued. A review of the expense report indicated that at \$8 per member, plus advertising, the break-even was at the 5th issue after the annual. President Tomassi also indicated that advertising falls off after the season. It was immediately agreed that 8 issues could no longer be printed due to the expense involved and a discussion ensued to whether we should publish 5 or 6 plus the annual.

Motion: To print and distribute 5 issues plus the annual by Mike Cusano, **Second** by Bob Green. **Motion** passed on a voice vote.

It was agreed that the Fishlines production calendar would be developed based on our tournament trail and presented at the January meeting.

Discussion ensued on the number of issues, print size, paper quality, photo quality, whether tournament results for the full field should be printed in each issue or just the top 50 or 100. **Motion:** To print all standings by Mike Cusano, **Second** by Pam Bliss. **Motion** passed.

President Tomassi stated that the Federation would have it's hands full replacing Ken Charbonneau. Ken sold many ads in Fishlines. One idea from President Tomassi was to offer commissions to those members who sell ads. Clubs could buy space in Fishlines to advertise their club and advertise for members. Discussion ensued.

Motion: A breakeven analysis on Fishlines advertising for possibility for club/individual commissions to be done for the January meeting by Pam Bliss **Second** by Mike Cusano. **Motion** passed.

Membership Report: Pam Bliss delivered the membership report. Club rosters were handed out to those in attendance.

- All memberships for 2003 are to go to Sharon Green.
- 816 active members

- 166 new this year
- 54 clubs - 2 new

President Tomassi made a plea for a volunteer to chair the membership committee. Someone has to coordinate club membership data with BASS and be sure that all Federation clubs are properly registered with BASS. There was an issue this year of a Federation club not registering with BASS and that could have been a problem.

After Meeting Note: Meg Corbett-Bates of Rochester BM came forward after the meeting adjourned and volunteered for the Membership Chairperson position. The Executive Committee approved President Tomassi's appointment on Dec 10th. NYSBCF appreciates Meg coming forward and volunteering for this important position.

A 15-minute recess was called for lunch at 1:30.

The meeting was returned to order at 2:03 PM.

President Tomassi opened this part of the meeting by stating that he thought that dues for members in the NONE club should be increased to \$40 plus the \$15 for the National Federation. The State Federation staff would have no increase in their dues. There are currently 23 members in NONE. The board recommended that no action be taken on this issue at this time.

Youth: Mickey Fortunato

- Casting kids. So far only 7 clubs have submitted results to Mickey for this year.
- A reminder - if your club holds a Casting Kids event then the club's name will be put into a hat and the winning club drawn will have a free entry in the Club Team Event.
- Casting Kids finals will be on March 1, 2003 at Brazees Chevrolet in Syracuse on Old Liverpool Road.

The Jr. Mr./Miss bass tournament this year will be on May 10, 2003. This event will be either in Connecticut or on a body of water in the state with a legal catch and release season and it will be a paper tournament. Great discussion ensued as to what a catch and release season means. President Tomassi stated that he had written documentation from Doug Stange that a Paper tournament for Junior Bassmasters would be permitted. More concerns were brought forth that clubs would get wind of this and come to the open areas and have illegal paper tournaments endangering this special regulation for those who worked so hard to get it into place.

Tournament Committee: Pam Bliss and Sharon Green

- Junior Nationals will be held on June 28 with the site to be announced.
- The tournament crew from New York State Bass Federation will be recognized in BASS Times.
- The July 13 tournament will not be on the Hudson River - site will be changed.
- Membership eligibility for the Club Team Event was further discussed.
- Concerns and questions regarding tournaments should be brought to the regions' TAB member.

Conservation: Mike Cusano

- Salt City Bassmasters are accumulating UPC Labels from Berkley fishing Lines. Please do not send him old line! Berkeley is making financial grants available for artificial habitats and Salt City is planning on enhancement of habitat at Onondaga Lake.
- Power loading issue. Discussion on power loading ensued. Some New York state parks are banning power loading and erecting signs. It was stated that some anglers have been ticketed. New York State Bass Chapter Federation is representing all anglers on this issue. The DEC states that bans on Power Loading are not a law. The New York State Parks Commissioner, Bernadette Castro, states that it is not a law and cannot be enforced. Mike Cusano asked that anyone who has gotten a ticket for power loading to please send him a copy of the ticket.
- Mike is looking for any information on drive on trailers. He stated that if you have owner's manuals that state the proper way to load your boat is to drive it on he would like a copy.

The last item in this area was the subject of early season catch and release. President Tomassi and Mike Cusano have been in contact with Doug Stange of DEC and he is willing to sit down and meet with them and discuss this issue. Clubs should poll their members and come back to the next meeting prepared to discuss this issue.

President Tomassi stated that the federation needed a Conservation Committee Chairperson, someone to take over the issue of Fishcare at the tournaments and stay on top of Fishcare issues.

Marketing: The loss of Ken Charbonneau is devastating to the federation. This job is very critical. Anyone who is willing to do this job please come forward.

Scholarship: Sharon Green spoke on this subject. Per the by-laws only 50% of the fund can be expended this year. Currently those eligible for scholarship would be students entering their first year of college, current college students, and continuing education students. Sharon thanked her fellow committee members. President Tomassi urged all club reps to ask their club members for a donation to the scholarship fund. Further all those with family meeting the criteria were urged to apply for these scholarships.

At this time, Southern Tier Bassmasters donated \$200 to the Scholarship Fund; \$100 from the Junior Chapter and \$100 from the Senior Chapter.

Banquet: President Tomassi stated that clubs must send in their tickets for the Boat Raffle. Many are holding onto paid tickets based on the rumor that it might be cancelled. Please be reminded that those planning to attend the banquet must RSVP to Rose as soon as possible. Once again all tournament sponsors would be invited to attend.

50-50: The meeting 50-50 was won by Dennis Smith of Westchester Rod and Reel.

Motion to adjourn made by Mike Cusano at 3:32 PM **Second** by Bill Pigott.

Respectfully submitted,
Rose Maher, Secretary