

**New York State B.A.S.S. Chapter Federation
minutes of 1-15-00**

The meeting started at 12:20 pm at the Quality Inn in Syracuse. Scott Keller thanked the Federation for letting him do his job for the past six years. He then introduced the new slate of officers as follows: President, Wayne Tomassi; Vice President, Joanne Davis; Secretary, Susan Johnson and Membership, Woody Henyan. Matt Draxler also retains his office as Treasurer.

The roll call indicated the following clubs in attendance: Albany Area, Barge Canal, Benevolent, Camden, Capital District, Finger Lakes, Greylock, Hudson Valley, Indian Lakes, Lake Champlain, Long Island, Orange County, Predators, Rochester, Salt City, Southern Tier, Statewide and Tidewater.

The minutes of the December 12th meeting were read and a motion to accept the minutes was made by Mike Zasuly and seconded by Dave Hadley. The minutes were accepted unanimously.

There were no announcements or communications to be made at this time.

President Tomassi thanked everyone who voted and asked for a round of applause for Scott Keller for his six years of service as President of the Federation.

President Tomassi stated he only intended to be President for four years and indicated the next President was probably at this meeting.

He thanked all of those representing clubs for attending this meeting as this is where it will all happen. Our first priority is to mend and build the camaraderie in the Federation. We all go through a lot with an election but he's excited about the future and hopes everyone else is too.

Improvements in communication will be made so everyone knows what's going on with the Federation. The web site will be organized so we can get lots of information out. Meeting minutes will be sent within a week.

If you have problems with the Federation, committees, a person or the Executive Committee, don't just talk about it, call the President. Vice President Davis' number one job will be to be the "complaint department". Communication is a two way street so we need communication from the members as well as to the members.

Club reps need to come prepared to the meetings to vote on issues. They may be small issues to vote on immediately or they may be issues to be brought back to clubs for voting on at the next meeting. Large issues may be done by a weighted vote or a committee may have to be appointed to prepare a proposal on the issue. Whatever is on the agenda we need to get to meetings on time since the meeting is where things will happen.

The Executive Committee meetings will have an "open door" policy and anyone may attend. The Executive Committee minutes will be sent to the clubs.

President Tomassi will continue to visit clubs and the officers will make random calls to check out and get feedback from the clubs.

This is your Federation, not one person's or the Executive Committee's. No idea is too small or too crazy to voice. A healthy organization continues to improve.

Treasurer Draxler was unable to make this meeting because of work obligations so there was no Treasurer's report. He sent word there will be a full report at the next meeting. President Tomassi stated there will be an audit and budget after the next Executive meeting.

Vice President Davis began her report with an announcement of a bus trip being organized to the Classic. Details will be forthcoming. She would like to think of her position as a communication portal so please contact her with any questions, complaints, etc.

A membership report was then given by Woody Henyan. To date we have 162 members, six of them being new this year. Fifteen clubs have paid their dues and one club has paid their dues but has no members signed up with the Federation. President Tomassi then proposed a membership phone book to list members. The list will not be sold.

President Tomassi also indicated he will have a presidential advisory committee. He even intends to personally pay the Federation dues for a member from Orange County so he can be on the committee.

Another proposal he would like to make with the approval of the Executive Committee is to have a Federation pro staff. The pro staff would come from various members such as the angler of the year, the Wrangler Angler or those that fish the pro trail. Their biographies would be posted on the web site.

Under old business the situation with Chautauqua Lake was brought back up to discuss. Ted Barth had talked with the Region 9 director, Paul McKeown, and the policy they have adopted is there will be no organized tournaments between July 15th and August 15th. They cannot stop tournaments but they can stop organizations and clubs from holding weigh-ins on state properties, such as Long Point State Park. Long Point is not allowing any large tournaments all of July. Ted feels personally this is just a lot of politics.

A comment was made by Mike Zasuly that this is the scariest thing he's ever heard since being with the Federation. If Chautauqua gets away with doing this the next step will be for other waters in New York to follow suit. Other situations similar to this, such as the requirement of permits instituted on Candlewood Lake in Connecticut, were

discussed. The Candlewood situation was not a problem at first but has become one. We can't allow this situation or any similar ones to happen. It was suggested that a committee be formed to investigate and stop this situation.

President Tomassi also talked about other things we need to do as a Federation, such as become active again in the Conservation Council and have representatives at the March on Albany on March 15th.

A question was then asked about the suggestion made at a meeting a couple of years ago that the calcutta money go to the Wrangler Angler for expenses. It will be checked into but it is believed that the decision made was to start again taking 10% of the money for the Federation treasury.

There was a break from 1:00 until 1:30. The food was provided by the Federation with a 50/50 raffle to help defray the cost. After the break it was suggested that the food come at the end of the meeting instead of the middle so the meetings would go more quickly.

Youth Director Mickey Fortunato then gave his report. He indicated only five clubs - Capital District, Indian Lakes, Renegade, Rip VanWinkle and Orange County - have reported their CastingKids events. Clubs need to report as soon as possible so details could be sent in a timely manner to clubs sending finalists to the State CastingKids finals on Saturday, March 18th. Clubs should send the winning copy to B.A.S.S. and a copy of the winners to Mickey. They should also keep a copy for their records. If the original winner is unable to attend, clubs can not send alternates.

The Junior Mr/Miss qualifying tournament will be held on Sunday, June 25th on Cayuga Lake out of Taughannock Falls State Park. This year the Junior Invitational will be held on Saturday, July 29th on the Connecticut River.

At this point in time Joanne Davis will assume temporary position of Conservation Director until the executive Committee appoints a permanent director. President Tomassi asked that we get back into the Conservation Council. Ken Charbonneau made a motion to spend the \$150 to get back into the Conservation Council and Mike Zasuly seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion.

Clubs were then urged to send a representative to the March on Albany on March 15th to lobby. There are lots of issues and we need to be involved. Burnie Haney had a proposal that would involve guides in the Federation. He also proposed a committee to look at various issues and take ideas back to the club. Members were urged to call if interested.

President Tomassi indicated the tournament director would be an Executive Committee decision but his choice would be Pam Bliss as indicated in his campaign platform.

Reps need to take back the off-limits issue to their clubs for discussion and be prepared to vote on this issue at the next meeting.

There was discussion if there was a bylaw requiring federations to follow B.A.S.S. tournament rules. The issue of increasing the horsepower when B.A.S.S. didn't was questioned. Mike Zasuly spoke to that rule indicating there isn't a bylaw and B.A.S.S. advocates the home rule policy since each state federation varies in laws, etc. New York basically didn't increase the horsepower because of safety and insurance. If a lawsuit were to occur our position wouldn't be as secure if we weren't following our parent organization's ruling. In addition, our team members wouldn't have been able to fish the divisional tournaments with a higher horsepower since divisional tournaments are B.A.S.S. tournaments. A question was also raised on the gas pump ruling and if it wasn't a Federal law as well as a tournament rule.

Ken Charbonneau then spoke on his ideas for marketing the Federation. We need to look at the Federation as a business, especially concerning the revenue generated for the Federation. We need to look at how to get money in and what we need to "sell" about the Federation. Revenue from membership and sponsorship in turn leads to being able to do what we want in the Federation. We need to sell to the public creating brochures in the form of membership and sponsorship packets. A problem we've had in the past is getting people to distribute this information. We need to get clubs and individuals to get involved in distributing this information.

We need to get money to sponsor anglers and we need to raise this money by advertising. This advertising could be in the form of brochures to be distributed, ads sold on the fishcare trailer, the newsletter and for displaying banners.

We need to ask the question of why there are 700 plus members but only about 250 fish the tournaments. We need to find out the answer to the question of why those other 450 are members of the Federation. Clubs should ask their members this question. One answer is our work with the areas of youth, environment and politics concerning our fisheries. Things are not going to happen overnight but more revenue will make the Federation stronger.

A question was asked as to who the brochure would go to and it was answered that it would go to members and sponsors. Mike Zasuly indicated that sports shows sometimes provide booth space to organizations for distribution of information. We've done this in the past but it gets more difficult to find people to man the booth. Occasionally we had Federation information in a booth manned by a club. A comment was made that the shows are now charging for the booth even for clubs. We need to see about spitting these costs and/or using a booth at sports shows as a fundraiser.

A question was asked what the goal was for more involvement. It was answered that more involvement would lead to more members and more tournament attendance. That in turn would enable the Federation to do more concerning youth and conservation.

Brian Sanson indicated lure companies aren't making as much money as in the past and do not have unlimited budgets for sponsorship. The fishing industry in general is tough to get money and/or products from. Mike Zasuly made the comment that one of our major problems is the Federation members don't support our sponsors. Unless the members support our sponsors and advertisers the marketing ideas won't succeed.

At this time Scott Bliss presented an offer from Jamison Marine for the no boater of the year in 2000. The angler will receive their four points tournament entry fees and \$500 towards any boat on his lot, new or used.

At this time the three year tagging program on the Hudson River was brought up for discussion. It was stated that the DEC had hired an engineering firm to do this study and there were some concerns about how the study was being done. Representatives from DEC and the engineering company will be coming to speak to the Orange County Bassmasters on March 7th at 7:30 pm in Newburgh. For further information contact Mike Kreloff at 914-782-7293. Discussion about the program and the meeting ensued.

At this time President Tomassi proposed a bylaw change to change membership secretary to second vice president. Clubs should discuss this proposed change for the next meeting.

There are conflicts of bylaw changes and this issue will be addressed by an audit of the bylaws.

Dave Hadley stated he had a problem with B.A.S.S. and their new tournament trail with a format of 50% fishing and 50% boat racing. He would like to see the Federation take a stand on this issue. A motion was made by Dave Hadley and seconded by Ken Charbonneau "to send a letter to B.A.S.S. expressing our concerns and going on record as a Federation disagreeing with this type of trail". It was indicated that Ray Scott had a statement about this issue on his web site that people might want to view.

Dave also expressed a concern about the problems that arise when B.A.S.S. schedule a conflict with the invitationals and the divisional tournaments. He faced making a difficult decision last year and Matt Martin may have the same problem. Again a motion was made by Dave Hadley and seconded by Ken Charbonneau "to write a letter to Don Corkran (National Federation Director) with a copy to Dewey Kendrick (B.A.S.S. Tournament Director) indicating our position as a Federation opposing the scheduling of conflicts between the national and divisional tournaments". A committee was suggested to draft this letter. Dave indicated he was doing a letter and would forward it to Executive Committee.

Concerning the discussion of the tagging project on the Hudson, Cliff Tienken indicated that the system was a fiasco and the fish were being mutilated in the process. Mike Zasuly agreed with Cliff. He also suggested that if Orange County Bassmasters are agreeable we should send as many people as possible to their meeting. He stated that Cornell already did surveys several years ago. The Orange County representatives stated they wanted to give the speakers an opportunity to explain why they are doing these surveys. President Tomassi said we had to be careful and present ourselves in a positive manner at this meeting and not "ambush" the speakers. Hudson Valley indicated they have already sent a letter and e-mail on this issue. It was suggested another letter be sent to the DEC with copies to Ulster County, Greene County, the local Fish and Game and any other organizations that are involved with this issue. President Tomassi suggested he write the letter and that Cliff Tienken and Scott Keller review the letter. The comment was made that the engineers are only doing what the State has directed them to do.

At this time a motion was made by Mike Zasuly and seconded by Ken Charbonneau to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 pm.