

# TNAFS 2024 Annual Business Meeting

## Virtual, Microsoft Teams

April 8, 2024

The meeting was called to order by President, Meredith Harris, at 8:05am CT and quorum was established.

The President recognized past TNAFS President, Justin Wolbert and Southern Division representative, Mark Rogers. The motion to approve the 2023 business meeting minutes was made by Sally Petre and seconded by Shawna Fix. The motion to approve the 2024 business meeting agenda was made by Sally Petre and seconded by Shawna Fix.

### Remarks from Southern Division AFS:

Mark Rogers represented Southern Division AFS and shared talking points from Anthony Overton. AFS is looking to re-hire Doug Austin as he plans to retire. AFS is currently planning for the Honolulu meeting. AFS is continuing to work on their DEI initiatives. AFS Membership is down about 8%, please renew your dues. In regards to AFS committees, if you aren't a parent society member, you aren't a voting member. Anthony strives to add more nominations for awards and increase more social media presence, please share field stories with SDAFS.

### Officers Reports:

President, Meredith Harris - Most of our time in the last year was spent planning SDAFS. In 2023 we were able to award all fishing derby applicants. We awarded 2 students to go to SDAFS fully funded. We also drafted a letter of support for RAWA.

President Elect - Sally Petre - Has spent a lot of time planning the 2024 SDAFS meeting. There were 654 attendees, 180 were students, over 240 talks, 19 concurrent sessions, 9 symposia, 12 workshops, and 90 posters. The meeting was very successful, thank you to the planning team!

Secretary-Treasurer, Shawna Fix- The total income for 2023, not including the investment interest, was \$228,156.39. Total expenses for 2023 was \$181,070.22 including \$173,309.06 for SDAFS, \$250 for 2023 student travel awards, \$1,000 for fishing derby support, and \$6,285.15 for the 2023 meeting at Henry Horton. Our total balance for the year was \$47,086.17 not including the investment account. Including the investment account it was \$52,477.17. Our total profit from investments was \$5,391.00.

The 2024 treasurer's report was approved, Sally Petre 1st, Bernie Kuhajda 2nd.

### Committee Reports:

Historian, Aaron Coons - Continuing to make updates to the chapter history doc. It is current through 2010, working on 2010 to now. He will be reaching out to students to see if they would like to help with this.

Webmaster, Shannon Murphy- Most of the website effort has been going to SDAFS. Is working on making sure information is more concise, looking to make the website more of a resource for members.

Newsletter Editor, Joelle Ciriacy- The 2023 newsletter out early this year. There are about 10 updates from everyone. Huge thanks to everyone! Would like to have a more streamlined way to collect submissions, looking to do a google form submission.

Nominations and Awards Committee- Kristen Irwin stepped down and Aaron Burch accepted the position.

Outreach and Auction Committees - Both chair positions are open. Jessica Giddens volunteers for the outreach committee chair. Auction chair left unfilled.

### **Student Chapters:**

Alec Nance (UTK) – The University of Tennessee Knoxville Fish and Wildlife Subunit has 145 members, 15 AFS chapter members. They received chapter of the year award at SDAFS. The rest of what Alec reported on was not recorded.

Eduardo Toala-Hidalgo (TN Tech)- (Pulled from 2023-2024 Winter Newsletter) 2023 has been proven to be a successful and exciting year for the Student Fisheries Association at Tennessee Technological University. We have been able to provide our membership with valuable volunteer opportunities, professional development opportunities, and socialization with like minded individuals. Thanks to our members and collaborators, we have held various events on campus and in the surrounding communities. Additionally, with the help of campus wide events and our previous officers, we have gradually increased membership and student involvement within the association. In January, we kicked off the year by participating in the university's ORG-Stravaganza. Here, some of our members spoke with various interested students and showcased our association and its presence on campus. We also held our first joint meeting of the year with The Wildlife Society and discussed our association among an auditorium of wildlife and fisheries students. Additionally, some of our members attended the 2023 Cooperative Fishery Research Unit Meeting and displayed their research. In February, The Student Fisheries Association and The Wildlife Society held a joint graduate panel. Several graduate members from both associations graciously shared advice on getting into graduate school, finding graduate programs, and answered other related questions with our undergraduate members. Later in the month, SFA also assisted The Wildlife Society with their annual Beast Feast Fundraiser. March was a busy month for SFA and its members. Several of our members attended the Tennessee American Fisheries Society Chapter Meeting held in Chapel Hill, TN. This included two sponsored undergraduates who attended the meeting for the first time. Many of our graduate members were able to present their research. Our Vice President, Joelle Ciriacy, won an award for "Best Student Presentation" with her presentation titled When Push Comes to Shove and you Pick a Fight with a River Chub. Later in the month, SFA held elections for the 2023-2024 officers and elected Eduardo Toala-Hidalgo (President), Alex Marquez (Vice-President), Andrew Gable (Treasurer), and Ian Williams (Undergraduate Representative). During the rest of the Spring semester, we held several monthly meetings including a meeting with Jeff Simmons with the Tennessee Valley Authority. He kindly provided our membership with important advice and insight into working for state agencies. SFA also assisted Fred Heitman with American Aquatics in the construction and dispersal of artificial habitat at several lakes in Crossville, TN. Lastly, four of our members attended the 2023 Nature Rally in Standing Stone State Park. Here, members were able to hold educational demonstrations related to aquatic invertebrates with the hope of instilling a lifelong appreciation of all stream inhabitants in the

youth present. Several SFA members at our Kid's Fishing Derby at Cane Creek Park in Cookeville, TN. During the summer, a great number of our undergraduate and graduate members remained busy with fisheries related research and work opportunities that would provide applicable field and lab experience. SFA members also assisted TWRA with restocking Southern Appalachian Brook Trout in the Cherokee National Forest. Members backpacked Southern Appalachian Brook Trout reared by the Tennessee Aquarium Conservation Institute into the Citico Creek wilderness to increase native populations. Excitingly, SFA also held the first Kids Fishing Derby at Cane Creek Park in Cookeville, TN since Covid-19 began. We, alongside TWRA and Cookeville Leisure Services, experienced a prosperous event with an encouraging number of participants bearing countless happy faces. We began the Fall semester in August, by participating in the University's Mix and Mingle campus wide event and displaying our association to incoming freshmen. We also held our second Joint Meeting with The Wildlife Society and welcomed students interested in Wildlife, Fisheries, Ecology, and more. In September, we held a social event for our members at The Boils WMA and learned how to identify common nongame species of fish and aquatic invertebrates. Additionally, some of our members assisted Justin Spaulding with TWRA with three pass electroshocking surveys at the Bald River and Sycamore Creek. With the field season coming to an end and classes ramping up, our involvement slowed down a bit. However, members continued to volunteer their time with varying entities. Some examples include helping the U.S Corp of Engineers plant native tree species at Cordell Hull Reservoir, saving important native plant species on the Universities Native Plant Garden, and assisting in cleanups at Cane Creek Park in Cookeville, TN. In October we were able to hold a successful SFA Fish Fry, our main fundraiser for the year. Here we served Fried Silver Carp, provided by TWRA, to our campus and locals within the community. Not only did this provide us with funds to use for next year's Kids Fishing Derby, it also served to educate the public on destructive invasive species, and break the stigma surrounding the palatability of these fish. In November, several of our graduate members also presented at the Southeastern Fisheries Council in Chattanooga, TN. As the year ends we are beginning efforts to plan for the Kids Fishing Derby, SFA Fish Fry, and attendance at the Southeastern Division American Fisheries Society Meeting in 2024. Additionally, we are excited to begin preparations for three new outreach programs with local middle school and high school students as well as a local STEM Center with the aim of inspiring a future generation of fisheries professionals. SFA looks forward to remaining an active subunit of the Tennessee Chapter of the American Fisheries Society.

### **New Business**

We will be capping the fishing derby funding to \$1500 each year. We will also be rebranding them to family fishing events.

Student support – We would like to continue supporting a student from a college/university in the state of Tennessee to attend SDAFS meetings. The membership is in support of this.

Update to the by-laws - EXCOM will be updating the bylaws to split the treasurer-secretary position into two separate positions as well as redefine the roles of the president elect and some of the committees. Changes to the bylaws were approved unanimously.

### SDAFS Meetings:

- I. 2025 – Asheville, North Carolina
- II. 2026 – New Orleans, Louisiana
- III. 2027- Alabama

Parent Society meeting:

- I. 2025 – San Antonio, Texas
- II. 2026 - Columbus, Ohio
- III. 2027 - Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

### **Election of New Officers**

Nominations for EXCOM:

#### **President- elect**

Shawna Fix - Shawna was elected via online voting

Robert Paine

#### **Secretary- Treasurer**

Alex Bybel

Abbey Holsopple- Abbey was elected via online voting

### **Current Officers:**

Past-president: Justin Wolbert

President: Meredith Harris

President-elect: Sally Petre

Secretary-Treasurer: Shawna Fix

### **New Officers:**

Past-president: Meredith Harris

President: Sally Petre

President-elect: Shawna Fix

Secretary-Treasurer: Abbey Holsopple

2023 Committee Members:

Awards and Nominations: Aaron Burch

Historian: Aaron Coons

Social Media: Julianna Jett

Website: Shannon Murphy

Newsletter Editor: Joelle Ciracy

Auction Committee: OPEN

Outreach Committee: Jessica Davis

Presentation of Awards:

We did not do awards this year since we hosted SDAFS.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00am CT.