

SOBA BOARD MEETING MINUTES – APPROVED

Tuesday, April 9, 2024

(via teleconference)

12:30pm – 2:30pm Eastern

Welcome

Mize welcomed everyone and opened the meeting.

Roll Call of Attendees

Board Members: Todd Mize, Nancy Stewart, Chris French, Gary Gardner, and Mike Wichrowski were present. Sharon Clark was absent.

Staff: Taylor Matsko

Review of the Agenda and Amendments

No amendments to the agenda.

Approval of Past Minutes

The board reviewed minutes from March 18, 2024. No edits were made. Wichrowski motioned to approve minutes. Gardner provided the second. Motion passed.

President's Report

Mize provided the President's report.

- Mize asked about the status of the new SOBA website. Matsko informed him that SOBA staff had been working on it. Plan to give the Board a preview at the next Board meeting in May.

Symposium Registration Rates

- During last month's meeting, the Board decided to keep the registration rates the same for the 2024 Education & Training Symposium.
- The Board approved an additional off-site/field trip day registration fee of \$30 for attendees participating in the event on Thursday, August 29, in addition to the full registration rate of \$595.
- Gardner is going to work on the timeline for field trip day. The Board will discuss this during its next meeting in May.

Board Vacancy

- As of the current meeting, there have been no members who have signed up to join the Executive Board. SOBA staff will rerun the board vacancy announcement in the April newsletter.
- SOBA staff encouraged board members to contact any members they think may be interested in filling this open position.

Committees

- SOBA staff provided an update to the Board, stating that invitations for the committee kick-off calls have been scheduled. Committees are slated to convene for their first meetings by the end of April.
- The call for presentation proposals remains open through April 30, 2024. To date, nine proposals have been submitted.
- The Symposium Planning Committee will prioritize developing the Symposium session agenda as its first major task.

Awards

- SOBA staff provided a reminder to the Board regarding the ongoing open nominations for awards, which will continue through May 31, 2024. SOBA staff also noted one of the organization's goals outlined in the Strategic Plan, which is to "Secure two or more project nominations per award per year."
- The Board discussed a few possible incoming awards from the USFWS. Additionally, the Board deliberated on potential candidates for other awards.

2025 SOBA Education & Training Symposium

- Wichrowski informed the Board that he, Mize, and Matsko, had met with the team in Rhode Island to discuss hosting the 2025 Education & Training Symposium. Rhode Island is interested in hosting.
- Nick Vaccaro (*SOBA Meetings Coordinator*) has sent out an RFP (Request for Proposals) to hotels in the Newport and Providence areas. He is expecting to hear back by the end of May/early June with quotes and options.
- The Board deliberated on the prospect of shifting the Symposium from August to October. However, concerns were raised regarding potential fiscal year implications associated with this proposed change.
- The Board requested we look for options for Rhode Island in both August and October.

Open Discussion

- SOBA staff asked the Board about events they are interested in attending this year. Wichrowski believed he was supposed to compile a list of this but had not yet had the chance to do so. He noted that he would work on this for an upcoming meeting discussion.
- Matsko will work to find the list of events the Board had previously compiled in 2023 with events they were interested in.
- Some of the events that were mentioned:
 - **Docks Expo:** December 9 – 12, 2024 (Nashville, TN)
 - **American Boat & Yacht Council:** April 2, 2024 (Annapolis, MD)
 - **River Management Society Symposium:** April 8 – 10, 2025 (Ashland, OR)
 - **North American Wildlife Conference:** March 9 – 14, 2025 (Louisville, KY)
 - **Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies Annual Meeting:** September 22 – 25, 2024 (Madison, WI)
 - **National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) Annual**

Conference: September 17 – 19, 2024 (New Orleans, LA)

- **Association of Conservation Engineers Conference:** October 6 – 10, 2024 (Flagstaff, AZ)
- SOBA staff reminded the Board that they are hoping to provide the membership with one informational training session per year. The Board should be thinking about ideas and topics and presenters for this.
- Some ideas for training sessions that were mentioned:
 - ADA transition
 - U.S. access board
 - Signs, improvement project signs

Adjourn

Mize motioned to adjourn. Stewart provided the second. Meeting adjourned.

Approved on May 14, 2024.