SOBA Board Meeting  
Denver, Colorado (in conjunction with AFWA’s North American Meeting)  
Monday and Tuesday, March 10, 11, 2014

Janine Belleque (President)  
Ron Christofferson (Vice President)  
Pat Harrell (Treasurer)  
James Adams (Past President)  
Craig Walker  
Larry Horan  
Steve Miller  
Bernice McArdle

Janine opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to Denver.

A call to approve minutes from February’s conference call (February 11) was made, seconded and passed.

MONDAY MARCH 10th:

2014 CONFERENCE: ARKANSAS

Monday Workshop:
Discussion about upgrading the workshop. The FWS has discussed the need to change the format of the workshop, to include more hands-on and interactive sessions. It would be worthwhile having the Corps there to discuss policy issues, in a national (versus local) capacity. Craig suggested have “regional” tables at the workshop to review CVA applications, and provide feedback on why they were approved, denied, etc. This action would need to be coordinated with the FWS.

Tuesday General Session:
It’s important that we always include sessions and updates on what SOBA is doing, from a local, national and regional viewpoint, to increase participation in boating and fishing. Also, SOBA needs to be the face of boating access, and the central theme of our annual events should always be “boating access”. Other presentations to include NMMA and Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council updates and to include presentations based on the national assessment report; will review the Executive Summary, and plug in speakers as appropriate

Some ideas for conference sessions:  
Marina Dock Safety and Electric Shock, Angling and Boating Alliance issues, RBFF activities, Cutting Edge issues related to recruitment and retention, engineering issues:

2015 CONFERENCE VERMONT:
Mike Wichrowski has met with the Vermont Convention board. He will shortly be re-visiting the Basin Harbor Club to meet with their planning committee to review topics, layout, schedule, logistics, exhibits, etc. Mike has already started to develop his agenda items.
FUTURE SOBA CONFERENCES:
Pennsylvania is open to hosting SOBA in 2017 (with Arizona potentially being in 2016). James sent a letter of invite to ascertain PA’s firm interest. Another idea discussed was the potential to work with AFWA on a joint event. Other possibilities are Washington State, Georgia and California.

CONFERENCE MANUAL
The conference manual has been updated and available for states use in planning a conference.

LACY NICHOLS EDUCATION FUND
The application form has been reworked and edited to reduce the paperwork burden. This needs to be promoted widely, with a teaser sent every month.

TREASURER’S REPORT
Pat Harrell referred the board to January’s Financial Report for the latest figures. The following was the year-end financial overview (Dec 31, 2013):

The final 2013 financials end with net revenue of $6,500, a $13,300 gain on the budgeted loss for 2013 of ($6,800).

AWARDS
CONGRESSIONAL: The Board considered numerous candidates for the SOBA 2014 Congressional Award.

PROJECT/INDIVIDUAL AWARDS: Ron is reviewing and revising the awards forms to reflect updates and changes.

FWS MEETING:
FWS representatives Hannibal Bolton and Tom Busiahn met with SOBA board members to discuss ways that FWS and SOBA can work more closely together. Some areas of cooperation were identified: FWS QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER: FWS would like to do a feature story on SOBA in an upcoming newsletter (and feature a SOBA update in future newsletters); TRACS: This is a pivotal program that both FWS and SOBA need to work closely; and DUAL PERMITTING: FWS AND CORPS OF ENGINEERS: Both entities should work together to streamline the process of permitting.

SOBA INCORPORATION
SOBA should incorporate. From research carried out on the topic, it appears that SOBA has not been incorporated in the past. James took this on board, and completed an application for the State of Illinois. We will incorporate as a Trade Association.

SUMMER 2014 SOBA BOARD MEETING:
It was agreed that the 2014 Summer meeting would take place in Phoenix, Arizona, July 16, 17 (travel dates 15 and 18).
TUESDAY MARCH 11th:

RESPONSIVE MANAGEMENT – Report on NCN Research Study: Mark Duda

Mark Duda, Responsive Management, gave a presentation to the SOBA board unveiling the Executive Summary of the recent AFWA grant awarded to SOBA. This research study was conducted to determine whether a lack of boating access has contributed to the decline in boating/fishing participation. It was also intended to provide a baseline assessment of the adequacy and availability of, obstacles and challenges to, and priorities for boating access against which future access improvements can be measured. Arising from the project, will be recommendations and strategies for improving access that address the key access-related factors limiting participation among boaters, anglers, and other outdoor recreationists, and a design and assessment tool (such as a survey) to evaluate boating access that can be replicated and has universal application but is adaptable in scope and provides strategic guidance for actions by federal, state, and local agencies and NGOs.

RE-AUTHORIZATION:

Gordon Robertson, VP of the American Sportfishing Association (ASA) and Libby Yranski, Policy Fellow at the ASA, spoke to the SOBA board about the activities of the Angling and Boating Alliance (ABA) which developed a Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund reauthorization position statement to be used in crafting “Transportation Bill”.

The ABA reviewed “asks” from the USFWS and USCG and developed a way to provide their administrative needs based on the use of percentages of the Trust Fund account each year. Percentages of the fund were also used to increase funding to CVA, BIG and RBFF. States will get an increase in funding (Fishing, Boating access and Boating Safety programs). Also included in the verbiage is a sum up to $300k for angling and boating access, from the 15% boating access allocation fund. The allocation of these monies will be subject to a competitive bidding process for non-profit entities to address specific access concerns which provides SOBA with funding opportunities. The next newsletter will have a short article on this subject with ABA position statement and facts available on the SOBA web page.

AFWA BOARD INTRODUCTIONS:

AFWA’s Executive Board visited with the SOBA board to discuss areas of mutual interest. Many SOBA members are strongly connected to AFWA, and it’s very worthwhile staying close to this group. Having an MOU with AFWA may bring groups closer and get more AFWA people at SOBA’s annual conferences. AFWA does not have a Boating Access committee – perhaps talk to Ron Reagan about SOBA setting one up within AFWA’s borders. A partnership with AFWA strengthens SOBA as an entity.

Thoughts for strengthening relationship:

- Include an AFWA updated in SOBA’s newsletters – Ron Reagan
- Receive and review notes from appropriate AFWA meetings to stay abreast of issues that are of mutual interest.
- BIG Working Groups and Ranking Meeting: this is an opportunity for SOBA to develop BMP for writing BIG grants.
- Streamlining BIG structure with the intent of producing a more structured look at the process, and the nuances of process. As it is right now, no feedback is provided to the
applicant which is a big problem because it means bad applications continue to be submitted. Another part of the problem is that bad applications are being funded, rather than being rejected, because they are the only applications received.

- Set up AFWA Access Committee, with SOBA participation

**SOBA RELATIONSHIPS AND PARTNERSHIPS:**
Janine led a discussion to identify Board appointments to our partners as well as a path forward for Board members service. To this end, board members should shadow other board members while they serve on an external board (e.g. RBFF / AFWA). No one from SOBA has yet been appointed to AFWA’s board. It was suggested that the position of SOBA President continues to be one year in length, but renewable for up to 3 years.

Boards, Task Forces, Committees earmarked as being important to SOBA’s Mission are as follows: RBFF, AFWA, ABA, AMI, ABC, SFBPC, BIG RANKING TEAM, BIG AND CVA REVIEW TEAM, REFUGE VISION, FISH HABITAT, BOAT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Janine will continue to work with board members to ensure a place at the table of the aforementioned.

**TASK FORCE UPDATES:**
**Non-Motorized:** Larry will send a draft of the Guidelines for non-motorized craft to Ron for his review, and then to the board by end March.

**GENERAL UPDATES:**

**Database of SOBA Contacts:** A copy of the Excel Sheet of SOBA contacts was distributed to the Board, and the board was asked to send edits to Bernice before the end of March

**New Members:** SOBA has engaged two new members this year. The Bureau of Land Management is also interested in membership, as is BASS. BASS also indicated that they would endeavor to get Oklahoma to become a member. Ron agreed to contact Colorado and encourage them to become a member.

A motion to adjourn, seconded and passed.