



LOUISIANA OUTDOOR WRITERS ASSOCIATION
Annual General Membership/Board Meeting Minutes
August 6, 2011

1. Call to Order and Calling of Roll: Executive Director/Board Chairman, Chris Holmes called the meeting to order and also conducted roll call, with the secretary recording board members present and absence.

Present; 4:00 P.M.

(Executive Board):

President Lyle Johnson

Vice President Joe Macaluso

Secretary John Flores

Chairman of Board/Executive Director Chris Holmes

(Board of Directors):

Wendy Billiot – (Board Member & Membership Committee Chair)

Dave Moreland – (Board Member & Youth Hunter of the Year Committee Chair)

Bo Boehringer – Internal Awards Committee Chair

James “Goosie” Guice – Board Member

Gerald Gaspard – Supporting Member Liaison Board Member

Absent:

Bill Ford – Fish Records Committee Chair

Don Dubuc – Ethics Committee Chair

Helmut Ermlich – Board Member

Rusty Tardo (Board Member & Nominations Committee Chair)

Gordon Hutchinson – Youth Journalism Chair

2. Reading of minutes of last meeting:

Jeff Bruel gave a motion to dispense with reading of the minutes from the previous meeting. The motion was seconded by **Rex Caffey**. All members were in favor. None opposed.

3. Executive Director and Financial Report:

Executive Director Chris Holmes, reported the following to the board and general membership: It was impossible to give a full financial report at the time since there was a considerable amount of money coming in, as well as going out due to the conference expenses and so forth. Holmes reported as of August 4, the Thursday before the conference that between the money market and checking account there was a total of \$20,131.03. Part of the total represents a \$5,000 cash donation from General Motors to LOWA. Chevrolet was made the 2010 as a result of a previous \$3000 donation and 2011 Conference sponsor as a result of the generous donation this year. Holmes in his executive report recognized Lt. Gov. Jay Dardenne being the keynote speaker at the evening banquet. And, further thanking Bo Boehringer for his efforts in working with the Lt. Governor's office to invite and schedule him.

4. Presidents Report:

President Lyle Johnson welcomed all of the membership in his report and also recognized the late Bob Dennie and his passing this year. Reported LOWA was expecting a large turnout for the evening banquet; perhaps 100. Mentioned he had made contact with CCA and the organization is committed to a Youth Fisherman of the year program. Mentioned the Friday evening hospitality as a success thanks to the Houma CVB. Chris Holmes echoed Johnson's report saying the Houma CVB has been an excellent host sponsoring the Friday evening hospitality and supper along with the fishing trips earlier in the day and the spouse's tour.

5. Committee Reports:

A. Youth Journalism – Gordon Hutchinson:

Gordon Hutchinson was absent and a report was not available. However, Chris Holmes did mention Mr. Hutchinson be attending the Awards Banquet that even. Further, Executive Director Chris Holmes reported 7 out of 13 students that won YJC awards would be in attendance at the Banquet. Also, Holmes reported that as a result of LOWA's donation and sponsorship to the Baton Rouge Advocate, which supplies newspapers to schools, he received a thank you card from Brighton School on behalf of the faculty and students for the generous donation and our support.

B. Internal Awards – Mr. Bo Boehringer:

Mr. Boehringer reported EIC sponsorships improved over 2010 with the addition of the Houma CVB picking up a co-sponsorship and return of Louisiana Sportsman Magazine picking up a full sponsorship after a two-year absence. Boehringer recognized and thanked all of the EIC sponsors that include the Bass Anglers Sportsman Society, National Wild Turkey Federation, the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Foundation, Coastal Wetland Planning Protection and Restoration Act Outreach Community, CCA Louisiana, Louisiana Charter Boats Association, and the Louisiana Association of Professional Biologists. Mr. Boehringer also recognized and thanked the Pennsylvania Outdoor Writers Association for stepping up and judging the LOWA 2011 EIC Awards Contest. Also noting, it is a reciprocating relationship asking the general membership to assist when the time comes to judge the POWA EIC contest should that occur.

C. Membership Committee Report – Wendy Billiot

Mrs. Billiot reported the LOWA general membership that the organization had three new members this year. Billiot also discussed, the continuous struggles she has in getting information from LOWA members that is required every three years to meet conditions for continued membership. To make it easier and perhaps less cumbersome to achieve and ensure she gets information, she asked that members look over the point requirements for membership and send her proof of payment for articles and other work, without the amount as another way to prove membership. President Lyle Johnson pointed out that it is up to the committee Chairman to develop and approve rules for criteria that meets the level of standards required; in this case membership.

D. Ethics Report – Don Dubuc:

Don Dubuc was not present at the general membership meeting but did send in a report and said there were no ethics violations or issues to discuss at the present time.

E. Conservation Awards – There currently is no Chairman for this committee, with the passing of Bob Dennie. Vice President, Joe Macaluso, at the last LOWA board meeting was asked to take over and chair this committee. There was no report for any award action at the present time.

F. Fish Records Committee – Mr. Bill Ford:

Bill Ford was not present at the meeting, however did submit a report to Executive Director Chris Holmes, which stated there will be two “Fish of Year Awards” for 2010 recognized at the evening banquet in fly fishing and spinning; both winners will be at the awards banquet. In July there was one fish entry a yellow-tailed snapper that weighed 6.5-pounds that placed it in the number 5 position for that species. Discussions pointed to a 35-pound tripletail being caught that could possibly move into the number

7 spot for that species pending application along with a potential fly fishing record for tripletail as well.

G. Nominations Committee – Mr. Rusty Tardo:

Tardo was absent and there was no report – non-election year.

H. Craft Improvement Committee – Joe Macaluso

Joe Macaluso hoped everyone enjoyed the photography sessions this conference with efforts to interject the video to still photography process with hopes to update this every couple years to inform everyone of the software that is available or new equipment coming out. Mr. Macaluso also recognized the importance of the “Vanishing Paradise” initiative and thanked Chris Macaluso for the time he took presenting the program as a seminar as part of craft improve. Reported he was already working on next years programs with possibly one topic being fishing line technology with specifics related to what works best for freshwater, spinning, bait cast, etc. Macaluso also solicited input from the general membership asking them to forward any topics they may have an interest in and would like him to check into for future topics at LOWA seminars.

I. Supporting Member Committee – Mr. Gerald Gaspard:

Mr. Gerald Gaspard had nothing to report to the general membership. Executive Director, Chris Holmes, thanked Mr. Gaspard for setting up PURE FISHING’s exhibits at the dinner and hospitality evening events taking time to recognize Gerald’s contributions to the organization.

J. Youth Hunter of the Year Program Committee – Mr. Dave Moreland:

Mr. Moreland was not called on to give a report at the general membership meeting, but there was a plan to recognize two youth hunters (Boy and Girl) at the evening awards banquet, with both young people attending.

6. Old Business:

There was no old business from the previous board meeting to review per Executive Director Chris Holmes after the general membership and board were called upon.

7. New Business:

A. Executive Director, Chris Holmes, discussed with the full general membership the planning conflicts that the 1st week in August presents concerning Annual LOWA Conference dates; particularly with sponsoring members. Therefore the Director made a

recommendation that the permanent fixed Conference date be set for the second weekend of August. Following full membership discussions, Jeff Bruel made a motion to make the second week of August the conference date each year; the motion was second by member Steve McNemar. All of the general membership was in favor.

B. Conference Site Suggestion:

Executive Director, Chris Holmes, solicited from the general memberships locations for future conference sites to send bid packages to. Currently the board has sent out **bid** packages for the 2012 Annual Conference to Monroe, St. Bernard (Chalmette) and Toledo Bend.

C. Bow Fishing Records:

The topic was brought up as a result of a proposal and inquiry to the LOWA Website and forwarded to the Fish Records Committee, inquiring if there was an interest for LOWA, holders of the Fish Records, to include keeping Bow Fishing Records. Joe Macaluso, the only member of the Fish Record Committee present expressed there was no interest by the committee for a variety of reasons that include controversy and philosophical differences surrounding the taking of redfish by bow. No action was required to be taken at the general membership meeting as a result of the fish records committee decision not to take up or further discussions surrounding the topic, but as a courtesy to the full membership wanted to report the decision not to include bow fishing, essentially due to it not being a good fit for LOWA as an organization.

D. Request by the Houma CVB for LOWA to sponsor OWAA as part of their bid to make Houma the host site for the organization's 2014 Annual Conference.

LOWA Executive Director, Chris Holmes, brought up the request on behalf of the CVB. According to Holmes LOWA isn't obligated to set up, work, or fund the conference. The request was for resolution-type support only, as LOWA carries the weight as an organization whose opinion carries weight and validity.

Following discussion with the LOWA general membership a motion was made by Steve McNemar to sponsor the OWAA conference; Wendy Billiot second the motion, with the general membership in favor.

E. Membership Criteria Qualification Change.

As a result of a new member request where editors of magazines is a criteria for membership inclusion and newspaper editors are not, it was requested by the new member and Membership Committee Chairman, Wendy Billiot, to change the qualification rule criteria to include newspaper editors.

A motion to make the recommended change was made by Rex Caffey. The motion to change the criteria membership rule was seconded by Glynn Harris. All of the general membership was in favor.

F. Inclusion of LOWA as an endorsing sponsor for the Vanishing Paradise Initiative.

Joe Macaluso requested, following the presentation by Chris Macaluso that since LOWA is not on their list of sponsors supporting the initiative that a motion be made that LOWA can be included on that list of sponsors going forward that formal endorses the program joining Ducks Unlimited, BASS, and other state organizations.

Joe Macaluso made the motion for LOWA to become a supporting sponsor endorsing the initiative. The motion was second by Rex Caffey. All of the general membership was in favor of supporting and endorsing the initiative.

H. Call for other new business.

Jeff Bruel made the request that spouses also be included in future fishing trips at LOWA conferences. Following a brief history of why spouses previously haven't been included and some discussion due to available spots provided for writers that typically are paid for by CVBs and donations, Chairman, Chris Holmes agreed to bring it up and discuss it at the next board meeting under "Old Business."

A motion was made to adjourn by Glynn Harris and second by Rex Caffey. All were in favor.

Adjourned – 5:10 P.M.

