



# North Dakota

## SPORTFISHING CONGRESS

North Dakota Sportfishing Congress  
Box 2472  
Bismarck, ND 58502-2472  
[www.ndsfc.wildapricot.org](http://www.ndsfc.wildapricot.org)

### Agenda

#### Fall Meeting – North Dakota Sportfishing Congress

Saturday - December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023 - 10:00am

North Dakota Game and Fish Office – 100 North Bismarck Expressway

#### MEETING MINUTES - APPROVED

#### Officers

President – Brueckner	X		Corey Paryzek	X
Vice President - Ed Dosch	X		Rob Holm	X
Treasurer - Jeff Herman	X		Keith Witt	
Past President - N/A			Mike Wenstad	
Duaine Ash	X			

#### Delegates

Wayne Blohm	
Chad Engle	
Terry Fleck	X
Michael Gunsch	
Keith Seidlinger	X
Michael Wenstad	
Jeff Pifferding	
Josh Holm	
Tom Miller	
Mason Bosch	
Terry Steinwand	
Perry Kapaun	
Rod Gilmore	X
Rick Eagleson	X
Dave Piatz	X



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1. President Brueckner Call meeting to order 10:00 AM
2. Roll Call & Introductions
  - a. See table above for present members both online and in person.
3. Approval of Minutes from Annual Meeting April 22<sup>nd</sup> 2023
  - a. Officer Rob moved to approve the April 22, 2023 meeting minutes, Delegate Gilmore seconded, and the motion passed.
  - b. Note that the draft and approved meeting minutes can be found on the new NDSFC website.
4. Treasurer's Report/Financial Audit Report: Jeff Herman
  - a. Reference the Treasurer's report sent by Treasurer Herman via email. Highlights include an ending balance of \$24,050.31 as of 9/30/23 and an ending balance of \$23,817.43 as of 11/29/23.
  - b. Delegate Gilmore moved to accept the Treasurer's Report, Officer Ash seconded, motion passed.
  - c. Delegate Seidlinger noted that the Congress should connect with our financial institution to see if there is a way to increase the rate of return on current accounts. He noted that the institution his club works with did not require any minimum action in the account and that because they were a nonprofit and had banked with them for a substantial amount of years the institution was willing to work with them. Treasurer Jeff will conduct more research into this action. Delectate Piatz suggested also looking into CD options.
5. Club Membership & Individual Membership Report: Jeff Herman
  - a. Treasurer Herman provided a report confirming that there hasn't been any new memberships over the summer, he is missing club payments from the Salmon Club and FM Walleyes, and gave a reminder that club memberships are \$100. Herman provided a reminder that notifications will go out on March 1st for 2024. Delegate Seidlinger notified the Congress that a variety of individual memberships would be



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coming from Devils Lake/Lake Region Anglers around April, a higher count than last year.

- b. Red River Sportsman Club – Letter from President Greg Gerou
  - i. A letter from the club was received in the Spring identifying that over the next year they were going to focus on the club events and activities. President Brueckner stated that he will revisit President Gerou in Spring 2024.
- c. Discussion was made on how to improve the ease of registering for the congress. Delegate Seidlinger offered a suggestion on requesting that individual clubs add in an option to join the NDSFC on their applications to make it easier for individuals to join. Treasurer restated how the current process works. Delegate Seidlinger will be sending out the current form that his club utilizes. Delegate Gilmore asked that we revisit an attempt to get individual memberships at the annual meeting. Further discussion was had about the pros and cons of having individual memberships at the banquet including having a designated area, inserting a plug in the nightly script, and having give-away items specifically for membership sign ups for the new year (not just ones who attended the banquet).
- d. Additional discussion was had about directing individuals to the website, putting QR codes up around the state in key areas for fishing, getting more visibility at fishing tournaments across the state, and looking more into some smaller organizations that may not currently be in the organization but may qualify to join now. Delegate Fleck noted that even if they do not qualify to be a club, even education about joining as an individual member would be important.

### 6. Committee Reports

- a. Delegate Fleck checked into NDSFC being a 501c3 and still lobbying. He stated that there has to be a differentiation between the individual lobbying and the club. He gave the example that you could be there with 20 of your friends lobbying for an issue but you cannot state that you are with NDSFC.
- b. Further discussion was had on the pros and cons of becoming a nonprofit organization including ability to accept donations (money, in-kind, materials) that are a tax write offs, any purchases made are not taxed, additional tax filings and costs, and difficulty finding tax accountants. Additional note that NDSFC is a



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nonprofit as it relates to North Dakota but not the IRS. Delegate Seidlinger noted that if we are having an issue filing for nonprofits we may be able to have an attorney he has worked with help in this transition.

- c. Officer Holm moved to continue the process of obtaining a 501c3, Delegate Paryzek seconded, motion passed.

### 7. Jeb

- a. Jeb provided an overview of Fish and Wildlife. He began by praising NDSFC for their leadership, guidance, and partnership especially right now as things are difficult and that we don't always agree but we can continue to work together. He raised concerns about bias and the continued importance to work together and consider perspectives from all parties when making decisions. Again, thanking the Congress for bringing thoughts and ideas from around the state. He discussed the unfortunate loss of some key individuals within their organization who had important institutional knowledge, so he asked for patience as new individuals are brought in.
- b. Delegate Fleck asked about the opportunity to potentially use these individuals who are leaving in a potential consultant capacity so we don't completely lose that knowledge. Jeb stated that ND is lucky that some of those individuals do continue to provide their knowledge with different projects. Jeb also stated they have a robust workforce strategy that they have continued to build on and execute over the last few years.
- c. Delegate Gilmore stated that Fort Berthold Water District will now begin charging for commercial and recreational water usage. Conversation was had around how this will affect a variety of areas including fish grinders and who will be paying the costs associated with different usages. Numerous individuals stated the need to find some consistency on how charges will be administered, collected, and distributed throughout North Dakota and the impacts on and off the reservations.
- d. Additional conversation and questions arose on conservation fees and specific needs for certain areas. The conservation fee conversation included how they will be administered and distributed based on the unique and differing needs and usage around the state. Jeb stated that the staff that works on programs such as these has increased from 2 to 4 and has helped build efficiencies. He also noted



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that costs over the last few years have risen significantly as well. Additional conversation was had about jurisdiction areas and the aid from Fish and Game. It was also noted that a variety of areas have a difficult time getting volunteers.

- e. Delegate Fleck noted the importance of communicating that there are grants and other money available to clubs and organizations around the state for some of the needs they have in their communities. President Brueckner discussed that Lake Region Anglers used to work with entities in the surrounding areas to provide funding for recreational needs. Delegate Gilmore commented that the clubs should provide information about local grants to NDSFC so that we can advertise the information on our website. Jeb mentioned that there has been an increase in entities applying for the Outdoor Heritage Fund.
- f. Jeb discussed how the conversations around fees going into the next legislative session will again be difficult. He noted that there was some push back about utilizing funds for a new parking lot but that it needed to be done so that they could save money by not doing small patching anymore. His organization will be looking at what neighboring states are doing with their fees. Delegate Fleck noted that there needs to be less barriers between tourism and the needs of North Dakota fishermen. Jeb suggested that they share their stories with legislation and tourism specific to their areas. Additional conversation was had on what is and is not considered conservation and how the department considers this when handing out grant or program dollars. Jeb stated that some of those items could possibly be worked on and narrowed in scope.
- g. Jeb emphasized the importance of Game and Fish being a part of decision making at the highest level for funds around the state. President Brueckner read a statement summarized as, "The North Dakota Game and Fish Department has successfully managed the sport of fishing with the help of anglers and on the back of anglers for more than 80 years. They have managed it based on science. This has been the core of their success. We are seeing efforts today to erode that, to replace it with public perception rather than fact." President Brueckner continued to state that what is missing from the conversations today is the media. The importance of getting the word out is partnering with those entities. Delegate Fleck noted that the Missouri River Group is having success with their Educate,



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Advocate, and Engage campaign because it is specific and easy to discuss. He stated that they have been going around the state speaking on several shows and in a variety of media pieces. He asked if we want to get together with that board to collaborate effectively with one continuous and consistent message. Jeb supported the ideas and said that they are also moving efforts forward to join forces with other entities to align messaging.

- h. Special note to check out Greg's report that was sent via email.
- i. Additional conversation was had on when new funds would be available. Jeb noted to connect with him on specific questions for your area. Delegate Seidlinger stated that his organization has been working with individuals who would like to donate and asking them to make donations directly to the club or organization and they would in turn identify it as a conservation donation.
- j. President Brueckner reminded the Congress that a few years ago they did research that showed North Dakota's Game and Fish, although they have one of the smallest teams, has one of the most productive in terms of programs and impacts. He stated that he knows ANS is not the most glamorous jobs, but wanted to see what would make it more appealing for potential job candidates. Jeb stated because they are a state entity there is only so much that can be done with salary but they have strategies in place to help with this. Jeb noted that there was just a support individual being hired to support the Williston office.
- k. President Brueckner asked about support for education via video development similar to the one done by the Missouri River group. Officer Ash stated that the video they put out was very impactful and felt that a presentation on ANS should be developed. Jeb stated that he would look into this.

### 8. Old Business

- a. ANS Citations Fines: This item was not discussed specifically but was mentioned throughout general conversation. No formal statement was recorded.
- b. Website Update & Domain name: <http://ndsfc.wildapricot.org>
  - i. The website is live with information but still operating with "wildapricot" in the URL. We have attempted to move it over but were denied access due to it being behind under a previous individual's information. Secretary Phares Oren will be reaching out to Officer Ash to get his permission information to



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formalize the move. Special note was given to remind everyone that they can still access the website through the above URL. She also noted that we could add a variety of information to the website for educational and other reasons. President Brueckner was going to send over a white paper from a study to Elizabeth to place on the website. Treasurer Herman requested that Elizabeth put up both the contact information for NDSFC as well as her business information on screen for member purposes. The information shared is listed below:

1. NDSFC Email
    - a. [ndsportfishingcongress@gmail.com](mailto:ndsportfishingcongress@gmail.com)
  2. Elizabeth Phares Oren
    - a. [thepharesconnection@gmail.com](mailto:thepharesconnection@gmail.com)
    - b. 406-930-2136
- ii. Delegate Seidlinger asked for an updated email list. Secretary Phares Oren will follow up with an updated email listserv (email contact list).
- iii. President Brueckner asked that members add the [ndsportfishingcongress@gmail.com](mailto:ndsportfishingcongress@gmail.com) to the newsletter listserv for individual organizations.
- c. Bylaws & Constitution presentation and discussion:
- i. President Bruckner gave a special thank you to Delegate Seidlinger, Delegate Gilmore, and Delegate Engle for reviewing the Constitution and Bylaws and providing suggested changes. He asked that the Congress review the documents that were sent to the existing bylaws and constitution on the website.
    1. Constitution: <https://ndsfc.wildapricot.org/Constitution>
    2. Bylaws: <https://ndsfc.wildapricot.org/By>
  - ii. Chairman of the committee Delegate Gilmore provided the following timeline for the group.
    1. 30 days of review by the Delegates and Officers to end on January 2nd - Send updates and questions to him and he will ensure the committee gets them.



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2. 30 days for the committee to review the changes and ask questions of the delegates who submitted them, if applicable, to end on February 2nd
  3. 30 days to send all updates out for final comments or suggestions to end on March 2nd
  4. Committee will present at the Spring meeting.
  5. Special note, ensure that when you are providing feedback that you state the article, section, what is to be removed or inserted, and why you are recommending the change.
- iii. Delegate Seidlinger noted that he left out the amount per membership so that the document can be more evergreen.
9. New Business
- a. Legislative & Outreach Goals for 2024/2025
    - i. President Brueckner stated that the Congress needs to consider strategy when it comes to Legislation as the turnaround of individuals will now be creating more of a barrier. He stated that there were really only four years to connect and educate with most of the Senators. Right now there are 31 new Legislatures. Officer Gilmore stated that educating them during the off season will become more important. Additional conversation was had around working with local clubs, educating individuals, creating impact sheets and contact documents, bringing in the DOT and Tourism and key benefits. A special note was made to consider the communities that do not have ties to the NDSFC. Secretary Phares Oren recommended that we put a media packet together to provide to these communities. Officer Gilmore suggested that a committee look at bringing this to the Spring program. Officer Seidlinger suggested a word of caution to ensure we were not actively influencing legislation if the Congress is going to move forward with a 501c3. He asked to be added to the committee that is working on the nonprofit status. The committee will dive further into these perimeters. Delegate Fleck added that in order to get Legislators to listen a checkbook would need to be brought out.





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- ii. Dani provided her perspective on the new legislative turnover and how that will affect NDSFC and its processes moving forward. She stated that many entities are considering what this means going forward for education. The preventative education before session will be that much more important and that it will be an uphill battle. Some new Chairs will be learning their roles and the Speaker of the House may be changing roles as well. Legislators are going to look more for information from experts and easy ways to consume information as they will be balancing their day jobs as well. Remember that many of these individuals will be starting from scratch and learning a lot about the Legislation process in the beginning. She also provided a quick update on further conversations that are happening around ANS. Finally, she touched on the importance of institutional knowledge, administrative partnerships, and consistent conversations.
  - iii. Does the Congress and member clubs have interest in pursuing Public School educational classes on Invasive Species (aka. ANS)?
    1. President Brueckner asked the Congress if they wanted to pursue getting education about ANS into the schools. This would entail getting in contact with the Director for Department of Public Instruction. Secretary Phares Oren will reach out to Kristen Basler to find out what implementing this information to the curriculum will entail.
  - iv. Does the Congress and member clubs have interest in pursuing DOT spending recreational tax dollars on Hwy safety in inspection zones.
    1. President Brueckner asked if the Congress wants to pursue a meeting with DOT to ask them to use their money in specific ways that help support recreational areas and potential survey opportunities. The discussion was tabled and President Brueckner will come back with more information at the next meeting.
- b. SB1538:
- i. President Brueckner noted that the Administrative Rules committee would be having a public meeting on December 12th and asked if the Congress seek to amend SB1538. Delegate Gilmore said it will all depend on how the



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bill gets administered. He stated by early or mid-March the rules should be finalized. He offered suggestions on how that Bill will be administered.

Discussion was had from the group on whether the Bill was fair including statements on repeal, the burden of a small group of individuals, how money is being removed from local communities, the lack of education and understanding on the Bill as a whole, and the ambiguity of how funds are being used and administered.

- ii. Some Congress members stated that they were going to the December 12th meeting. Officer Gilmore offered to take some notes and provide those to the group.
  - iii. Delegate Seidlinger noted that he did research on the Bill and found that the NWTs and the Master Walley's Circuit brought this forward. The application fee of \$75 goes into the Game and Fish fund, it does not go back to the local community. He stated that the \$5 fee brought in more net income than previously set up and that we should wait to see what comes out of the administrative rules.
  - iv. President Brueckner stated that it is the consensus of the group that NDSFC monitor the upcoming hearing on administrative rules on December 12th.
- c. Outreach
- i. President Brueckner stated that he recently saw a variety of marketing opportunities to share education about ANS, one of them being a drink coaster. The coaster he is referencing had a small business name on the front that said "Please Clean Your Johnson" but on the back it had information on ANS. He asked the Congress to consider it in the future with a partnership with potential sponsors. Further discussion was had on bringing this information to the hospitality industry as well to reduce that cost and potential partnerships with Tourism. Recommendations on adding a general message such as "Be Legendary" that would connect with the whole state and connect with larger companies to sponsor it.
- d. Annual Meeting & Banquet - April 27, 2024



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- i. President Brueckner stated that the annual banquet will be on April 27, 2024 at the AM Vets. He asked if anyone would like to join this committee to please do so.
  - ii. Treasurer Herman stated that the gaming permit process has changed and that a list of prizes need to be provided before the event. He needs to get permission from the AM Vets to see if they need to shut down their gaming while the event is happening. He stated that he needs that list by April 1st.
  - iii. Delegate Seidlinger stated that he could utilize some of his resources to get auction items for the annual banquet.
- e. Executive Secretary Contract
- i. President Brueckner asked if the Congress wanted to move forward with contracts with Elizabeth and The Phares Connection.
- f. Open Positions as of April 2024
- i. President Brueckner announced that two positions will be available come the Spring meeting both the Vice President and Officer Ash's position.
- g. Set January Zoom Meeting
- i. Secretary Phares Oren will be sending out a Doodle poll via email to find when the best time to meet with be.

### 10. Speakers

- a. ND Game and Fish Director Jeb Williams: Department update
  - i. See above comments.
- b. NDG&F Fisheries Report: (see email attachment from Greg Power)
  - i. Sent before Fall meeting.
- c. NDG&F ANS Coordinator Report:
  - i. No physical report was given but items were discussed in Jeb's segment.
- d. Legislative Outlook Report
  - i. See comments above for Dani's guidance.

### 11. Club Reports

- a. Delegate Seidlinger submitted a Club Report for LRAA. See attachment in email.

### 12. Adjournment

- a. Meeting was adjourned at 1:52 PM.



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"To Preserve, Promote and Improve the Quality of Sport Fishing in North Dakota."