

South Dakota Walleye Classic

Meeting Minutes

August 8, 2024

The meeting was called to order by Craig Mehlhaff. The following members were in attendance: Becky Randall, Bill Waeckerle, Greg Yonkovich, Lloyd Schlomer, Dana Randall, Kent Kramer, Chad Schilling, Beau Schilling, Ben Beadle, Hunter Friend, Bill Hinds and George Kessler.

A copy of the July 11th minutes was handed out to those in attendance and read by Secretary Becky Randall. Lloyd Schlomer made a motion to approve and second by Dana Randall. Motion carried.

The financial report was given by Craig Mehlhaff. Bill Waeckerle made a motion to approve and second by Greg Yonkovich. Steve also provided a report of the expenses and profits of the SDWC Tournament. Motion carried.

Old Business: 2024-gun drawing continues. Greg stated that only 4 guns have not been claimed and the oldest one is from May. Bryan German is storing the projector for us in Aberdeen. The projector worked great for the classic.

Old Business from floor:

New Business: A coalition meeting is set for August 22nd here at Akaska Community Center at 7PM. Becky will get cookies, water, and coffee. Coke will supply some pop.

Craig has collected sponsorships for the 2025 calendars. So far, we have 13 calendar sponsors; Oahe Wings & Walleyes and C & B Operations still need to send in their payment.

Greg Yonkovich looked into purchasing plaques for the winners of SDWC from QQP which would be around \$100.00 for first place winners. Kent Kramer suggested we check with Jess and Marlin Berens (605-848-2080) as they have a business that does this, and Chad Schilling gave us the name of Cholik Signs (605-224-

7734 and ask for Travis). Greg will check into the pricing and have some answers at the Sept. meeting. We would like to give out plaques for the 1st through 3rd place winners. Greg will ask them if they would like to possibly be a sponsor for classic and work out a deal for the plaques.

We will purchase another pull tab machine for the Akaska Tavern & Bait Shop for \$7500.00 to get rid of the boxes of pull tabs. We will sell the remainder of the pull tabs at the Walleye classic in 2025 that are left in the boxes.

Bill Waeckerle is getting a price for a standby generator for the fish cleaning station. Power has gone out at least twice this past year so we will get pricing and labor and Bill will report back.

Craig is stepping down at the SDWC president but will continue to collect funds for the calendars and will help with other SDWC things. Elections will be in October.

Craig reported back that the Craft Fair was slow on the first day.

SDWC tournament date was changed to July 24-26, 2025 and going forward it will always be the last weekend in July so there are no conflicts with the Governor's Cup.

Bill Waeckerle is picking up the 2025 calendars and roughly 550 will be distributed ASAP to those folks that sell calendars for us.

Craig was told how to fill out the forms for transferring fish during the classic and how many fish were caught as SD Game Fish and Parks is requiring the forms.

New Business from floor: There was much discussion and suggestions were made by George Kessler, Bill Hinds, Chad Schilling and Kent Kramer for ideas to bring the popularity of the SDWC Tournament back like days of old. The question was proposed if we want the "festival" back or just continue on with the tournament making it more appealing and fun. It takes many volunteers if we went back to the days of old with a tent set up and festivities throughout the weekend.

Kent Kramer suggested having a silent auction during the weigh-ins and some fun games. Kent suggested getting some high school students to help with those things and then we would donate to their school. We would need to get more sponsors for the weekend so that we could have more prizes to give out.

Chad Schillings suggestions were:

- *Limit boat max to 70 boats

- *No overs- 20 inches and under- fair playing field for everyone!!

- *Suggest big fish prize for fish over 20" that were released.

- * Have no penalty for fish over 20", just replace with a smaller fish, if available.

- *2 to 4 man teams- this allows families to participate, father/daughter, spouses

- *Raise entry fee to \$700.00-\$750.00. Maybe start with \$500.00 for the 1st year

- and come up with more prizes for different teams fishing in the tournament.

- *NO boundaries

- *Bring in 8 fish and only weigh 6 and tag the fish immediately and then no bump

- station would be needed.

- *Supply each team with 8 non-removable tags and have teams tag fish as they

- put them in live well/on ice.

- *2 day tournament- Day 1 payout

- Day 2 payout and then a payout for winner

- of both days

- *Have one or two tournament official boats go around and 'check' teams during

- fishing hours to see that all kept fish have been tagged.

- *Do Calcutta in blocks

- *Make it FUN

- *Comeback awards

*Get more sponsors for the weekend to give out lots of prizes so everyone has a chance to walk away with something.

Beau Schilling and Hunter Friend suggested putting a survey on Facebook under our SD Walleye Classic page to get input. Some of the survey questions that they came up with were:

1. Would you fish in a No Overs Tournament?
2. Should we allow up to 4 people in and boat, catching 8 fish but only weighing 6?
3. Would you pay \$700-\$750.00 for entry fee?
4. What should we limit the teams to 50-60?????

Chad Schilling, Craig Mehlhaff and Becky Randall will get the survey together and then have Dick Sorensen put it out on Facebook under SD Walleye Classic page and possibly have Avid Hawk put it on our website.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Bill Waeckerle and second by Lloyd Schlomer. Motion carried.

Next meeting will be September 12th, 2024, at 7:00pm.

Meeting adjourned.
Secretary

Submitted by: Becky Randall,