

South Dakota Walleye Classic

Meeting Minutes

August 28, 2025

The meeting was called to order by Gregg Yonkovich via Teams Meeting. The following members attended: Becky Randall, Bill Waeckerle, Steve Mann, Bob Heier, Dana Randall, Sandy Gilyard & Marissa Gilyard. On teams meeting was Mike Valster and Barrett Rhymes & Bryan German.

A copy of the July minutes was handed out to those in attendance. Bill Waeckerle made a motion to approve and second by Dana Randall. Motion carried.

The financial report was given by Steve Mann. Dana Randall made a motion to approve and second by Bob Heier. Motion carried. Steve also sent the 1st half of the gun payment to SoDak.

1. New Business

Tournament wrap up/notes for next years tournament

- AFTCO/ Midwest Fishing will support the 2026 event again. The tournament will be July 24th-registration; July 25th & 26th tournament. Becky will have Avid Hawk update the website now.
- A second weigh station will be at West Witlock's Boat landing and Midwest will coordinate that.
- We will have food trucks on Friday afternoon and possibly at river if that is permissible with the state. Becky has some names for food trucks and Bob Heier has a contact in Eureka also.
- Mike is thinking we could have 400 entries next year and we would limit it to 500 capacity.
- We will have more exact weights for fish for the under 20" heaviest fish category.
- We will change the registration time from 2-6pm or even 3-6pm and then have only 1 boat captain attend the rules meeting but we want all to attend the Calcutta at 7pm- need more yuppies on the floor for Calcutta.
- Becky will order less meat and cheese trays for Friday

- The fire dept. worked well for hosting Dakota Mart and other vendors so we will keep that in place for 2026.
- Lisa German and Marissa Gilyard will volunteer to take over the SDWC facebook page from Dick Sorensen.
- AFTCO will try and have swags shipped directly to Akaska and swag packs will have the same prizes inside with an additional hat included and we want to SDWC logo also on the hat.
- We will hold off on the raffle announcements during the rules meeting and Calcutta.
- The Sportsman (Perky) is already in process to rent a tent for a dance on Saturday night of the tournament. We will look for a bank/entertainment.
- We will tape fish tags and bid numbers to swag packs and just use a smaller gallon bag.
- We will get some spare generators for weigh stations.
- On Friday possible things to do that afternoon
 - * Live scope seminar-Bo Schillig?
 - * Kids casting game -AFTCO will help with that
 - * SDWC can do a fundraiser of some kind???
- Can we sell State Park stickers at registration? Perky has them available at The Sportsman.
- AFTCO/SDWC would pay for taxidermy for the biggest fish which would cost between \$800-900.
- 65 yrs and older prize for biggest fish
- A female prize will also be discussed for 2026 tournament.
- SDWC will provide food for AFTCO/Midwest teams on Saturday and Sunday if we don't have food trucks available.
- We will haul picnic tables to weigh stations at Swan Creek for people to watch weigh-ins
- Carpet protector should be on stage for final awards presentation and the fish presentation.
- We will only have the community center open on Friday and Sunday of the tournaments.
- We will have a dumpster at community hall for the yellow AFTCO clean up garbage bags

- Thinking of giving extra prize if the participants are wearing AFTCO clothing when weighing in their fish
- Gregg will start process for insurance with Marin-Biel for next year as we never received the policy. Bob Heier has offered to go and speak with Marin-Biel to see if we could get better service or we will get insurance elsewhere but would like to keep it local if possible. Marin-Biel does not buy sponsorship on our calendar anymore.
- Helm Marine is willing to give us a 2nd dock for Swan Creek; we will not need one at Witlock's.
- Thank you's were sent out by AFTCO (244 participants) and we have heard all positive comments on website. The only negative feedback we have received is to have food trucks available in town. We will take care of that next year.
- Mike Valister has approached Jerry Beadle from Beadle Ford about giving away a new Ford Pickup. Details to follow.
- January 2026 save the dates will go out from AFTCO and they will advertise that 1st place will be 15k to 20K right out of the gates.
- We will also have an itinerary put in place for the local/out-of-town people so everyone knows what will be going on. We will have it on SDWC facebook page and Avid Hawk.
- AFTCO will make the SDWC logo bigger on the posters for 2026 tournament.
- Mike Valister has committed that AFTCO will choose the SD Walleye Coalition as their charity for 2026. Roughly \$5,000.00 would be the potential amount.
- We will have a truth verification aka Lie detector test for the 2026 tournament for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners and then other prize winners. Bryan German has a contact and will get that in place for 2026 tournament.

Old Business:

New Business from the floor:

2026 SDWC calendar update-Bill has about 200 calendars to distribute yet. Hoven Liquor Store will also sell calendars for us.

LOWC update from Bill W.- Bill will be going to Rapid City next week for Game, Fish and Parks meeting.

It was decided by everyone at the meeting that we will give out the leftover AFTCO t-shirts when someone buys a calendar as a "thank you".

We would also like to have the 2027 calendars available to sell at the 2026 tournament. AJ at SoDak can have the gun list ready and Bill W. was going to ask Bernie Bisbee and Dick Sorensen to come up with previous pictures from the past years. We will just have to have our sponsors commit and then collect the money. For those people that purchase a calendar the weekend of the tournament would be eligible to have their name put in a gun drawing.

Becky will be sending out thank you cards for the 2026 sponsors on the SDWC calendar.

Bill Wackerle made a motion to give Bruce and Bernie Bisbee a free calendar as a thank for all the picture taking that Bernie does for us. All agreed.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Bob Heier and Sandy Gilyard second by. Motion carried.

Next meeting- date to be decided but possibly in October.

Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by: Becky Randall, Secretary