



BBRSDA Board Meeting Minutes

February 20, 2024 – 9:00am AKT
Teleconferenced

1. Call to Order/Establishment of Quorum

President Johnson called the meeting to order at 9:00am AKT. Present were board members Sabo, Andrew, Morgan, Niver, and Dewitte; advisor Collier; members David Kopra, Buck Gibbons, Robert Buchmayr, Maxwell Vukas, and Melissa Resetarits; guests Janis Harsila and Matt Nemeth; and staff members Bursch, Dunn, Machain and McNeil. **A QUORUM WAS ESTABLISHED.**

2. Approval of Previous Minutes

a. December 12, 2023

Sabo moved and Morgan seconded to approve the meeting minutes from December 12, 2023. **MOTION CARRIED WITH UNANIMOUS CONSENT.**

3. Member Comments

Member comments submitted via email since the last board meeting were provided in the meeting materials. Johnson opened the floor for member comments.

Member David Kopra expressed deep concern about the focus of the RSDA on the price of salmon and emphasized the need for fairness in pricing. He expressed dissatisfaction with the dismissal of former ED Wink and praised the white paper that was previously prepared and posted by BBRSDA. He supported advocacy for the Farm Bill to express industry concerns. He highlighted the unique position of the RSDA in uniting members and proposed leveraging this unity to address price fairness and develop cooperative efforts.

Buck Gibbons countered concerns about transparency by emphasizing the ongoing public processes that members could engage in to gain insight and participate actively. He asserted that access to information and involvement in decision-making were readily available to those who sought it.

4. Executive Director Report

There were no comments or questions on the Executive Director report.

5. Approval of Agenda

Sabo moved to approve the agenda with the addition of item 6d. Discussion of Skin packs under Quality. Seconded by Andrew. **MOTION CARRIED WITH UNANIMOUS CONSENT.**

6. Program Updates & Committee Business

a. Finance

Machain walked through the latest financial snapshot, highlighting bank balances, current year budget, and cash flow assumptions. The 2023 year-end financials will be presented to the full board when available.

b. Marketing

Dunn gave a brief update on Marketing program updates and noted that new updates are constantly updated on our website. Other discussion and highlights included:

- Collier provided a synopsis of recent activities, including discussions on product quality and social media marketing.
- Collier highlighted positive receptions in Japan and emphasized the importance of building relationships.
- Niver expressed optimism about price improvements and the quality of BB fish.
- Johnson clarified that there are no updates on the bulk purchase H&G project for direct marketers.

c. Sustainability

i. Stocks of concern: Chum and Kings

The sustainability committee suggested that RSDA remains neutral on the subject of chum and kings for now and focuses on accumulating information and data. If fishermen request action in the future, RSDA could provide relevant information by putting funding and efforts towards a library of resources to reference as decisions get made in the coming years.

Andrew inquired about the timing of the management plan for the upcoming summer season, particularly regarding the stock of concern denotation for chum or kings. Matt Nemeth advised that the final OEG's are what dictate when fishing can commence, and those numbers are expected later this year from ADF&G.

ii. Nuyakuk Hydro Project

The Nuyakuk Hydro Project comment period on the Initial Study Report was extended through February 19th. The direction from the Sustainability committee was to track it closely for any updates or future action items. CFBB is encouraging people to comment and also requesting a thorough study of any impacts of this project

Bursch attended the Aquatic Resources Work Group (ARWG) Meeting on February 14th.

d. Quality

The Quality committee met January 25th and had a work session on February 13th. Ongoing Quality program updates include:

- Staff will post an RFP for the RSW Apprentice program in early March. The quality committee will review applications at their next meeting.
- Staff is working on setting up a system to solicit images of sockeye at retail in order to launch that project with the goal of encouraging and providing education on how to best display product.
- Staff is also working on quality handling (& value difference) messaging for the fleet to share ahead of the season.
- RSW Operator class will be promoted to encourage participants to receive partial reimbursement.

i. Skin pack discussion

The board discussed the potential benefits of promoting more product display in skin pack format, akin to Costco's method of selling products. This involves presenting thawed filets shrink-wrapped to a tray, which is visually appealing and showcases

product quality effectively. Most of the board participated in the work session focused on this topic.

Dunn expressed gratitude to Buck Gibbons for his dedication to the skin pack initiative and highlighted ongoing discussions with processors, sales teams, and skin packers regarding its implementation. While there is widespread agreement on its merits, adoption varies among retailers, with some embracing the idea while others remain hesitant or traditional in their approach. Dunn emphasized the need to manage expectations, noting that even if successful, the process of implementation can be slow. One possibility is partnering with multiple retailers, with Bristol Bay processors providing raw materials and skin packers handling packing and distribution, similar to standard retail promotions.

Staff will work on next steps for this and go through the committee and board processes.

e. Outreach

The Outreach committee met on January 22nd.

i. Advisory Panel Summary/Updates

The advisory panel met January 4th and staff solicited feedback from the group on the first year. They will be meeting every other month and Schonberg is working on filling one opening.

ii. Update on Social Media policy and internal guidelines

Sabo moved to make it BBRSDA's internal policy that in situations when board members deem it productive to comment in social media conversations happening outside of BBRSDA's own pages, BBRSDA will use the organization's account to comment with the drafted response to direct people to BBRSDA's formal communication channels. Seconded by Andrew. **MOTION CARRIED WITH UNANIMOUS CONSENT.**

iii. Supporting USDA adoption of seafood priorities in the Farm Bill

Sabo moved to direct staff to draft and send the discussed Farm Bill letters to the four Ag Committee leaders, to Alaska delegation, and state-specific letters, personalized for BBRSDA membership but adhering closely to the priorities listed in the September letter. Seconded by Dewitte. **MOTION CARRIED WITH UNANIMOUS CONSENT.**

7. Miscellaneous Business

a. 2024 Board Election updates

Machain gave an update on current candidates and upcoming timeline events. Paper ballots go out in early March and electronic ballots in late March. The deadline for ballots to be returned is April 9th with final results being posted no later than April 12th. The board was not in favor of holding a candidate forum.

b. Togiak Canned Herring – proposal from Warner Lew

An email proposal was provided in the meeting packet regarding canned herring. Sabo has met with Dunn and shared some ideas, one being getting into the WIC program. There was consensus to have this project idea go through the Sustainability Committee to flesh out the idea and verify that our bylaws allow a project like this.

c. Fishermen Petition

Staff has fielded questions from fishermen about the status and potential of the petition that was started in the fall. It is still live on a page of our website but does not have enough signatures. The packet includes a letter Wink received from the state in August. What is still unclear is DOLWD's authority to mediate the price of Bristol Bay sockeye salmon for the upcoming 2024 season.

Morgan moves to quietly withdraw our support of the fishermen petition. Seconded by Niver. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

8. Future Meetings, Events, and Agenda Items

April 16, 2024 – New Director terms begin

May 7, 2024

June 11, 2024 - Board mtg & Annual Member mtg in Dillingham

August 20, 2024

October 8, 2024

November PME meetings
December 10, 2024

a. Industry meeting

The board discussed whether or not to hold an industry meeting this year, and what information is valuable to present to members. The consensus was that past meetings have not felt productive and the biggest benefit is our forecast updates from ADF&G and UW which are helpful and can be hosted separate from an industry meeting. The board agreed not to hold an industry meeting this year.

Andrew suggested setting up a potential call or meeting once the Farm bill has firmed up. Staff can set this up once there is more traction.

9. Executive Session

Sabo moved and Morgan seconded to enter executive session at 11:11am AKT. **MOTION CARRIED WITH UNANIMOUS CONSENT.**

Director Schonberg joined the meeting at 11:23am during the executive session.

Outside of executive session the following motion was made:

Sabo moved and Schonberg seconded to hire and direct Scott Kendall to pursue and execute a common interest agreement with regard to Pebble Mine. **MOTION CARRIED WITH UNANIMOUS CONSENT.**

10. Adjourn

Dewitte moved and Schonberg seconded to adjourn the meeting at 12:43pm AKT. **MOTION CARRIED WITH UNANIMOUS CONSENT.**

Total meeting time: 3 hours, 43 minutes

Board members in attendance: Johnson, Morgan, Niver, Dewitte, Sabo, Andrew, Schonberg