



## **BBRSDA Board Meeting Minutes**

August 8, 2023 – 9:00am AKT

Teleconferenced

### **1. Call to Order/Establishment of Quorum**

President Johnson called the meeting to order at 9:03am AKT. Present were board members Sabo, Morgan, Niver and Andrew; and staff members Bursch, Dunn, Machain, McNeil, and Wink. **A QUORUM WAS ESTABLISHED.**

Over 25 members and other Bristol Bay fishermen were present throughout the meeting. Setnetters were invited to this meeting due to the upcoming membership vote for S04T permit holders.

### **2. Approval of Previous Minutes**

#### **a. May 9, 2023**

Morgan moved and Niver seconded to approve the meeting minutes from May 9, 2023. **MOTION CARRIED WITH UNANIMOUS CONSENT.**

### **3. Member Comments**

President Johnson opened the floor for member comments and let everyone know that this portion was being recorded for note-taking purposes. Members were also asked to send in written comments if they have more to add, these can be sent to [board@bbrsda.com](mailto:board@bbrsda.com).

Highlights and notable items from member comments:

- Look into the Magnussen Stevens Act (MSA). Can the BBRSDA ask Senator Murkowski to restructure the MSA to govern every region separately and have Alaska designated as its own region?
- Request BBRSDA to consider an Agenda Change Request to BoF which is due on August 14th. The criteria are: conservation, correct an error in regulation, correct an effect on a fishery that was unforeseen when regulation was adopted, any new information.
  - Sportfish argued they would be more aggressive with emergency order and didn't need more specific language written in.

- BBRSDA can share the notes from the fishermen townhall, if requested.
- There is a problem affecting a wide-species spectrum, not just sockeye regarding the importation of foreign product. There is a committee being formed to look at this issue and position ourselves better, BBRSDA should appoint someone to get actively involved in this.
- There is an opportunity to go through congress and have the US-Russian Federation Seafood act passed to close the loophole of Russian fish getting reprocessed and sold by China.
- Does the BBRSDA have an accurate number of inventory or carryover from 2022 and roughly what grade those fish are? Can we get an estimate of what we might be sitting on from this season? The RSDA can use its strength to get that information and help with planning on how aggressive our marketing programs should be as far as promotions.
- There are some concerns over the promotion of the petition. The RSDA shouldn't think we can hang our hat on that without addressing the issue more directly.
- Even though there are great concerns, still believes the BBRSDA is the best tool we have to be able to understand and go through the whole process regarding the price situation.
- The current situation is not the RSDA's fault and they are the only organization that is funded, organized, and respected to represent the fleet. Members are open to hearing alternatives to the BBRSDA that are being formulated for other purposes.
- There are those who are critical of \$900K spent on marketing, but there would be just as many critical if we hadn't spent it.
- People that bad mouth the RSDA obviously don't understand how much work goes into it. At the present time, they are the only voice that we have that tries to help us.
- Supportive of a members-only meeting at Pacific Marine Expo, where only permit holders are allowed in for discussion about the 2023-24 season.
- The fishermen townhall from a few nights before was a forum for members to ask questions and speak their minds, this is different from the typical board meeting format.
- When one processor posts a low base price and the rest follow with the same price, it feels "fuzzy".

Wink clarified antitrust rules and what we can and cannot talk about, including how industry members interact and any accusations of anti-competitive effects in the market.

**4. Executive Director Report**

Morgan moved and Niver seconded to approve the Executive Director report as presented. **MOTION CARRIED WITH UNANIMOUS CONSENT.**

**5. Approval of Agenda**

Niver moved and Morgan seconded to approve the agenda. **MOTION CARRIED WITH UNANIMOUS CONSENT.**

**6. Program Updates & Committee Business**

**a. Finance**

Machain gave a verbal update on upcoming financial deadlines including the 2022 Audit, 2024 draft budget, and upcoming finance committee meetings. The financial snapshot was shared to highlight the current cash position.

**i. Q1 Financial Statements**

Morgan moved and Sabo seconded to approve the Q1 financials as provided in the meeting packet and recommended by the Finance Committee. **MOTION CARRIED WITH UNANIMOUS CONSENT.**

These quarterly financial reports, along with finalized audits and 990 tax returns, get posted to our website once approved by the board.

**b. Marketing**

Dunn shared a timeline of the marketing activities from June 2022 through June 2023.

- The board approved additional marketing funding to support sales velocity in February 2023. Staff were careful to make sure the additional funding was used for national promotions, and that processors and suppliers benefited. Volume was a priority and the

contracts required sales metrics be provided before payment was sent. The resulting lift varied from 50% to 6000%.

- For consumer outreach, more people than ever had and tried Bristol Bay sockeye salmon, this momentum will continue to be integral to our strategy.
- The focus is also on the upcoming Salmon restaurant weeks in Washington DC and Seattle.
- Working with ASMI on global opportunities – working on the stigma of frozen product
- We do have digital targeting in our social media outlets.

A member asked about the Marketing Committee meetings. Due to sensitive information and non-disclosure agreements with partners, these meetings are typically open just to board and committee members but there could be an opportunity for members to join a meeting in the future.

A member asked if we work with any high-profile chefs. We do not have any on contract, but within Seattle and DC especially, we have strong chef advocates for Bristol Bay.

Andrew moved to approve the marketing report as presented by staff. Seconded by Sabo. **MOTION CARRIED WITH UNANIMOUS CONSENT.**

### **c. Sustainability**

Niver gave a brief update about Governor Dunleavy filing a lawsuit against the EPA's 404c protections of Pebble Mine, more details to come later.

Wink shared updates on other sustainability programs and projects:

- We provided funding to Port Moller and BBFC collaborative research. With the second vessel they were able to fish in weather that historically would have been unfishable. This allowed sampling for age and composition stock estimates on the onboard genetics lab.
- On the king mapping project, we encouraged fishermen to sign up and provide data in the Skipper Science app. Unfortunately, participation was extremely low and at this point there is not enough data to create the desired reporting. Staff is looking at

options to claw back funding since this project did not materialize according to plan.

- Nushagak escapement was worse in 2023, we can request an agenda change by August 14<sup>th</sup> for the board of fish to address this issue.
- Regarding the Nuyakuk Hydro project, there has been field work this summer, we have a seat on the aquatic resources working group to track the progress.
- Staff is working with UW and UAF on contracting climate change research.

#### **d. Quality**

Bursch gave a verbal update on quality projects. Most of these continued through the fishing season and we won't have final reports until later this month.

- We have 2 projects supporting the use and data analysis of the CQR devices. One is with Seafood Analytics and another with Digital Observer. The goal of the devices is to measure and improve quality and eventually use quality over quantity in bonus incentives.
- RSW Apprentices – two different companies requested funding and we expect reports and updates later this month.

#### **e. Outreach**

Bursch gave an update on outreach programs:

- The focus over the next few months is the setnet vote in October where setnetters will get to vote on whether to join the BBRSDA.
- Drill conductor training went well in the spring with good results in Naknek.
- KDLG fisheries reports went smoothly over the summer.

### **7. Miscellaneous Business**

#### **a. Potential Changes to BBRSDA Bylaws**

Sabo moved to table this discussion to a future meeting. Seconded by Morgan.

#### **b. Discussion of Town Hall Meeting & Member Comments**

BBRSDA hosted a virtual town hall on August 3<sup>rd</sup> with members giving informed feedback and ideas. This was an opportunity for members to

comment on what direction they want BBRSDA to look into and possible paths for the board to consider. The main takeaway was that the present situation isn't acceptable, and people want to know what the price will be before spending money up front. The board is paying close attention to continued member feedback.

**c. BBRSDA Priorities**

Wink prepared a list of priorities for the board to consider and President Johnson passed the chairman duties to Sabo. Sabo opened the floor to member comments regarding these listed priorities:

- i. Support fishermen/processor negotiations & a Fishermen Agreement
- ii. Have a successful Setnet Vote
- iii. Execute a productive Price Mediation process with the State
- iv. Deal with the Chinook Stock of Concern
- v. Work with State Legislators to develop a bill addressing fundamental problems with the fishery's price-setting system
- vi. Have (more) effective outreach to fishermen
- vii. Develop a CY24 Budget that reflect the priorities and interests of BB fishermen
- viii. Pebble Opposition
- ix. Start a cooperative or joint venture

Other ideas that have come up through members:

- Look into the fish tax paid in the Lake and Peninsula Borough, there hasn't been much provided for fishermen with that tax revenue.
- Do a survey about permit stacking to allow fishermen to hold and use 2 or more permits in their name.
- Help bury power lines by Leader Creek.
- Look into providing better rates and coverage for vessel insurance.
- Discussion on bycatch.
- Russian Seafood Act
- Independent review of BBRSDA programs.
- Put together an action-item list for fishermen to see the ideas presented and what they can do.

Chairman Sabo asked Wink to give his utmost attention and focus to 1) fishermen/processor negotiations, 2) having a successful setnet vote, and

3) mediation. There will also be momentum to address the statewide salmon collapse, possibly with the partnership of UFA or a designated task force.

**d. Reducing costs at Pacific Marine Expo**

The meeting materials included a table with a breakdown of historical costs of Pacific Marine Expo for board and staff attendance, as well as the annual member meeting held in Seattle. Sabo felt that PME is an important week to meet with members and talk with fishermen at our booth and there are other areas to cut costs, but he feels PME is important to continue. Board members Morgan, Niver and Andrew agreed.

Staff will work on ways to reduce travel expenses.

**8. Executive Session**

There was no executive session.

**9. Future Meetings & Agenda Items**

August 15 – Marketing Committee

September 12 – Board Meeting (tentative)

Sabo proposed a special board meeting on August 15<sup>th</sup> with the only item being an executive session to discuss updates on the petition and legislative issues.

**10. Adjourn**

Niver moved and Andrew seconded to adjourn at 12:50pm AKT. **MOTION CARRIED WITH UNANIMOUS CONSENT.**

*Total meeting time: 3 hours, 47 minutes*

*Board members in attendance: Sabo, Morgan, Niver, Andrew, Johnson*