

**MINUTES OF THE FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF BENTHOLOGISTS
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EC) MEETING
17 OCTOBER 2001**

Location: Lime Tree Bay Resort, Layton, Long Key, Florida.

Members Present: Palmer Kinser, Member at Large; Michael R. Milligan, Environmental Consultant Representative; Marc Minno, President; Douglas G. Strom, State Government Representative and EC Chair; Ford Walton, Immediate Past President; Andrea Baird, designated alternate; Jay Leverone, designated alternate.

Doug Strom called the meeting to order at 9:15 PM.

Reports of Officers and Standing Committees

Mike Milligan, Chair of the Award of Excellence Committee, asked if there were suggestions regarding recipients of this year's awards. A discussion ensued regarding potential award recipients. Mike will take the suggestions back to his committee to poll them regarding the nominations made.

Ford Walton is the Chair of the Nominations committee. He is soliciting more nominations for candidates for the election of officers to be held at the annual meeting. Jay Leverone of Mote Marine Laboratory volunteered to be a member of the Nominations Committee; Ford welcomed him in this capacity. The next topic considered was nominations for officers for the elections to be held at the 15th annual meeting in Cedar Key this December. Bob Rutter has agreed to run for another term as Secretary of F.A.B. Marc will contact Lynn Denahan to see if she is still interested in running for another term as Secretary. Palmer Kinser has agreed to run for President-Elect. Anyone who has more ideas for candidates should please contact Ford.

Doug mentioned that the Internet Committee Chair was vacant, and the committee was essentially inactive. We need computer enthusiasts for this position and to serve as regular members of the committee so that F.A.B.'s website can be updated more often. Mike suggested that we discuss this with Dave Karlen at the annual meeting.

New Business

Marc Minno mentioned that the St. Johns River Water Management District was seeking partners to share costs of publishing paper copies of the upcoming publication by Dr. John Epler, "*The Chironomidae of the Carolinas: A key to the Chironomidae of the southeastern United States*". Partners so far include the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, North Carolina Department of Natural Resources, and the South Florida Water Management District. Marc issued a motion that F.A.B. allocate \$1,000 towards this cause. Ford seconded the motion. The EC unanimously approved the motion. Marc (as President) and Doug (as EC Chair) approved the expenditure of the \$1,000 as required by the F.A.B. Constitution. Marc will contact Lynn Denahan regarding allocation of the funds for this effort. Marc mentioned that John Epler must issue a letter authorizing the use of copyrighted material for this printing. Mike Milligan suggested contacting the North American Benthological Society and Duke Power as other potential partners in this venture.

On the subject of publications, Mike Milligan mentioned that he still has many copies of both volumes of his "*Guide to the aquatic microdriles of Florida*" series. Anyone interested in getting free copies of these publications should contact Mike.

Marc mentioned that Secretary Lynn Denahan had suggested that some other officers be listed as partners for the F.A.B. bank account, authorized to write checks or withdraw funds from the account. Marc made a motion that as a matter of policy the President and Executive Committee Chair be authorized as stated above. Andrea seconded the motion; the motion was then unanimously approved by the EC. Ford suggested that one or both of these authorized officers have their own checkbook for the F.A.B. account.

A question came up as to when current EC officers (such as the EC Chair) terms expire. Ford Walton suggested that the Constitution be revised to contain a clause regarding these terms such as "EC terms will be three years *or until the term of the incumbent is renewed or a successor is appointed*". Ford suggested that this be a general item for all officers with limited terms. The EC agreed to table this item until the annual meeting. Marc (as Chair of the By-Laws Committee) agreed to prepare text for insertion into the Constitution/By Laws for consideration by the membership at the business meeting.

When we mentioned that we still need another At-Large member for the Executive Committee, Jay Leverone volunteered for this. Jay was welcomed as the newest member of the EC, effective at the annual meeting in December. The EC now is fully staffed with fourteen members.

Andrea suggested that we publish a directory of F.A.B. members. It was mentioned that this idea has been discussed previously as something F.A.B. should do. Since the Membership Committee Chair was not present, it was decided by the EC to table this item until the annual meeting, when we need to make sure to bring this item back up for consideration.

There being no additional new business, Jay made a motion to adjourn. Mike seconded the motion, and the meeting adjourned at 10:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Doug Strom, acting for Robert P. Rutter, F.A.B. Secretary

**MINUTES OF THE FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF BENTHOLOGISTS
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EC) MEETING
6 DECEMBER 2001**

Location: Captain's Table Restaurant pier, Cedar Key, Florida.

Members Present: James L. Hulbert, Newsletter Assistant Editor; David J. Karlen, President-Elect; Palmer Kinser, Member at Large; Jay Leverone, Member at Large; Robert A. Mattson, Newsletter Editor; Marc Minno, President; Robert P. Rutter, Secretary; Douglas G. Strom, State Government Representative and EC Chair; Albert S. "Ford" Walton, Immediate Past-President.

Doug Strom called the meeting to order at 5:37 PM, and distributed copies of the minutes from the October 2001 EC meeting. He asked for any corrections to the October minutes, or those of the December 2000 EC meeting, which were published in the January Newsletter. There were no proposed corrections, so he moved that the minutes be approved as written. Dave seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Reports of Officers and Standing Committees

President Marc Minno, Chair of the By-Laws Committee, reported that he has not yet formalized wording proposed at the last EC meeting, regarding committee term expirations. At that meeting a question arose as to when current EC officers' (such as the EC Chair) terms expire. To insure continuous representation of such limited-term positions, Ford had suggested that the Constitution be revised with a clause such as "EC terms will be three years *or until the term of the incumbent is renewed or a successor is appointed.*" Marc said that he would present this to the membership at tomorrow's Business Meeting for their input and approval.

Rob Mattson, Newsletter Editor, has been editing our membership directory and anticipates including it in the next Newsletter. He will check with Marianne Pluchino, Chair of the Membership Committee, to insure that attendees of this Annual Meeting are included. [Remember that the registration fee for the Annual Meeting includes F.A.B. dues for the following year!] Each member will be listed by name, affiliation, address, phone and email. Marc said he would forward his email addresses to Marianne. Palmer suggested that if the directory is put on our website, it not contain the email addresses, as that could promote spamming. At present, Rob sends out 110 copies of the Newsletter, of which 10-15 are complimentary. The January issue typically runs about 18 pages, the May and September issues about half that. He believes that the membership directory will run about 3 pages. He is soliciting material for the January issue; one item he would especially like to continue is unusual Florida "critters." Doug asked about securing reduced postage costs (perhaps one-third of what we are currently paying) due to our non-profit status. Rob replied that he has been working on it, but has yet to speak with the right person.

Doug, speaking as a member of the Internet Committee, reported that the Chair of this committee is vacant and needs to be filled, preferably by someone with website interests. Our site is seriously dated. Palmer suggested that we seek professional input for the latest in website design and maintenance, although this might involve some cost. He has a person in mind and will look into it. Jim Hulbert said that he also knew of someone who might be able to help us, at least with

initial set-up. Mark Wetzel suggested that we visit the NABS website for ideas, and above all keep it simple and keep it current!

Eric Pluchino, Chair of the Endowment Committee, reported that beginning next year F.A.B., through its Endowment Fund, will be able to promote Student Presentation Awards, both graduate and undergraduate, for presentations and posters given at the Annual Meeting. Awards will be monetary, and could include reimbursement for travel. This will require that we have judges available, not to include members of the Endowment Committee. He is working on an announcement that by February can be sent to applicable departments and professors. He is soliciting ideas on who else should receive the announcement. Something similar should also appear in our Newsletter. At present, the interest amount from the Endowment account (\$7629) is \$560, roughly half of which will go toward next year's awards. Since only the interest earned from the fund can be used for endowment purposes, Eric suggested that this fund could be readily increased if F.A.B. contributed some of its General Fund monies to the Endowment Fund. It is his understanding that because our General Fund is a non-profit business account it does not earn interest. [It was quickly noted that the Treasurer needs to look into this.] After considerable discussion, it was decided by the EC that this was a viable option, and that a reasonable amount be determined. Marc moved that the General Fund (current balance \$12,891) contribute \$3000, an amount that would bring the Endowment Fund principal balance to just over \$10,000. David seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Doug advised that this be presented at tomorrow's Business Meeting. Marc informed the group that he had offered a student award for this year's meeting, and moved that we award from our General Fund \$50 for the best student presentation. Palmer seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. After further discussion it was decided that at least three line-items be added to the Annual Meeting registration form, their intents expressed generally below:

Do you want to make a separate contribution to the F.A.B. Endowment Fund?

Do you plan on giving a presentation?

If a student, would you like to be considered for an award?

Doug suggested that all newsletters include an item pertaining to Endowment Fund contributions, with a note that such donations are tax-deductible.

Marianne Pluchino, Chair of the Membership Committee, reported that she has completed a final update to her membership list, and asked if now would be a good time to purge those individuals who have not paid their dues for four consecutive years. Doug advised that we wait until after the list is published in the Newsletter, with an accompanying note explaining the four-year drop policy.

New Business

Doug advised that we need to arrange to have Marc Minno's name added to the President's Plaque. He asked if Ford would be willing to remain on the EC as an At-large Member, after his Immediate Past-President position terminates. Ford responded in the affirmative. Dave made the motion that Ford assume an At-large Member position: this was seconded and passed unanimously.

Doug asked for any additional new business. Mark Wetzel, visiting Biologist from the Illinois Natural History Survey, introduced himself and distributed copies of a memorandum addressed to F.A.B. attendees and members. The topic was *Taxonomic Certification – Issues, procedures,*

protocols under consideration by NABS. He is a member of their Technical Issues Committee, and works on organizing taxonomic workshops. He noted that F.A.B. was in a unique position to sponsor these workshops, perhaps one or two per year, and went on to say that he was available to conduct a workshop on freshwater Oligochaeta; and that some cost would be involved for travel and materials. Marc Minno related our experience with sponsoring a formal taxonomic workshop, formal in the sense that a proficiency test was given and a certificate of completion awarded. This was the 2001 Spring Workshop on larval Chironomidae presented by Dr. John Epler, using laboratory facilities at the University of Florida in Gainesville. The cost per participant (25) was \$125. Marc said that perhaps something similar could be worked out with Mark this coming spring. Palmer suggested that Mark submit a proposal for what he plans to present. There was agreement that there is a definite need for workshops that offer this type of training, but F.A.B. at present cannot undertake many because of the time and coordination (with educational facilities) required. Doug mentioned that the Florida Department of Environmental Protection is funding a series of freshwater taxonomic workshops at Florida A&M, but participation is limited almost exclusively to DEP biologists. This is part of a larger DEP program to insure taxonomic accuracy and consistency among the department's biologists. After considerable discussion, there was garnered unanimous opinion that it would be worthwhile for F.A.B. to at least have a part in sponsoring formal taxonomic workshops and certification. It is, after all, implicit in our mission statement. However, it was apparent that to properly address the subject, a new standing committee would need to be formed, a committee that would work closely with DEP, Water Management Districts, and the State University System, among others. Doug made the motion, pending approval of the membership at the Annual Meeting, that we form a standing committee, the Workshop and Certification Committee, to handle this. Rob seconded, and it passed unanimously. Doug then proposed that the Chair be the President-Elect. This motion also carried unanimously. After further discussion it was decided that the President and Immediate Past-President should be members, as well as at least two other F.A.B. representatives. It was mentioned that Mike Milligan, our EC Environmental Consulting Firm representative and Chair of the Award of Excellence Selection Committee, would be a valuable contributor since he has organized the taxonomy-based Fall Workshops since 1991.

Marc showed the ballot that he had prepared for tomorrow's elections: Palmer Kinser for President-Elect, Bob Rutter for Secretary, and open for Treasurer. Ford will announce the nominees so far and then open the floor to other nominations.

Dave Karlen, President-Elect, offered his ideas on next year's meetings. The Spring Workshop could be held at the Archbold Biological Station in Lake Placid; possible topics include freshwater Oligochaeta and Coleoptera. A backup location is the University of Florida in Gainesville. It is assumed that Mike Milligan will again organize the Fall Workshop in Long Key. The 16th Annual Meeting could be held at the Whitney Marine Laboratory, in St. Augustine, at a date favorable for student participation. A backup location is the St. John's River Water Management District in Palatka.

There being no additional new business, Doug asked for a motion to adjourn. Dave so moved, and the meeting adjourned at 7:37 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert P. Rutter, F.A.B. Secretary

MINUTES OF THE FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF BENTHOLOGISTS
15th ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING
7 DECEMBER 2001

Location: Cedar Key Field Laboratory, Cedar Key, Florida.

President Marc Minno opened the meeting at 10:47 AM, and handed out copies of the last Business Meeting's minutes and the Treasurer's report. He asked for any corrections to the minutes. There were none, so he had the minutes accepted as shown.

Marc asked if I, the Secretary, had any comment. I replied that I maintain an F.A.B. history file, and a repository for most documents. It was suggested that some of this material might be included in one of our newsletters.

Marc, on behalf of Treasurer Lynn Denahan, briefly went over the Association's balance sheet. The General Fund is \$12,891 and the Endowment Fund is \$7629. A question from the floor concerned how many members are represented by the \$240 in membership dues for January through December 2001. Doug Strom, Chair of the Executive Committee, responded that it is difficult to determine because dues are also included in the Annual Meeting registration fee. This is something that needs to be checked by the Chair of the Membership Committee; it is possible that members unfamiliar with the dues policy may pay dues twice for the same year.

Marc introduced Doug Strom as Chair of the Executive Committee. Doug thanked the Cedar Key Field Laboratory for hosting this event, Dave Karlen for yet another year as Program Chair, and the general membership for their attendance and support. He then presented his annual report recognizing F.A.B. officers and committee members for their contributions, and progress made during the year. [Doug's address is included elsewhere in the Newsletter.]

Marc then called on Rob Mattson, Editor of the Newsletter. Rob solicited input for the Newsletter, which is published in January, May and September, and asked that any address changes be mailed to him. Jim Hulbert, Newsletter Assistant Editor, said that 4-6 weeks remain for sending items to be included in the January issue.

Marc next called on Eric Pluchino, Chair of the Endowment Committee. Eric began by explaining that the primary goal of the committee is to promote the mission of the Association. All donations to the Endowment Fund, which now stands at \$7629, go into a federally guaranteed interest-bearing account, and only the interest earned is expended. He welcomes all donations. Beginning next year F.A.B. will be able to offer Student Presentation Awards, graduate and undergraduate, for research presentations and posters given at the Annual Meeting. For the best presentation we expect to offer an award of \$200 plus registration/dues; the best poster will be awarded \$50 plus registration/dues. Three line items will be included with the pre-registration form to assist with this:

Do you want to make a separate contribution to the F.A.B. Endowment Fund?

Do you plan on giving a presentation?

If a student, would you like to be considered for an award?

Eric pointed out that the awards program will require that we have judges available to sit in on and evaluate presentations. Please contact him if you are interested. He went on to report that

because our General Fund does not earn interest due to our non-profit status, and because the principal in the Endowment Fund is marginal for generating awards money, he suggested at yesterday's Executive Committee meeting that we transfer some of the General Fund into the Endowment Fund. This was done - \$3000 was allocated, an amount that would bring the Endowment Fund principal balance to just over \$10,000.

Marc introduced Marianne Pluchino, Chair of the Membership Committee. Marianne started out by thanking Doug Strom for all the work he has done as Chair of the Executive Committee. She then reported that current membership is 174, and outlined the three membership categories: 1) Current - dues paid within the last four years, 2) Temporary - receive complimentary copies of the Newsletter for one year as a way of introducing them to F.A.B., and 3) Honorary - charter members of F.A.B. She plans on working with our website person to post member interests. She mentioned that Marc Minno has come up with some ideas for an F.A.B. brochure, and she is looking for help on her committee to put this promotional material together. She asked if Jim Hulbert or Peggy Morgan would be able to hand out, or post brochures at the next NABS meeting. [Peggy Morgan, Biologist with the Florida DEP, is Co-Chair of the NABS Student Awards Subcommittee and regularly attends their meetings.] Mark Wetzel (Biologist with the Illinois Natural History Survey and member of the NABS Technical Issues Committee) offered to put the brochure on the NABS website with an appropriate link. Doug asked if it were possible to also post information regarding our meetings - Mark said that he could do it. Marianne asked Peggy if she would accept a position on the Membership Committee - Peggy accepted. Carlos de la Rosa suggested that F.A.B. could operate a booth at other societies' meetings. Doug replied that we had prepared and used an information board at the NABS 1994 meeting in Orlando. Numerous other suggestions were forthcoming from the floor; a powerpoint presentation, a poster with brochure holder, and a commercially available portable display board. Marc wrapped up the discussion by saying that these alternatives would be discussed at the next EC meeting.

Marc then introduced Ford Walton, Immediate Past-President and Chair of the Nominating Committee, who announced nominees for the F.A.B. positions that need to be filled: Palmer Kinser for President-Elect, Bob Rutter for Secretary, and Bonnie Hall for Treasurer. Voting will take place later in the meeting.

Marc asked for any unfinished business. There was none, so he moved on to new business by saying that three issues need to be voted on, two of which are proposed changes to the Constitution. The first change is explained in the minutes that he handed out earlier. Basically, we want to add some language that will permit us to extend the term of some Executive Committee positions, to insure continuous representation. He read the proposed wording change, "EC terms will be three years *or until the term of the incumbent is renewed or a successor is appointed.*", and asked for comment. There was none. Doug moved that the change be accepted; this was seconded and the motion passed unanimously. The second issue involves the future direction of our spring and fall workshops. We would like to gradually work into a more formal, hands-on treatment of taxonomic groups, similar to what we did this last spring with Dr. John Epler and his program on larval Chironomidae, which included instruction on the proper use of keys, a proficiency test and certificate of completion. There were many favorable comments made by the attendees at that workshop. This would be a new format for us, and the EC felt that it warranted the establishment of a new Standing Committee, the Workshop and

Certification Committee. The President-Elect will serve as chair, as it will help him organize future meetings. The President, Immediate Past-President, and two other members will help organize the workshops. We need to vote on establishing this committee. Rob made the motion and Dave Karlen seconded. It was asked from the floor if the committee could be comprised of more than five. Marc responded yes, that at the discretion of the Chair at least two other members would be appointed. Palmer Kinser suggested that members do not include individuals that could also be presenters, to avoid a possible conflict of interest. He went on to suggest that one of the members should have a freshwater background and one a marine background. Jim Hulbert volunteered to represent the former, and Jay Leverone volunteered to represent the latter. Speaking from the floor, Linda Epler thanked Marc for his efforts toward formalizing taxonomic training, and suggested that some language be included to insure money will be made available for such training. Marc responded that these are the kinds of details that will be worked out by the committee. Doug added that the committee will also address taxonomic certification and accreditation issues. This generated considerable discussion among the membership, including number of workshops per year and other interested parties. Marc reported that much of this had also come up at yesterday's EC meeting. He continued that we feel that F.A.B. can make a contribution in this regard and that the first step is to make the commitment to work on it. There is much to explore, and we plan on starting out slowly, with a triad of participants; F.A.B., Florida DEP and academia. Mark Wetzel called attention to the handout he had distributed at the EC meeting, that provides some insight on where NABS stands with the issue of taxonomic certification. He added that the task is daunting, especially in terms of legal defensibility, but that Florida appears to have a good, if not the best program, and perhaps could be used as a model. In the interest of time, Marc returned to the issue of establishing a Workshop and Certification Committee. It passed unanimously. The third and final issue is election of officers. Ford asked if there were any more nominations. There were none, so he moved that nominations be closed: the motion was seconded and passed unanimously. Since there were no new nominations, Ford called for a voice affirmation of the nominees (to the dismay of Marc who had prepared an official written ballot, which would have afforded him the opportunity to detail the myriad manifestations of chads). The three nominees were approved unanimously.

Marc, after asking if there was any other new business (there was none), announced that this ended his term as president, and turned the meeting over to the incoming President, David Karlen. Dave presented a proposed schedule for next year's meetings. The Spring Workshop will provisionally be held at the Reedy Creek Improvement District near Orlando in late April or early May. Possible topics include freshwater Oligochaeta and Coleoptera. It is assumed that Mike Milligan will again organize the Fall Workshop in Long Key, with a focus on decapod crustaceans. The 16th Annual Meeting may be held at the Whitney Marine Laboratory, in St. Augustine, at a date favorable for student participation. A backup location is the St. John's River Water Management District in Palatka. Dave has volunteered to again serve as the Program Chair.

Dave asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was so moved and the meeting adjourned at 12:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert P. Rutter, F.A.B. Secretary