

Bylaws of South Eastern Connecticut Skin Divers, Inc.

- **Statement of Non-Discrimination.**

SECONN is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to programs, facilities, events, and positions without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications. It is the policy of SECONN to maintain an environment free of discrimination, including harassment. SECONN prohibits discrimination and harassment against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status. Discrimination or harassment against members, officers, vendors or guests will not be tolerated.

- **Member (Definition)**

To be a member in “good standing” this person:

Must be current on their Club dues payment.

Must not be under Suspension or Expulsion, as per Charter/Constitution.

Any person, who is not “in good standing”, shall be treated as a non-member.

Only individuals are members.

Businesses cannot be members. Business owners can be an individual member.

- **Membership Year and Dues**

Membership runs for the fiscal year, Oct 1st to September 30th.

Dues as per “Schedule of Fees” attached.

An initiation fee, as per “Schedule of Fees” attached, is required for any new member.

A late fee, as per “Schedule of Fees” attached, is due with renewal dues that are not paid by Jan 2nd.

DAN Subsidy. SECONN is a supporter of the Divers Alert Network. Members are rebated an amount, as per “Schedule of Fees” attached, toward their annual DAN membership costs. Proof of membership must be provided to treasurer.

Membership for those who join on or after August 1st will run until September 30th of the next year.

- **Meetings**

SECONN business meetings will be conducted monthly on the second Tuesday of each month commencing at 7:30 P.M. SECONN social gatherings will be conducted on the fourth Tuesday of each month.

Meetings are held twelve months a year.

Meeting location may be changed by a vote at a club meeting. Publishing the new location in the newsletter shall serve as notice.

Meetings may be cancelled if there is not a quorum present.

Meetings may be cancelled in advance when it is expected that a quorum will not be present. (e.g. The meeting scheduled for the week of Christmas).

- **Voting**

Quorum – A minimum of five members must be present at a meeting for valid transaction of business. At least one of the members present must be an officer.

Majority – All votes, unless otherwise specified, require a simple majority of the attending members, to pass.

- **6. Club Sponsored Dive Rebate**

A Club Sponsored dive is an event where participating SECONN members are eligible for a rebate of a portion of the dive fees.

Rebate amount up to the fee amount for the dive or an amount, as per “Schedule of Fees” attached, whichever is lower. (Example: A dive costing \$5 would only be eligible for a \$5 rebate)

There must be a monetary charge incurred for participation in the dive. Dives that are “free of charge” do not qualify as a club sponsored dive. Treasurer may demand a receipt of payment as proof of participation.

Definitions:

A fee “Paid” is the fee paid to a professional/incorporated business in order to participate in the dive. The intent is that only dive charter boats or paid shore dive facilities would qualify. A scuba facility that charges an entry fee (e.g. Dutch Springs, PA) would qualify.

Gear rental fees and/or “pool” fees for training classes do not qualify a dive as a “paid” dive.

Fees paid to an instructor, as part of a class, do not qualify for rebates.

A fee paid to a dive charter boat or a shore dive facility for a dive that will also be a qualification dive for a member that is taking a class is allowable provided that the dive meets the other requirements of a Club Sponsored Dive.

Dive must be Open to all qualified members. (Minimum certification standards should be the only reason for excluding members. Example: Dives requiring “Advanced Certification” will acceptably exclude “Open Water” certified members.) No dive trip may be sponsored if the provider discriminates against any portion of the membership as defined in the non-discrimination statement.

Club sponsored dives must be discussed and voted on at least two weeks prior to the dive date.

The dive must be voted on at a regular organization meeting and accepted by at least a 2/3 of the votes cast.

To be eligible for the rebate, the member must have paid their dues prior to the vote on Club sponsorship of the dive. Payment on the same day as the vote is acceptable as long as it is paid prior to the vote.

A minimum of three club members must participate in the dive for the dive to qualify.

Any member can propose or initiate discussion of a club sponsored dive.

The total amount rebated to a member in any one fiscal year shall not exceed

the member's dues for that year.

Treasury balance must exceed a specified amount, on the date of rebate request, as per "Schedule of Fees" attached, for any rebates to be paid.

Rebate eligibility expires upon the close of the books for the current fiscal year.

Any rebates not claimed by that date, for that year will be lost.

Members must pay for the dive, in full. Rebates will be made to the diver, not to the Business running the dive.

Rebates can only be claimed after the dive has occurred.

- **Ads in the SECONN Newsletter or on the SECONN Web Site**

Description

For Sale

Short Ads of personal items for sale, for dive or marine related gear, will be accepted from members.

For Sale ads from non-members will require a fee be paid.

Services Offered

Ads of dive related services offered, such as diver certification classes, can only be accepted from businesses, and are therefore paid ads.

All other ads

All other ads are paid ads only, regardless of source.

The Newsletter editor is requested to limit the number and/or size of non-dive related advertisements. Any member can request a vote as to whether specific ads should be accepted.

Frequency and volume of ads are at the discretion of the Newsletter editor.

All ads (paid or free) are accepted on a space available basis. Paid ads not run will be refunded without recourse.

Printing and distribution of the ad does not constitute SECONN acceptance or endorsement of the product or service.

Paid ads that have been declined by the membership will be refunded. (e.g. If a long term ad is printed and subsequently declined by the membership, the pro-rata portion of the fee will be refunded and the ad will be discontinued)

The "Sponsor News" is a section of the newsletter where vendor information, of general interest to members, is printed for free. Typically this is one or two lines containing the business name, phone, website and product line. The newsletter editor has discretion as to whether inclusion in and/or content of the "Sponsor News" section of the newsletter constitutes an ad or not.

The intent of this section is to reward donors with free publicity.

Advertising other than via the newsletter will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Members may request a vote on whether to over-rule the editor on an ad decision. Newsletter editor can be overruled by a simple majority vote during a regular club meeting.

- **Charity**

SECONN is a Public Service organization with a Constitutional mandate to “encourage interest in safe sport diving; in the study and development of underwater resources”.

The club should make all efforts to promote this goal through volunteer efforts. When possible, donations from the club treasury should be made to other non-profit groups/organizations whose goals are in concert with ours.

- **Swap Meet**

Entrance fees, as per “Schedule of Fees” attached.

Members, in good standing, selling personal gear receive a table free-of-charge. Members selling items as a business shall pay the vendor fee.

Non-Members selling personal gear shall pay a fee, as per “Schedule of Fees” attached, for one table of space. This fee will include one entrance fee for that person. Non-Members joining the Club, and paying their dues in full, prior to start of the Swap Meet shall be considered Members.

Commercial or Professional Vendors shall pay a fee, as per “Schedule of Fees” attached. This fee would apply to a commercial or professional entity run by (or owned by) a member. This shall entitle the Vendor to a space equivalent to three tables and entrance fee for up to three people working at the booth.

Table space is not guaranteed for members. Table space is allocated first to vendors, second to Non-Members and lastly to members. Table space is allocated to members on a first-come first-served basis. Table sharing is encouraged.

- **Absentee Ballots**

The Club recognizes that its membership resides in a broad geographic region and not all members are able to attend meetings. In order to allow all members to participate as much as possible the Club allows “absentee” balloting.

All members in good standing are eligible to submit ballots.

Ballots must be in writing, contain the question to be voted on, the club member’s printed name and signature, and their vote (Yes or No).

Ballots can be submitted to any club officer in advance of a meeting.

These absentee ballots will be counted as if the member were present, for the purposes of the specified vote only.

Since absentee ballots are for only one specific question, they will not be used for the purpose of determining a quorum. They will be counted towards determining a majority for that vote.

If a member who has submitted an absentee ballot attends the meeting during the vote they will be allowed to retract their absentee ballot and cast their vote in person.

- **Annual review**

In order to keep fees, charges and rebates in line with the economy and the club’s ability to function, all amounts specified in the bylaws should be reviewed and confirmed annually. This should be done at the first meeting

in October, at the beginning of the fiscal year, but may be done at any meeting prior to the fee(s) being due.

Until the review and confirmation of amounts, or in the event that amounts are not reviewed, the previous year's amounts shall stand.

The schedule of amounts may be amended by a 2/3 majority vote of all members voting at a regular meeting.

• **Addendum: Schedule of Fees: Effective January 2009**

• Membership Dues

- Dues: \$30 per fiscal year for Individual Membership; \$45 per fiscal year for Family Membership (must be immediate family members – spouse and dependant children).
- Initiation fee: \$0
- Late Fee: \$5
- DAN Subsidy: \$5 discount on dues for Individual Membership, \$10 discount on dues for a Family Membership with a family type policy.
- Club Sponsored Dive Rebate
 - Dive Day Rebate: \$10 per Club sponsored dive day not to exceed the total amount paid by the individual for SECONN Individual or Family Membership dues paid for the year.
 - Minimum Club Treasury amount required for payment of dive rebates: \$2500
- Fees: Newsletter: (per insertion)
 - Full Page \$75
 - Half Page \$40
 - Quarter Page \$25
 - Eighth Page \$15
 - Prepaid ads run for 12 consecutive months receive a 25% discount from the above single insertion rates. (e.g. Full Page 12 month fee = (12 x \$75) = \$900 less 25% = \$675)
- Swap Meet
 - Entrance fees: \$1 (Includes family member(s) of a member).
 - Members (selling gear or not) entrance fee: \$1 (Includes family member(s) of a member)
 - Non-Members selling personal gear: \$15 fee for one table of space
 - Commercial or Professional Vendors: \$50 space fee
- Expenses (As described in Article X of the club Constitution)

The maximum total expenditure of club funds allowable, by the corporation officers, between meetings, without prior approval of the corporation's members at a business meeting is \$100.