

MINUTES

Association for Conservation Information Board Meeting

Conference Call ● May 1, 2019 ● 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. MST

ITEM NO. 1: Meeting Called to Order.

ITEM NO. 2: Roll Call.

- ✓ Jenifer Wisniewski (TN, President, Conference Co-Chair, Auction)
- ✓ Scott Ball (FL, Communications)
- ✓ Lance Cherry (NM, Vice President)
- ✓ Dan Dennison (HI, Board)
- ✓ Sara DiRienzo (WY, Secretary, Scholarships)
- ✓ Judy Stokes Weber (VT, Treasurer)
- ✓ Kay Ellerhoff (MT, Futures)
- ✓ Mandy Futey (NJ, Board)
- ✓ Jason Harmon (TN, Board)
- ✓ Darrin Hill (OK, Board)
- ✓ Micah Homes (OK, Ways & Means)
- ✓ Kyle Martens (NE, Board)
- ✓ Kim Nix (AL, Past President)
- ✓ Alix Pedraza (SC, Board)
- ✓ Blake Podhajsky (OK, Awards)
- ✓ Craig Sanchez (NM, Board)
- ✓ Amanda Stroud (SC, Conference Co-Chair)

Unable to Attend:

- ✓ Jeff Kurrus (NE, Board)
- ✓ Nadia Reimer (KS, Board)

ITEM NO. 3: Approval of Minutes.

MOTION: Kim Nix moved to approve the March 6, 2019 board meeting minutes. Jason Harmon seconded the motion.

VOTE: Voice vote taken. All present voted in the Affirmative. **Motion carried unanimously.**

ITEM NO. 4: Opening Remarks.

Presented by Jenifer Wisniewski, President

Congrats to Mandy on her new baby! Congrats to Nadia on her appointment for the new chief of communications for KS!! We need people to register for the conference!

ITEM NO. 5: Communications Report.

Presented by Scott Ball, Membership Communications Chair

Business as usual. No updates on membership. Next issue of The Balance Wheel scheduled for May 15. We have 587 subscribers (-9 from last report). There have been 17 Facebook posts since March 6, mostly about Awards Contest and Conference. Facebook page has 549 likes (+5 from last report) and 656 followers. Scott continues to update the website with conference details as they become available.

ITEM NO. 6: Treasurer's Report.

Presented by Judy Stokes Weber, Treasurer

Our current balance is \$111,476.43. Final checks received for those in the awards program. We ended up with 50 “agency members.” Ready to begin sending out annual invoices for dues and awards entries in mid-June. Here is the check register since the last report. I plan to ask the same CPA firm to provide a review and report of our finances, if agreeable with the board.

MAR						
Deposit	3.1.19	NM dues and awards	\$880.00	\$112,898.06	x	
PP transfer	3.13.19	Bonnie Holding Individ Memb	\$24.15	\$112,922.21	x	
PP transfer	3.13.19	Delaware Downpayment 20	\$24.15	\$112,946.36	x	
PP transfer	3.16.19	WI membership	\$195.30	\$113,141.66	x	
10219	3.20.19	Hosting4Less	\$299.40	\$112,842.26	x	
APR						
10220	4.10.19	Scott C. Ball	\$1,250.00	\$111,592.26	x	
10221	4.18.19	JSW/Wildlife Conservation Partner	\$1,250.00	\$110,342.26	x	
PP transfer	4.19.19	WA dues and awards	\$430.02	\$110,772.28	x	
PP transfer	4.19.19	Emily-Jo Wiggins indiv dues	\$24.15	\$110,796.43	x	balanced
	VT Acct		\$110,796.43			
	NH Acct		\$680.00			
	Total Assets		\$111,476.43	as of 4.29.19		

ITEM NO. 7: 2019 ACI Annual Conference (Georgia/South Carolina).

Presented by Amanda Stroud, Conference Co-Chair

The conference is slowly gaining registrants. They are finalizing sponsorships, awards and speakers, and are starting to create a program for the event. The opening reception will be a little different this year with tours. Savannah is the most haunted city in America, so the ghost tour is a total must! But, all the tour options are all exciting. If anyone has suggestions on the best way to moderate a panel discussion, send suggestions to Amanda.

ITEM NO. 8: Awards Report.

Presented by Blake Podhajsky, Awards Chair

Judging for the 2018 contest is well underway. Deadline to complete judging is Friday, May 17. We have a record number of 546 entries in 31 categories! Still need judges for the following categories: Photography: Flora and Fauna (1), Photography: People (1) Magazine: General Interest Article (1). There are a few categories that judges have volunteered for but they have yet to register as a judge. There is always a chance they flake out and I will scramble to recruit judges last minute Only half of the entries have been judged

Each year we award plaques to the top three entries in each category. We try to keep the total cost for plaques at around \$2500/year. Last year we ordered 85 plaques at a total cost of \$2,245.19. This year with the expanded photography categories, Blake anticipated we will need to order 93-95 plaques (depending on ties, etc). Using last years prices, Blake anticipated we will need to spend approx. \$2,600. Last year we had 457 entries at \$40 per entry (\$18,280). This year we have 547 entries at \$40 per entry (\$21,880). \$21,880 - \$18,280= \$3,600 difference. The ACI awards competition continues to grow in popularity and it is a big deal to finish first place! Blake proposed that we reward the first place winners with something different than a larger plaque. Blake proposed we spend more money to

purchase trophies for the first place winners. Currently our first place plaques cost \$37. Discussion on how transport would work for trophies if there were people with multiple first places as well as the ease of display. Budget is a concern, too. The board decided on no trophies by perhaps upgrading the first place plaque.

Blake proposed to have good number of the physical entries on display at the conference. Before the online contest, entries were mailed in to category chairs and the awards chair. The awards chair would have all the entries on display at a designated booth at the annual conference. Blake would like to bring this element of the awards back because it is beneficial for conference attendees to see what other agencies are producing. Blake will email entrants to have them send a sample of what they submitted to Georgia or South Carolina directly.

We are in our final year of our contract with OMNISAM, our contest provider. At the end of August 2019, our prices will go up drastically. Right now we are paying \$2,700/year with support hours included. The price will increase to \$7,500 without support hours included (\$4,800 difference). Blake is research other contest providers that may be able to host our contest at a more reasonable price, but we will not find any solution on the market as cheap as \$2,700/year. We need to prepare for the contest site to cost \$5,500- \$8,500/year. Blake is comfortable with OMNISAM as our provider and thinks overall it is an acceptable online contest for our organization. But if we are to make a change and find an overall better provider or better price, we need to shop now! With the increase in entries our awards contest is making enough to essentially offset the inevitable increase in contest site costs. We need to address these questions:

- How much does ACI feel comfortable spending on a contest site provider?
- Are we content with our current provider, OMNISAM? Is it time to look elsewhere?
- Will our contest continue to grow in entry numbers? Do we purposely want to expand in order to bring in more money to offset future cost increases?

More on this will be discussed with the awards committee and at the board meeting at the conference.

The board and the award committee needs to determine the next steps for managing the awards and the role of the awards chair. The job as administrator has increasingly taken on more duties today then it arguably did 10 years ago when we had 338 less entries! This has become nearly a full-blown job. The board discussed options for managing the work such as splitting the duties or adding more category chairs with responsibilities to recruit and manage judges. The possibility of paying judges, based on number of entries judged also was discussed. The board decided to discuss this further and make decisions with the awards committee and at the board meeting at the conference.

ITEM NO. 9: Auction and Sponsorship Report.

Presented by Jenifer Wisniewski, President and Auction Chair

Jenifer is still collecting auction items. She is seeking more experiences to auction because they raise good funds.

ITEM NO. 10: Futures Conference Report.

Presented by Kay Ellerhoff, Futures Chair

New Jersey is unable to host in 2021, but wants to move to a later year. We a need for a host state for 2021.

ITEM NO. 11: Scholarship Report.

Presented by Sara DiRienzo, Secretary and Scholarship Chair and Kim Nix

The scholarship application is posted with a May 24 deadline. We are offering 10-15 scholarships. Thus far, 13 applications have been submitted. The focus will be on offering scholarships to first-time

attendees. There was discussion about offering a lifetime member scholarship; Scott will offer and see if anyone is interested.

ITEM NO. 12: Ways and Means Report.

Presented by Micah Homes, Ways and Means Chair

No updates.

ITEM NO. 13: New Business.

The next board meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, June 5, 2019 at 10-11 a.m. MDT.** It will focus on awards. The awards committee will be invited for discussion. Sara will work with Blake to facilitate call in details to the awards committee.

ITEM NO. 14: Adjournment.

MOTION: Jenifer moved to adjourn. Blake seconded the motion.

VOTE: Voice vote taken. All present voted in the Affirmative. **Motion carried unanimously.**

With no further business on the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at **10:54 a.m. MST.**

Submitted by Sara DiRienzo, Secretary