

MINUTES

OFFICIAL

**Association for Conservation Information
Annual General Business Meeting
Thursday, July 16, 2009
Baton Rouge, La.**

CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL

President Nels Rodefeld (Oklahoma) called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m. (CDT), welcoming the members in attendance and thanking them for participating in this important part of the conference.

Secretary Scott Ball (Florida) called the roll. In attendance were the following:

Agency Members

Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Arizona Game and Fish Department
Arkansas Game and Fish Commission
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Indiana Department of Natural Resources
Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission
Ohio Division of Wildlife
Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation
Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation
South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks
Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Utah Division of Wildlife Resources
West Virginia Division of Natural Resources
Wyoming Game and Fish Department

Sponsoring Members

Liberty Press Publications

Individual Members

Marilyn Bontz
Dottie Head

Cheryl Stanco

Lifetime Members

Kay Morton Ellerhoff

TREASURER'S REPORT – Bob Wines (West Virginia)

Bob Wines reported that ACI is financially sound, even though our total assets are \$1,200-\$1,400 less than at this time last year.

The proposed budget for 2009-10, he noted, is not a balanced budget. It calls for anticipated revenues of \$20,000 and anticipated expenditures of \$41,500. This is due to the large number of members (21) attending the conference on scholarship, raising projected expenditures for that item from \$5,000 to \$10,000. The cost of the Awards Program (\$5,000) also exceeded previous estimates (\$1,000).

At its July 13 meeting, the Board of Directors had postponed voting on a proposed budget, allowing Bob time to incorporate the Board's discussion into a new draft. The Board briefly reconvened during the General Business Meeting to complete this item of business.

Motion to approve amended budget: Robin Thomas (Utah)

Second: Thomas Gresham (Louisiana)

Vote: The motion passed, and the proposed budget was adopted.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Audit Committee – Scott Ball

As chairman of the Audit Committee, Scott Ball introduced the other members: Lesley McNeff (Oklahoma) and Jeff Williams (Arkansas). Their review (submitted separately) concluded that ACI's financial records are in good order.

Motion to accept the committee's report: Marianne Burke (Louisiana)

Second: Lindsay Deering (Ohio)

Vote: The motion passed.

Membership Committee – Bob Wines

New Members:

- Sponsoring Member – National Bowhunters Foundation
- Agency Members – The Wildlife Society, Pennsylvania Game Commission, National Archery in the Schools Program
- Individual Member – Marilyn Bontz
- Associate Member – Ducks Unlimited (Andy Cooper)

Departing Members:

- Connecticut Dept. of Environmental Protection
- U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance

- Mississippi Dept. of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks
- Missouri Prairie Foundation
- Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
- XONTV
- Izaak Walton League of America
- Michael Warner, Arkansas Heritage Foundation

2009 Conference Update – Marianne Burke

Marianne Burke reported that this year’s conference drew 52 registered participants, representing 28 agencies. The current economic climate prohibited many members from attending; but despite the lower-than-usual attendance, she said, it has been a good conference. Associated expenses totaled approximately \$35,000, and total revenue was approximately \$22,550. She offered one last reminder to sign up for Friday field trips.

Nominating Committee – Stephanie Hussey (RBFF)

Stephanie Hussey served as Chair of the Nominating Committee this year, with Michael Gray (Kentucky) and Thomas Gresham (Louisiana) filling the other two slots.

Stephanie reported that Lydia Saldaña (Texas) will be unable to continue serving as Vice President due to an overwhelming workload and other commitments. The committee offered the following slate of candidates:

President – **Nels Rodefeld**

Vice President – **Scott Ball**

Secretary – **Don King (Tennessee)**

Treasurer – **Bob Wines**

Board of Directors – **Don Cash (Texas), Lindsay Deering, Jeff Williams**

Nels reviewed the eligibility criteria for serving on the Board of Directors: A candidate must represent an agency that has been a member in good standing for at least two years. Nominees must have attended at least two of the past four conferences and/or must have served as an official committee member for at least two years. They will be expected to attend conferences, board meetings and teleconferences if at all possible.

Scott added that, excluding officers, there are nine members of the Board of Directors, serving staggered terms of three years each. Current Board members are Jon Charpentier (New Hampshire), Thomas Gresham, Craig Rieben (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), Stephanie Hussey, Kim Nix (Alabama), Robin Thomas (Utah), Michael Gray, Micah Holmes (Oklahoma) and Monica Linnenbrink (South Carolina). The terms of Charpentier, Gresham and Rieben expire at this meeting.

Each of the Board nominees spoke briefly, and the ballots were distributed. The meeting continued while the ballots were counted.

Future Conference Sites – Kay Morton Ellerhoff

Kay reported that Kentucky will host next year's conference – July 19-23, 2010 in Louisville. Ohio will host the 2011 conference. For 2012, plans are meeting at the National Conservation Training Center (Shepherdstown, W. Va.). Conference coordination will be handled by West Virginia and one or two other states, which have not yet been determined.

After 2012, potential conference sites include Alabama, Iowa, Oregon, South Dakota, New Hampshire, Utah, Arizona, Minnesota and Granite Ranch, Wyoming.

Election Results

Stephanie announced that all candidates had been elected to their nominated positions.

***The Balance Wheel* Committee – Dottie Head, Editor**

In reviewing the highlights of her written report (submitted separately), Dottie reported that the fall issue of the ACI newsletter will feature the Proceedings of the 2009 Conference. She also welcomed Jamey Graham (Ohio) and Penny Miller (North Carolina) as new members of her committee.

Geoffrey Schneider Scholarship Committee – Robin Thomas

In summarizing her written report (submitted separately), Robin said the committee received 23 scholarship applications from 13 different agencies, although two candidates later withdrew. The 21 scholarships covered registration (\$4,725) and lodging (approximately \$10,000).

Auction Report – Steve Wilson (Arkansas), Micah Holmes

“Wild Man” and Micah thanked everyone who contributed auction items, bought tickets, bid on items and helped prepare for the event. This year's auction generated \$3,962.

Outdoor Writers Association of America (OWAA) – Kay Ellerhoff, Phil Bloom

Kay introduced Phil Bloom as ACT's new OWAA liaison. Phil is with the Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources and is Past President of OWAA. He reported that OWAA is selling the condominium it owns and converting its publication to an online-only format. The latter action should save the organization at least \$20,000/year. OWAA recently streamlined its awards contest. He said its recent conference in Grand Rapids, Mich. was a success, and next year's conference will be June, 2010 in Rochester, Minn.

SPECIAL PROJECTS STATUS – Monica Linnenbrink

Monica led a team including Micah Holmes and Bob Wines that sought and evaluated proposals for projects that would address ACI priorities. When the idea was originally conceived, ACI's financial situation was such that we could afford to fund a proposal for as much as \$10,000. Since then, however, we've had to use that money to help cover this year's conference costs and provide travel scholarships for many members. And although ACI is still financially sound, much of our money is tied up in a CD that won't mature until late 2011.

Monica described the top three proposals, as ranked by the committee:

#3: Waive registration fee for the first 50 applicants for the 2010 ACI Conference. The committee feels this is duplicative of the Geoffrey Schneider Travel Scholarship program already in place. But if any extra money were to be available, use it to augment the existing travel scholarship program.

#2: Conference Coordinator. The committee received two similar proposals. The main difference between them is that one proposed hiring an ACI member part-time to perform this job for all future conferences; the other proposed having the host agency fill the position locally for that particular year. The committee did not recommend one scenario over the other.

#1: Student Mentor/Conference Planning. Give selected students \$1,000 each to work with host agency in planning, attending and facilitating sessions at the conference. The committee sees this as a creative way to recruit students from the fish and wildlife field into ACI before they graduate.

Monica said the Board of Directors' original plan was to select one proposal for funding at a conference call following the General Business Meeting. Instead, given ACI's current financial situation, the Board had decided not to fund any of the proposals for the time being; but it would revisit the issue when more funds are available.

NEW BUSINESS

None

OLD BUSINESS

None

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 9:46 a.m. (CDT)

Respectfully submitted:
Scott C. Ball, Secretary