

MINUTES

Association for Conservation Information Board Meeting

Conference Call ● Oct. 3, 2018 ● 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. MDT

ITEM NO. 1: Meeting Called to Order.

ITEM NO. 2: Roll Call.

- ✓ Jenifer Wisniewski (GA, President, Conference Co-Chair, Auction)
- ✓ Lance Cherry (NM, Vice President)
- ✓ Sara DiRienzo (WY, Secretary, Scholarships)
- ✓ Judy Stokes Weber (NH, Treasurer)
- ✓ Scott Ball (FL, Communications)
- ✓ Dan Dennison (HI, Board)
- ✓ Kay Ellerhoff (MT, Futures)
- ✓ Jason Harmon (TN, Board)
- ✓ Darrin Hill (OK, Board)
- ✓ Bonnie Holding (ME, Scholarships)
- ✓ Micah Holmes (OK, Ways & Means)
- ✓ Kim Nix (AL, Past President)
- ✓ Alix Pedraza (SC, Board)
- ✓ Blake Podhajsky (OK, Awards)
- ✓ Nadia Reimer (KS, Board)
- ✓ Craig Sanchez (NM, Board)

Unable to Attend:

- ✓ Mandy Futey (NJ, Board)
- ✓ Jeff Kurrus (NE, Board)
- ✓ Kyle Martens (NE, Board)
- ✓ Amanda Stroud (SC, Conference Co-Chair)

ITEM NO. 3: Approval of Minutes.

MOTION: Jason Harmon moved to approve the Aug. 1, 2018 business meeting minutes. Darrin Hill seconded the motion.

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

MOTION: Kim Nix Jason Harmon moved to approve the July 1, 2018 Board meeting minutes. Darrin Hill 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

Jennifer is leading efforts to survey of each state's agency structure as related to communications, education and outreach. All board members will get an email from Matt Harlow at DJ Case & Associates with draft survey. The direct is to review and provide feedback to Jennifer. Surveys will be disseminated to membership for one response per agency. The intent is to have more information to help with personnel structure questions.

ITEM NO. 5: Communications Report.

Presented by Scott Ball, Membership Communications Chair

Judy Stokes Weber has sent renewal notices/contest invoices to member states, organizations. Followed up with reminder item in September TBW, map for website.

The Board discussed approving new membership for the Lower Loop Natural Resources District of Nebraska and reviewed qualifications for member agencies. The organization meets the requirements as a conservation agency with outreach work.

MOTION: Darrin Hill moved to approved membership for the Lower Loop Natural Resources District. Jenifer Wisniewski seconded the motion.

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

The latest issue of The Balance Wheel sent Sept. 17 to 607 subscribers resulting in 404 visits to website that day. This is the largest ever single-day total, surpassing previous record of 359 from July 2017.

Of 16 scholarship recipients (including Steve Wilson) Scott received TBW articles from 12. Three have requested extra time, and one (Mandy Futey), is handling the tagline project as her assignment.

The ACI Facebook boasted 31 posts since July 10. Many were pre-, mid- and post-conference-related. Blake has posted several times, highlighting some of the award winners. Prior to the conference, we had just under 500 Facebook likes. We now have 539 likes.

The ACI listserv will shut down given there are no new subscribers or users in over a year; the subscriber list has excessive number of closed-out email accounts.

Thanks to Kyle Martens, ACI now has a presence on LinkedIn.

ITEM NO. 6: Treasurer's Report.

Presented by Judy Stokes Weber, Treasurer

Currently, 35 agency members have renewed. ACI has one supporting sponsorship, Southwick Associates, and one individual, Jennifer Sampsell from the Conservation Federation of Missouri. Membership renewals will continue through December. The board may be asked to assist by calling lapsed members to reengage their membership. The agency member list currently for FY 2019:

Alabama Wildlife and Fisheries
American Sportfishing Association
Aquatic Resources Education Association
Arizona Game and Fish Department
Arkansas Game and Fish Commission
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
California Department of Wildlife
Colorado Parks and Wildlife
Congressional Sportmen's Foundation
Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission
Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources

Indiana Department of Natural Resources
Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources
Lower Loup Natural Resources District
Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
Michigan Dept. Natural Resources
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
National Shooting Sports Foundation
Nebraska Game and Parks
Nevada Division of Wildlife
New Hampshire Fish and Game Department

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
North Dakota Game and Fish Department
OH Division of Wildlife
OK Department of Wildlife Conservation
Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission
Pennsylvania Game Commission
South Carolina Department of Natural Resources

South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks
Texas Parks and Wildlife
US Fish & Wildlife Service
Utah Division of Wildlife Resources
Vermont Fish and Wildlife Dept.
Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
West Virginia Division of Natural Resources
Wyoming Game and Fish Dept.

ACI started Fiscal Year 2019 in a strong position thanks to an ongoing team effort. Expect updates on the returns from the MO conference in November. As of 9-30-18 we have a balance in our account of \$82,649.24.

Checks written since July 1 to:

10200 7.3.18 Scott C. Ball \$1,250.00
10201 7.20.18 Weber Treasurer Stipend \$1,000.00
10202 7.26.18 CPA Compilation Report 2 yrs \$1,000.00
10203 7.29.18 L Cherry reim Spirit re-do \$128.00
10204 8.4.18 K. Nix reimburse Spirit Award \$60.94
10205 8.4.18 J.Wisniewski reimb Pres gift \$121.00
10206 8.4.18 K2 Awards & Apparel \$2,245.19
10207 8.4.18 JS Weber Treas travel reimb \$1,500.00
10208 8.4.18 VOID --
10209 8.4.18 SC Ball ACI conf travel reimb \$1,500.00
10210 9.5.18 Omni Solutions Group Inc \$2,700.00

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

Presented by Jenifer Wisniewski, President

Jennifer updated the board on planned conference sessions and activities including a Sunday night riverboat cruise as welcome. Sessions include topics such as media relations, crisis communications, R3, panels and USFWS talks. Expect good things for 2019 in Savannah, July 7-11, 2019.

ITEM NO. 8: Awards Report.

Presented by Blake Podhajsky, Awards Chair

Blake presented about our current ACI Awards contest platform is with OmniSG, a current year-to-year agreement. Our current agreement costs \$2,700 / year and renews every September. With this agreement, they host the contest on their site, provide technical support and provide a winners gallery. But they have recently notified ACI their rates have significantly increased to \$7,500 /year no including tech support or winners gallery; support hours and winners gallery will be additional costs- approx. \$8,500 / year.

Blake collected an initial quote from OpenWater, another contest platform that could host with a three-year agreement for \$5,200/yr with unlimited entries, support and training, winners gallery and more.

Options moving forward:

- find a different contest provider at a reasonable price
- increase our entry fee
- hope to increase the number of entries submitted at current \$40 entry fee to offset platform rate

increase
– do nothing

The board discussed raising contest fees, and Jennifer raised concerns about doing so, given fees were recently waived and the money generated from the contest already far exceeds the cost of the awards. The current fee structure could be enough to cover a new awards platform or stay with OmniSG with the rate increase.

Blake will continue to research other options and evaluate costs to inform future board discussion on this topic.

ITEM NO. 9: Auction Report.

Presented by Jenifer Wisniewski, President and Auction Chair

Auction went well at past ACI. Hope to do even more next year.

ITEM NO. 10: Futures Conference Report.

Presented by Kay Ellerhoff, Future Conference Hosts Chair

The following states are slated to host future ACI Annual Conferences: 2020 New Mexico, 2021 New Jersey, 2022 (new!) North Carolina Resources Commission, 2023 Pennsylvania Game Commission, 2024 Michigan. Washington and Montana (new!) on futures list. There is also interest from an anonymous –yet generous - mystery host for 2025 (not Hawaii).

Lance Cherry updated the board on the 2020 conference, slated for Santa Fe, New Mexico July 19-20. The conference will be held on the historic Santa Fe Plaza Drury Plaza Hotel, 828 Paseo de Peralta, Santa Fe, NM 87501. A block of 100 rooms has been locked in with a nightly rate of \$179. Summer months in Santa Fe are peak season, with average rates per night in the \$300-\$400 range. By confirming our location early we are able to secure an off-season rate.

As the committee begins to explore details and options for hosting a truly enchanted conference, Lance will be updating the board. Lance said he will be encouraging states to register early and book their rooms well in advance to ensure they benefit from the best possible room rates.

ITEM NO. 11: Scholarship Report.

Presented by Sara DiRienzo, Secretary and Scholarship Co-Chair and Bonnie Holding, Scholarship Co-Chair

Scholarships went well and pleased with the updated. All recipients fulfilling duties. ACI awarded 15 scholarships and one scholarship to a lifetime member.

ITEM NO. 12: Ways and Means Report.

Presented by Micah Holmes, Board Member and Ways and Means Chair

Micah led discussion about the update to bylaws regarding the distribution of funds for advanced payment to host states, allowing for more support, if needed. Lance made change and that update is reflected on the website.

ITEM NO. 13: New Business.

Jennifer Wisniewski, President, on behalf of Mandy Futey, updated the board on the survey results for ACI tagline. The leading tagline was “Where outdoor communicators connect.” The board discussed whether we should send another survey with narrowed choices to membership to help come to a decision. The direction for Mandy is to send out a narrowed survey with a clear goal for the tagline to help explain ACI to guide voting.

Jennifer Wisniewski, President, lead discussion on a change to the budget. The current treasurer stipend and communication stipend are different—\$1,000 vs. \$5,000 respectively.

MOTION: Dan Dennison moved to increase the treasure annual stipend to \$5,000. Lance Cherry seconded.

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

The board reviewed the budget for 2019.

MOTION: Jason Harmon moved to approve the 2019 Budget. Sara DiRienzo seconded.

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

Micah reminded the board the bylaws would need to be updated to reflect the salary change for officers. Further, the Article of Incorporation state there is also a \$1000 bonus available to the treasure when the year’s membership exceed 50 agency members. To change this would require a vote by full membership at the annual meeting. Jennifer will review this and offer recommendations for the next meeting.

The next board meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, November 7, 2018 at 10-11 a.m. MST.**

ITEM NO. 15: Adjournment.

With no further business on the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at **10:58 a.m. MDT.**

Submitted by Sara DiRienzo, Secretary