

MINUTES

Association for Conservation Information Board Meeting

Virtual Conference Call ● November 8, 2023 ● 11 a.m.-12 p.m. CDT

ITEM NO. 1: Meeting Called to Order.

ITEM NO. 2: Roll Call.

- ✓ Blake Podhajsky (OK, President)
- ✓ Aaron Meier (NV, Vice President)
- ✓ Judy Stokes Weber (VT, Treasurer)
- ✓ Lance Cherry (CAHSS, Immediate Past President)
- ✓ Linda DiPiano (NJ, Board-24)
- ✓ Fairley Mahlum (NC, Board- 24)
- ✓ Paige Pearson (VA, Board- 24)
- ✓ Dan Dennison (HI, Board- 25)
- ✓ James Pitman (NM, Board- 25)
- ✓ Brent Drinkut (IN, Board- 26)
- ✓ Bobby Jones (NV, Board- 26)
- ✓ Beth Quillian (OR, Board)
- ✓ Kay Ellerhoff (Future Conference Chair)
- ✓ Caitlyn Fralin (VA, 2024 Conference Coord)
- ✓ Jenifer Wisniewski (National Deer Association, Grants Committee Chair)

Unable to Attend:

- ✓ Joanne Martonik (RBFF, Secretary)
- ✓ Sarah Southerland (OK, Board- 25)
- ✓ Jason Harmon (TN, Fundraising/Auction Committee Chair)
- ✓ Micah Holmes (OK, Ways and Means Committee Chair)
- ✓ Chris Martin (WY, Awards Committee Co-chair)

ITEM NO. 3: Approval of Minutes.

- September 2023 board meeting minutes attached.

MOTION: James Pitman moved to approve the September 2023 ACI Board meeting minutes as presented. Linda DiPiano seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

ITEM NO. 4: Opening Remarks. Presented by Blake Podhajsky, President.

- Blake Podhajsky thanked everyone who was able to make the meeting today during this busy time; appreciates everyone being on the call

ITEM NO. 5: ACI Conference Update. Presented by Paige Pearson, Virginia.

- Special guest on today's call is Caitlyn Fralin from VA. She is going to be the new conference coordinator as Paige Pearson has taken a new position and will no longer be on the Board
- Conference will be in Arlington, VA and will start on July 22
- Waiting on the final contract to come back but that should be in hand any minute
- Their graphic designer will create a logo and Paige Pearson will send that and other logistics to go on the website. Video team will be updating the video Paige Pearson shared at the 2023 Conference
- Drafting agenda and working to finalize and start reaching out to confirm speakers
- Next podcast will have a promotion of the conference
- The conference will be at a Hyatt Centric in Arlington, VA in the Rosslyn neighborhood
- Altered the agenda to give people two nights free- going to do awards before lunches on Wednesday and Thursday
- Hotel rate is per diem, thinks it's \$179
- Blake Podhajsky thanked Paige for her work with ACI and appreciates the work she's put into the conference. He also thanked Caitlyn for stepping up and working on this

- Aaron Meier gave an updated recap of the 2023 Conference with the completed financials
 - 2023 Conference Budget attached.
 - Conference was a success with a strong agenda. The set up worked well with sponsors and the break room next door.
 - 110 people registered not including sponsors; which raised \$37,950
 - Auction raised \$5,932
 - Raised an additional \$30,350 in sponsorship
 - Stayed in budget on everything except AV
 - Have \$9,534.37 leftover for next year

ITEM NO. 6: Treasurer's Report. Presented by Judy Stokes Weber, Treasurer.

- Treasurer's report attached.
- Things are going well in terms of getting invoices paid
- Still looking for the right contacts at a few places
 - PA Fish & Boat Commission
 - DE
 - IL

ITEM NO. 7: Membership Communications Report. Presented by Blake Podhajsky, President.

- Member Communications report attached.
- Membership information - With Scott Ball no longer on the Board, Blake is serving as the interim Communications Chair.
 - Judy Stokes Weber celebrated her 10 year anniversary as Treasurer. Her work has been instrumental in keeping things going.
 - 48 agency level members- expecting 5 more to come in
 - 1 sponsor level
 - 3 supporting members have been invoiced expecting to come back on board
 - 1 NGO agency level member waiting board approval
- On the Comms side, Blake Podhajsky is updating things on the website
 - Next Balance Wheel scheduled for 11/15
 - 1 scholarship recipient who has yet to send in an article and Blake Podhajsky will reach out to her

ITEM NO. 8: New Member Consideration. Presented by Blake Podhajsky, President.

- National Deer Association (Agency Level)
MOTION: Judy Stokes Weber moved to approve the National Deer Association as an agency level member. Dan Dennison seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
- Outdoor Stewards of Conservation (Agency Level)
(ACI board approval is required for each)
MOTION: Paige Pearson moved to approve the Outdoor Stewards of Conservation as an agency level member. Linda DiPiano seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

ITEM NO. 9: ACI Grants Committee Update. Presented by Jenifer Wisniewski, Grants Committee Chair.

- All of the grant work is going well currently and grant work in the hopper for next year
- Jenifer Wisniewski will need to charge time for this work as she cannot do the work on the National Deer Association's (NDA) dime. This gets built into the grant as a contractor/administrative fees so NDA would invoice Wildlife Management Institute for this.
- Looking for new grant ideas for the future
- New photos and imagery from grants will be added to the Clearinghouse. Blake Podhajsky suggested promoting the Clearinghouse on ACI's website
- Jenifer suggested she and Lance Cherry build a page on ACI's website to promote the grants and point to where the grant reports live in the Clearinghouse
- Blake said he'd like to talk with Jenifer about what that page looks like along with filling the Membership Communications chair and/or applying for a grant for a website overhaul

ITEM NO. 10: Futures Conference Report. Presented by Kay Ellerhoff, Future Conference Hosts Chair

- Kay Ellerhoff is hopeful that someone else can take this over. She made note that she would stay diligent about keeping in touch with those hosting future conferences
- Someone else can bring in new ideas – potential for a committee or ask people to bid on hosting
- It's important to know a wide range of people and know stuff about their agency
- We're roughly into 2028 for locations but some of it is iffy
- Blake Podhajsky said we appreciate all the hard work she has put in as the Futures Chair. Those are big shoes to fill. Kay really is the spirit of ACI

ITEM NO. 11: Awards Committee Report. Presented by Beth Quillian and Chris Martin, Awards Committee Co-chairs.

- Beth Quillian has drafted a couple of How To documents for entering the contest as well as judging
- Switching up for the format of the awards, as Paige Pearson mentioned, to move awards to the daytime over two days

ITEM NO. 12: Scholarship Committee Report. Presented by Joanne Martonik, Scholarship Committee Chair.

- Joanne Martonik was not on the call so no update was given

ITEM NO. 13: Fundraising and Auction Committee Update. Presented by Jason Harmon, Auction Committee Chair.

- Jason Harmon was not on the call so no update was given

ITEM NO. 14: ACI Podcast. Presented by Blake Podhajsky, President

- Tim Akimoff and Ashley Sanchez were not on the call but keeping this on the agenda to keep it top of mind
- Planning to publish monthly with the first one out in January
- Tim Akimoff or Blake Podhajsky will start an email communication to get ideas for guests

ITEM NO. 15: New Business. Presented by Blake Podhajsky, President.

- Last March, Lance Cherry had tasked a committee to look at the Membership Communications Chair position. Jenifer and her team brought some suggestions in May
 - Blake Podhasky would like to get the committee back together and hammer some details
 - Jenifer Wisniewski agreed it's good timing to re-convene
 - Blake will reach out to the committee via email and any other Board members who are interested should contact Blake or Jenifer
- Lance had also previously mentioned the idea of Professional Outdoor Media Association (POMA) and ACI collaborating in the future. Blake Podhajsky has been emailing with Marilyn Bence about this.
 - Outdoor Writers Association of America also has interest in being involved with ACI as a sponsor or presenter at the conference
- Paige Pearson was serving a one-year term on the Board. Blake asked how this should be filled or if it should be left vacant
 - Paige stated no one at VA feels comfortable filling her spot
 - Lance mentioned he thinks it would be good to fill the position
 - Blake will put together a nominating committee to make a recommendation to the board to be voted on in January

ITEM NO. 16: Adjournment.

MOTION: Dan Dennison moved to adjourn the meeting. Brent Drinkut seconded. Motion passed unanimously at 12:10 Central.

Joanne Martonik

Submitted by Joanne Martonik, Secretary



ASSOCIATION *for*
CONSERVATION
INFORMATION, INC.

WHERE OUTDOOR COMMUNICATORS CONNECT

Treasurer's Report

October 31, 2023

Membership renewals are going well and you will be asked to vote on two new members at the Nov. 8 Board Meeting. Jenifer Wisniewski invited Jim Curcuruto from Outdoor Stewards of Conservation Foundation to join us and he made that commitment. Here is a short statement about them. "Outdoor Stewards of Conservation Foundations™ (OSCF™) was established as a 501(c)3 nonprofit in 2021. Through all the turmoil of the pandemic, one bright spot shined greater than any other, which was having millions of Americans connect, or re-connect, with nature, the environment, and outdoor activities of hunting, angling and target shooting like never before. OSCF is dedicated to working with Americas' 60 million hunters, anglers, and target shooters (HATS™) to promote their stewardship and expand their ranks in an effort to continue the tradition of HATS being Americas' foremost stewards, and funders, of wildlife and environmental conservation in America."

The second vote will be for the National Deer Association where Jenifer Wisniewski now works as Chief Marketing Officer. "The National Deer Association will carry forward the reputation for reliable, science-based information for hunters, empowering them to be more informed, successful and engaged stewards of deer and wildlife. Teaching the non-hunting public about the keystone position of deer in the success of all wildlife conservation will be a new goal. We are uniting hunters, state and federal wildlife agencies, the hunting industry, elected officials, and non-hunters to ensure the welfare and sustainability of wild deer and their habitat.'

Blake will provide some details on membership numbers at the meeting. In summary at this writing we have 40 state agency members, 7 NGO agency members and 1 federal agency member. Invoices have gone out to supporting organizations including ASA, Southwick Associates, DJ Case & Associates, Thrill of the Outdoors and the National Bowhunter Education Foundation. These contributors support our activities at the \$250 and \$500 levels.

Still looking for best contacts at PA Fish and Boat Commission, Delaware, and Illinois.

On the next page you will see a copy of the checkbook register (excel spreadsheet) covering our transactions from 9.1.2023 through 10.31.23. Please ask any questions you would like.

Sincerely,

Judy

Judy Stokes Weber, APR

Treasurer

Association for Conservation Information, Inc.

SEPT						
10320	9.8.23	ACI (conf acct w/Delaney, Scholar. Regs)	\$3,750.00	\$60,641.55		ok
10321	9.8.23	Caesars Entertainment (Harveys rooms Scholar.)	\$7,294.48	\$53,347.07		ok
PP Transfer	9.8.23	NJ 2024 Dues and Awards	\$626.77	\$53,973.84		ok
PP Transfer	9.8.23	CO 2024 Dues and Awards	\$1,254.04	\$55,227.88		ok
PP Transfer	9.8.23	KS 2024 Dues and Awards	\$901.20	\$56,129.08		ok
PP Transfer	9.11.23	LA and PA Game Dues and Awards	\$665.49	\$56,794.57		ok
PP Transfer	9.12.23	OH 2024 Dues and awards	\$744.39	\$57,538.96		ok
PP Transfer	9.13.23	AFWA 2024 Dues	\$195.53	\$57,734.49		ok
rect Deposit	9.13.23	AZ 2024 Dues and Awards	\$880.00	\$58,614.49		ok
PP Transfer	9.14.23	NV 2024 Dues and Awards	\$901.20	\$59,515.69		ok
PP Transfer	9.15.23	FL Awards	\$234.73	\$59,750.42		ok
10322	9.15.23	Reimburse JSW personal cc use - K2 awards	\$44.98	\$59,705.44		ok
10323	9.15.23	Reimburse JSW personal cc use - K2 awards	\$46.98	\$59,658.46		ok
PP Transfer	9.19.23	WI 2024 and 2025 dues, and Awards payment	\$1,077.62	\$60,736.08		ok
PP Transfer	9.21.23	NC 2024 Dues and Awards	\$822.79	\$61,558.87		ok
PP Transfer	9.21.23	National Deer Assoc 2024 Dues	\$195.53	\$61,754.40		ok
PP Transfer	9.21.23	Maine IFW 2024 Dues	\$195.53	\$61,949.93		ok
PP Transfer	9.21.23	Hawaii 2024 Dues and Awards	\$469.96	\$62,419.89		ok
10324	9.25.23	Hosting 4 Less - security certificate	\$25.00	\$62,394.89		ok
Check	9.26.23	RBFF 2024 Dues	\$200.00	\$62,594.89		ok
PP Transfer	9.26.23	Maryland DNR 2024 Dues	\$195.53	\$62,790.42		ok
Check	9.27.23	Oklahoma 2024 Dues and Awards	\$1,880.00	\$64,670.42		ok
PP Transfer	9.27.23	Virginia DWR 2024 Dues and Awards	\$509.16	\$65,179.58		ok
Check	9.27.23	NH Fish and Game 2024 Dues and Awards	\$360.00	\$65,539.58		ok
PP Transfer	9.30.23	NY DEC 2024 Dues and Awards	\$626.77	\$66,166.35		ok
Check	9.30.23	KY 2024 Dues and Awards	\$520.00	\$66,686.35		ok
Check	9.30.23	IA DNR 1014 Dues ans Awards	\$280.00	\$66,966.35		ok
Check	9.30.23	MT F,W &P 2024 Dues and Awards	\$760.00	\$67,726.35		ok
Check	9.30.23	UT 2024 Dues and Awards	\$480.00	\$68,206.35		ok
OCT						
10325	10.2.23	Scott Ball Stipend (final)	\$1,250.00	\$66,956.35		ok
10326	10.2.23	JS Weber Treasurer Stipend	\$1,250.00	\$65,706.35		ok
Check	10.3.23	SD 2024 Dues	\$200.00	\$65,906.35		ok
Debit	10.4.23	K2Awards	\$48.86	\$65,857.49		ok
Check	10.4.23	NE 2024 Dues and Awards	\$2,440.00	\$68,297.49		ok
PP Transfer	10.5.23	USFWS Awards payment	\$1,293.24	\$69,590.73		ok balance
PP Transfer	10.11.23	WA 2024 Dues	\$195.53	\$69,786.26		ok
Check	10.11.23	NM 2024 Dues and Awards	\$680.00	\$70,466.26		ok
Check	10.11.23	SC 2024 Dues and Awards	\$1,280.00	\$71,746.26		ok
Check	10.11.23	TN 2024 Dues and Awards	\$1,240.00	\$72,986.26		ok
Check	10.11.23	RI 2024 Dues	\$200.00	\$73,186.26		ok
Debit	10.11.23	CNA Surety Bond Treasurer	\$320.00	\$72,866.26		ok
PP Transfer	10.12.23	GA 2024 Dues nd Awards	\$626.77	\$73,493.03		ok
PP Transfer	10.12.23	WY 2024 Dues and Awards	\$744.39	\$74,237.42		ok
Check	10.13.23	VT 2024 Dues	\$200.00	\$74,437.42		ok
Check	10.17.23	CASSH 2024 Dues and Awards	\$240.00	\$74,677.42		ok
PP Transfer	10.17.23	Westervelt 2024 Dues and Awards	\$587.57	\$75,264.99		ok
PP Transfer	10.17.23	Gulf of Mexico 2024 Dues and Awards	\$313.14	\$75,578.13		ok
Check	10.21.23	AL 2024 Dues and Awards	\$240.00	\$75,818.13		
Check	10.27.23	MI 2024 Dues and Awards	\$360.00	\$76,178.13		
PP Transfer	10.28.23	OR 2024 Dues and Awards	\$313.14	\$76,491.27		ok
PP Transfer	10.28.23	MO 2024 Dues and Awards	\$1,489.26	\$77,980.53		ok
PP Transfer	10.30.23	Outdoor Stewards Conservation 2024 Dues	\$195.53	\$78,176.06		okbalance

ACI membership status as of November 6th, 2023

Compiled by Blake Podhajsky
ACI President and interim Membership Communications Chair
with assistance from ACI Treasurer Judy Stokes Weber

AT A GLANCE

48 Agency level members. (39 state, and 9 NGO/federal) (Paid)

5 Agency level members expected to renew.

1 sponsor level (Paid)

3 supporting member level, that have been invoiced

1 agency level member (NGO) waiting board approval.

2023 Agency state/fed members that currently have not renewed for 2024 (\$200)

California Department of Game and Fish ([expect them to renew](#))

Connecticut Dept. of Energy & Environmental Protection ([expect them to renew](#))

Idaho Fish and Game ([expect them to renew](#))

Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources ([expect them to renew](#))

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (**on the fence whether to join or not*)

North Dakota Game & Fish Department ([expect them to renew](#))

Agency state/fed/NGO members new for 2024 that were not members in 2023

Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources

South Carolina Waterfowl Association

Outdoor Stewards of Conservation Foundation ([have applied for membership, pending vote by ACI Board](#))

2023 Supporting members that are invoiced in November for 2024. (\$250)

American Sportfishing Association

DJ Case and Associates

Southwick Associates

Agency level, NGO, Fed new for 2024

National Deer Association

South Carolina Waterfowl Association

Delta Waterfowl (Not a member, but in my records. We don't have a record of a person to contact or request for membership from this group. Am I missing something? Remove from this category?)

2023 Sponsor level members for 2024 (\$500)

National Bowhunter Education Foundation

2023 Sponsor level members that are invoiced in November for 2024 (\$500)

Thrill of the Outdoors

2023 Individual level members that are invoiced in November for 2024 (\$25)

Gina Jackson

Chuck Yoest

Agency state/fed entities that need to be persuaded to join for 2024

- [Alaska](#) (will contact again...they sent an individual to 2023 conference)
- [Aquatic Resources Education Association](#) (Treasurer works for S. Carolina. Long time members. Did not respond to contacts last year or this year so far. Need to call AREA Treasurer and talk.)
- [Delaware](#) (need a good contact, no response last year)
- [Illinois](#) (need a good contact)
- [Massachusetts](#) (invoice being processed, but their fiscal system is slow to adapt to change in our address from 2018!)
- [Mississippi](#) (have been in contact and they are on the fence; have been offered dues waiver.)
- [PA Fish and Boat Commission](#) (Reached out to several people last year based on Linda's suggestion. Board member contact?)

Other entities that might be a good fit for ACI that we should pursue?

Washington DC Department of Energy and Environment – Fisheries and Wildlife?