

MINUTES

Association for Conservation Information Board Meeting

In-Person Board Meeting, Arlington VA ● July 22, 2024 ● 3:00pm - 4:00pm EDT

ITEM NO. 1: Meeting Called to Order at 3:03pm Eastern

ITEM NO. 2: Roll Call

- ✓ Blake Podhajsky (OK, President)
- ✓ Joanne Martonik (RBFF, Secretary)
- ✓ Judy Stokes Weber (VT, Treasurer)
- ✓ Lance Cherry (CAHSS, Immediate Past President)
- ✓ Linda DiPiano (NJ, Board-24)
- ✓ Dan Dennison (HI, Board- 25)
- ✓ James Pitman (NM, Board- 25)
- ✓ Brent Drinkut (IN, Board- 26)
- ✓ Beth Quillian (OR, Board-26)
- ✓ Caitlyn Jacobus (VA, 2024 Conference Coord)

Unable to Attend:

- ✓ Aaron Meier (NV, Vice President)
- ✓ Fairley Mahlum (NC, Board- 24)
- ✓ Bobby Jones (NV, Board- 26)
- ✓ Faith Heaton Jolley (UT, Board)
- ✓ Jason Harmon (TN, Fundraising/Auction Committee Chair)
- ✓ Micah Holmes (OK, Ways and Means Committee Chair)
- ✓ Chris Martin (WY, Awards Committee Co-chair)
- ✓ Jenifer Wisniewski (National Deer Association, Grants Committee Chair)
- ✓ Patty Allen (AFWA, Communications Committee Chair)

ITEM NO. 3: Approval of Minutes

- June 2024 board meeting minutes attached
- **MOTION:** Lance Cherry moved to approve the June 2024 ACI Board meeting minutes as presented. Linda DiPiano seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

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

- Blake Podhajsky welcomed everyone- it's good to be in person.

ITEM NO. 5: 2024 ACI Annual Conference Update. Presented by Caitlyn Jacobus, Virginia

- Caitlyn Jacobus welcomed the Board to the conference.
- The monument boat tour is still on. It's up to the charter company to cancel for weather. There is some covering on the boat.
- The Rosslyn BID has been involved and is going to speak for a bit tomorrow
- Agenda has built in time on Wednesday for attendees to go into DC
- Exceeded the sponsorship goal
- Hit or exceeded registration goal

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

- Treasurer's Report attached
- FY25 Budget draft attached
- Judy Stokes Weber stated that ACI is in good shape. Thank you to those who tracked down members.
- Resources are growing, especially with a boost from the NV conference. There will probably be a return from this conference
- The FY25 budget was presented. The Board needs to approve before it's presented at the Business Meeting for membership approval on July 25th
- **MOTION:** Lance Cherry moved to approve the FY25 budget as presented. Dan Dennison seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

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

- Memberships and Communications Report attached
- Blake Podhajsky went through the Memberships and Communications report
- ACI currently has the highest number of members in recent history
 - There are 48 state agencies representing 47 states
 - Illinois hasn't been a member for a long time and CA said they weren't able to renew
 - Received first tribal nation membership
 - MS and DC have also become members
- Blake Podhajsky has asked Patty Allen to be the unofficial chair of the Communications Committee
- Newsletter followers down a bit
- Facebook posts are down but impressions have increased.
- ACI has a LinkedIn profile but it's a placeholder at this point.

ITEM NO. 8: Communications Committee Report. Presented by Blake Podhajsky, President

- Memberships and Communications Report attached
- Info covered in ITEM NO. 7 above

ITEM NO. 9: Appointment of 2024 ACI Nominating Committee. Presented by Blake Podhajsky, President

- Every year the president has a Nomination Committee recruit and recommend future board members. Blake Podhajsky assigned Aaron Meier, Linda DiPiano, and Dan Dennison to this committee.
- There are currently 4 board openings. Three people are cycling off their three-year term and a 4th is needed to cover one year since Sarah Southerland has left.
- Faith Jolley expressed interest in remaining on the board for the one-year position. By-laws say you can't serve two consecutive terms but doesn't mention having a person fill in a slot.
- New board members will be voted for on Thursday

ITEM NO. 10: Appointment of 2024 ACI Auditing Committee. Presented by Blake Podhajsky, President

- Every year the treasurer opens the books for the audit committee to review
- Blake Podhajsky appointed Brent Drinkut, Fairley Mahlum, and Bobby Jones to be on the committee.
- One committee member will need to report out how things look at the Business Meeting on Thursday

ITEM NO. 11: Awards Committee Report. Presented by Beth Quillan, Awards Committee Co-chair

- There are 113 awards across 35 categories
- 40 agencies participated and there were 29 winning agencies
- 507 entries this year vs 598 entries last year
- Beth Quillan is interested in putting a committee together to review the awards categories, finding judges, process, etc.
- Everything is ready for the awards ceremony.

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

- 10 people were awarded scholarships and all will be in attendance
- There is a meeting at 4pm with scholarship recipients to review writing requirements
- Blake Podhajsky asked if recipients could take pictures and videos around the conference that he can use for social
- Joanne would like to try to get more scholarship applicants next year

ITEM NO. 13: Auction and Fundraising Update. Presented by Blake Podhajsky, President

- Jason Harmon was not in attendance and Blake Podhajsky provided an update.
- Jason Harmon has a spreadsheet of all auction items and PowerPoint for live auction
- Caitlyn Jacobus had been given \$500 to get some items for the auction/raffle.

ITEM NO. 14: Multi-State Grants Committee Update. Presented by Blake Podhajsky, President

- Jenifer Wisniewski was not in attendance and Blake Podhajsky provided an update
- 4 grants were submitted. Should know in August if awarded
- Current grantees have projects live
- Want to get more images donated to the R3 Clearinghouse photo library. Have done several asks with little response.

ITEM NO. 15: Futures Conference Report. Presented by Blake Podhajsky, President

- The 2025 conference is in NJ and 2026 is in OK. Currently the 2027 conference is slated for NC.
- Tim Akimoff said that OR and WA had previously talked about co-hosting a conference and he will look back into it.
- With Kay Ellerhoff stepping down as the Futures Chair, new people need to look at securing conference locations
- Blake Podhajsky wants to connect all of the conference coordinators from recent years to gather information and work on a conference 'how-to' planning guide.
- With increasing costs, the Board should have a bigger role in planning rather than using an outside events team.
- One big issue states have had in the past is being able to accept money for registration fees and sponsorships. Judy Stokes Weber said ACI can manage the funds but would need to record them separately.
- ACI recently purchased a point-of-sale machine that will work for the auction/raffle
- Lance Cherry has experience with the funding portion of conference registration. Joanne Martonik has managed a lot of conferences but has not done the finance aspect. Blake Podhajsky asked Joanne Martonik and Lance Cherry to create a plan for the financial side of things

- A committee will be formed to work with the host state every year and look for future conference locations.
- Linda DiPiano said she will need help on the financial aspects of hosting a conference and to reach out to potential sponsors. She cannot solicit sponsorships.

ITEM NO. 16: New Business. Presented by Blake Podhajsky, President

- Tim Akimoff provided an update on the Outdoor Communicators Podcast.
- He and Ashley Zeme have done 6 episodes with 400 downloads
- Several topics have been confirmed for future episodes
- Tim Akimoff will be recording several episodes at the conference
- Send him any topic ideas you might have for the podcast

ITEM NO. 17: Adjournment

- The meeting concluded at 4:00pm Eastern.

Joanne Martonik

Submitted by Joanne Martonik, Secretary



**Treasurer's Report
2024 Annual Meeting
Arlington, Virginia**

Dear Colleagues,

I am delighted to report that ACI is in good financial condition thanks to the leadership of President (and Membership chair) Blake Podhajsky and the collective work of Vice President Aaron Meier, Secretary Joanne Martonik, and excellent board members. Awareness of ACI continues to increase through these collaborative efforts and the work of the Grants Committee led by Jenifer Wisniewski.

We have filed our regular and necessary annual reports with Wyoming where we were incorporated in 1984 and in Vermont where we are registered to do business. We have also filed our Federal Tax return pertinent to our 501c3 nonprofit status.

The Treasurer has prepared a draft budget for FY 2025 for the President who will present the final version to the board and membership for review and approval at the Virginia conference.

Please feel free to ask questions about the entries in the attached "check register."

It continues to be a pleasure to serve as ACI's treasurer.

Sincerely,

Judy

Judy Stokes Weber, M.S., APR
Treasurer

FY 2024 ACI Check Register

Transaction ID	Date	Description	Amount	Balance	*
	7.1.23	Beginning Balance		\$74,973.32	
JUL					
10311	7.4.23	Scott Ball Memb & Comms Stipend	\$1,250.00	\$73,723.32	ok
10312	7.4.23	JS Weber Treasurer Stipend	\$1,250.00	\$72,473.32	ok
Check	7.5.23	SC Waterfowl Association 2024 dues	\$200.00	\$72,673.32	ok
Wire Transfer	7.6.23	Remainder to Awards Force	\$242.00	\$72,431.32	ok
Debit	7.6.23	Awards Force wire transfer fee	\$25.00	\$72,406.32	ok
10313	7.18.23	Blake Podhajsky Prez gift reimb	\$113.82	\$72,292.50	ok
10314	7.18.23	JS Weber Reimb cc Payment to K2 Awards	\$3,782.65	\$68,509.85	B ok
10315	7.22.23	Lance Cherry Reimb for Ellerhoff Spirit Plaque	\$107.19	\$68,402.66	ok
10316	7.31.23	JS Weber Reimb Conference Travel	\$1,861.11	\$66,541.55	ok
10317	7.31.23	Scott Ball Registration reimb.	\$350.00	\$66,191.55	ok
AUG					
Check	8.1.23	FL 2024 Dues	\$200.00	\$66,391.55	ok
10318	8.8.23	Scott Ball Conf Travel reimbursement	\$2,000.00	\$64,391.55	B ok
10319		VOID- error made			
SEPT					
10320	9.8.23	ACI (conf acct w/Delaney, Scholar. Regs) Caesars Entertainment (Harvey's rooms for scholarship recipients.)	\$3,750.00	\$60,641.55	ok
10321	9.8.23		\$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
Direct 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	B ok
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	ok
Check	10.27.23	MI 2024 Dues and Awards	\$360.00	\$76,178.13	ok
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	B ok
NOV					
PP Transfer	11.3.23	National Bowhunter Ed Found. Sponsorship	\$489.56	\$78,665.62	ok
10327	11.10.23	Hyatt Centric Arlington Deposit ('24 conf. seed \$)	\$5,000.00	\$73,665.62	ok
Direct Dep	11.13.23	MA 2024 Dues	\$200.00	\$73,865.62	ok
Check	11.20.23	AR 2024 Dues and Awards	\$1,600.00	\$75,465.62	B ok
DEC					
Check	12.5.23	CT 2024 dues	\$200.00	\$75,665.62	ok
Check	12.11.23	DJCase supporting membership	\$250.00	\$75,915.62	ok
PP Transfer	12.11.23	AK 2024 Dues	\$195.53	\$76,111.15	ok
Direct Dep	12.18.23	IN 2024 Dues and awards	\$689.65	\$76,800.80	ok
PP Transfer	12.18.23	ND 2024 Dues	\$195.53	\$76,996.33	ok
Check	12.29.23	ASA Supporting member	\$250.00	\$77,246.33	B ok
Debit Card	12.29.23	efile4biz - 1099 Misc filing	\$9.50	\$77,236.83	ok

JAN						
10328	1.2.24	JS Weber - Treasurer Stipend	\$1,250.00	\$75,986.83		ok
PP Transfer	1.3.24	MS DNR 2024 Dues	\$195.53	\$76,182.36		ok
PP Transfer	1.4.24	DC 2024 Dues	\$195.53	\$76,377.89		ok
Debit Card	1.23.24	Libsyn - podcast partial month	\$4.48	\$76,373.41		ok
PP Transfer	1.26.24	MN 2024 Dues	\$195.53	\$76,568.94	B	ok
Check	1.31.24	ID 2024 Dues	\$200.00	\$76,768.94		ok
FEB						
Debit Card	2.1.24	Libsyn (Podcast monthly fee)	\$15.00	\$76,753.94		ok
Check	2.6.24	Choctaw Nation 2024 Dues	\$200.00	\$76,953.94		ok
PP Transfer	2.6.24	Gina Jackson indiv member	\$24.01	\$76,977.95	B	ok
Debit Card	2.28.24	WYSOS Annual Report filing	\$27.00	\$76,950.95		ok
MAR						
Debit Card	3.1.24	Libsyn (Podcast monthly fee)	\$15.00	\$76,935.95	B	ok
Debit Card	3.30.24	Hosting 4 Less	\$359.40	\$76,576.55	B	ok
APRIL						
Debit Card	4.1.24	Libsyn	\$15.00	\$76,561.55		ok
10329	4.4.24	Delaney Event Management - VA 2024 confer.	\$5,000.00	\$71,561.55		ok
PP Transfer	4.4.24	TN Wildlife Federation 2024 Dues	\$195.53	\$71,757.08		ok
10330	4.15.24	Judy Weber Treasurer Stipend	\$1,250.00	\$70,507.08		ok
MAY						
Debit Card	5.1.24	Libsyn	\$15.00	\$70,492.08		ok
Check	5.14.24	Yamaha (2023 conference sponsorship)	\$2,500.00	\$72,992.08		ok
Check	5.28.24	Delaney Meeting and Event (2023 conf balance)	\$14,926.10	\$87,918.18	B	ok
JUNE						
Debit Card	6.1.24	Libsyn	\$15.00	\$87,903.18	B	ok
FY 2024 Ending Balance				\$87,903.18		
CD on deposit earning interest				\$26,241.14		
Total Assets				\$114,144.32		

*

"ok" means bank recorded income or expense accurately

"B" means checking account was balanced using standard bank-provided methodology

END REPORT

FY 2025 DRAFT ACI Budget

		estimate - includes the conference proceeds
Beginning Balance Checking Account	\$87,500	\$17,426.10
ESTIMATED REVENUE		
Dues, Awards	\$31,500	includes sponsorship & individual category members
Conf Returns	\$0	
Total Income	\$31,500	\$31,500
FY 2025 Assets Available	\$119,000	

ESTIMATED EXPENSES

Conference Advance	\$5,000
Scholarships	\$12,000
Award Plaques	\$5,000
Online Awards Platform	\$5,500
Webhosting/Security certificate	\$385
Web domain renewal	\$0
Treasurer Stipend	\$5,000
Surety Bond	\$325
Communication Manager Stipend	\$0
Conference Travel Reimbursements	\$5,000
Professional Fees CPA Review	\$0
Office Expenses	\$100
Podcast	\$180
Zoom	\$160

we did advance 10,000
in FY 2024

FY 2025 Total Expense	\$38,650	\$38,650
Estimated Checking Account Balance June 30, 2025		\$80,350
CD		\$26,300
Resources available as of June 30, 2025 to support FY 2026 Budget		\$106,650

Draft Budget with revisions from meeting information accepted by board on June 12, 2024, noted in red

- Prepared 5.2.24 JSW
- Revised 5.16.24 with conference proceeds expected
- Revised 5.28.24 with deposit of 2023 conference proceeds

Note: We may get invoiced for awards platform and pay for it near the end of June.
This would impact the beginning checking account balance.

MEMBERSHIP AND COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

Compiled by: Blake Podhajsky – July 17, 2024

MEMBERSHIP

As of 06/30/24, ACI has its highest number of members in recent history.

- 60 Agency-level members (+9 from last year. +11 past two years), including...
 - 48 state agencies (+3 from last year, +5 past two years), representing 47 states
 - 1 federal agency
 - 1 Tribal Nation (+1)
 - District of Columbia (+1)
 - 9 NGOs (+4 from last year, +3 past two years)
- 1 Sponsor-level members (-1 from last year, -3 past two years)
- 2 Supporting-level members (-1 from last year, +2 past two years)
- 1 Individual-level members (-1 from last year)

COMMUNICATIONS

Newsletter / Email subscribers

- 528 subscribers to *The Balance Wheel* newsletter (-17 since this time last year, -48 past two years)**. 45% of subscribers are highly engaged and often open and click our emails. 8% of subscribers are moderately engaged and sometimes open and click our emails. 40% of subscribers are not very engaged and rarely open and click our emails.

***Not all are unsubscribes; the remainder were cleaned from the list after multiple bounces.*

Facebook

- 825 Facebook likes (+26 from last year, +116 past two years)
- 887 Facebook followers (+64 net follows, 73 follows/9 unfollows from last year, +118 net follows, 133 follows/15 unfollows past two years)
- 2.3K Facebook visits (121% more than FY23)
- 44 Facebook posts (72 posts FY23) Impressions are up 32%, reach is up 220.3%, content interactions are up 21%, and link clicks are down 48.9% (FY24 vs FY23)

LinkedIn

- 157 followers

WEBSITE ACI-NET.ORG

- FY24: 21,311 views, 8,970 visitors
- Top pages: 1) ACI 2) Conferences 3) Awards 4) The Outdoor Communicators Podcast 5) Past and Future Conferences