

## **Association for Conservation Information**

**Board Meeting** (conference call)

**8/28/14**

**Call to Order:** President Micah Holmes called the meeting to order.

**Roll Call (Kim Nix):** Micah Holmes (President, OK), Judy Stokes Weber (Treasurer, NH), Tom Cadden (AZ), Randy Zellers (AR), Phil Bloom (IN), Kathy Garza-Behr (OH), Regina Knauer (MO), Michael Gray (KY), Aaron Meier (NV), Julie Hammonds (Awards, AZ), Kim Nix (Secretary, AL). **Unable to attend:** Robin Cahoon (Vice President, UT), Don King (Immediate Past President, TN), Rachel Piacenza (RBFF), Jane Gustafson (NE)

**Approval of Minutes:** Phil Bloom moved to approve the July 7, 2014, board minutes with a minor edit. Judy Stokes Weber seconded. Motion passed.

**Treasurer's Report (Judy Stokes Weber):** Judy reported that the IRS Form 990 has been filed on behalf of ACI. This is an annual requirement for non-profit status.

The ACI account balance is \$70,384.98. Expenses that were recently paid include the awards plaques, travel reimbursements for the treasurer and Balance Wheel editor, and the Balance Wheel services.

**Membership Report (Judy Stokes Weber):** Two states have already paid their dues. Membership renewals and awards bills will be mailed to the states next week. She is meeting with an auditor next week to get the independent audit completed.

There are no new memberships to report. A brief discussion followed on what could be done to attract more members. Micah said he would send letters to states who are not members encouraging them to join. Judy said there are numerous other non-government organizations that can be contacted as well.

**Investment committee (Micah Holmes):** There was some discussion at the Nebraska board meeting, but this needs more exploration. Micah will start email train on that for those who are interested and see if progress can be made.

**Awards Committee (Julie Hammonds):** Julie reported that she has spoken with former chair Kim Nix and has obtained all the documents pertinent to administering the awards.

She is looking into ways to automate the awards process and attended a webinar by Better BNC. Their service includes building a portal and submitting awards online. The initial setup fee is \$10,500 and an annual fee of \$3,500 after that. A brief discussion followed with the consensus that while we want to move in the direction of online/automated entries, that cost is too high. Julie will continue looking in to some alternate companies to see what their services cost. There are also other ways we can automate the award entry process such as uploading videos to YouTube for the judges to access.

Julie will ask some people to review the descriptions of several categories to see what changes should be made. A call for category chairs will begin in October.

**Balance Wheel Report (Randy Zellers):** Randy reported that The Balance Wheel has settled into a bimonthly routine, and there should be plenty of topics from the conference and throughout the year to keep it interesting and stay timely. He is still sorting through all the presentations from the conference and will be adding two or three in the next issue. The last mailing of the newsletter was sent to 470 individuals (compared to 484 last year). It was opened 147 times (138 last year). These figures do not include shares or click-throughs developing from the Facebook post of the newsletter.

The last Balance Wheel included a link to a survey for the next conference that was copied from the survey Tom Cadden handed out at the Nebraska conference. So far, we've only received a couple of responses, but the survey will stay live and will be plugged a few more times in future issues of the newsletter to get some additional responses.

**Conference Report (Tom Cadden):** The 2015 ACI Conference will be held July 13-17 at the High Country Conference Center in Flagstaff, Arizona. The conference hotel is the Drury Inn and Suites. The plan is to have the conference program take place Tuesday and Thursday, with Wednesday being the field trip to the Grand Canyon. The Park Service has waived the facility and entrance fee for ACI.

Tom said that he is reaching out to potential speakers, but some will be too costly for us to obtain. He asked that any suggestions for speakers be sent to him. Micah asked if Tom could reach out to states to see if they want to present at the conference. Several have done successful projects during the past year that they might want to share.

Of the 20 surveys turned in that were handed out in Nebraska, topics of most interest include how to evaluate marketing, how to best utilize video, internal communications, social media trends, the public's passion for wildlife and how to build support for our agencies. Tom will be looking at incorporating some of this into the agenda. Additional agenda items will probably include something for magazine editors and videographers based on feedback he received from attendees at the Nebraska conference.

**2016 Conference: (Regina Knauer):** Regina still in talks with Bass Pro for using one of their facilities for the 2016 conference. She is also looking at dates that would coincide with a local baseball game that could be an outing for conference participants.

**Best Practices for Conference Planning (Micah Holmes):** Micah indicated that it would be helpful to have a timeline developed that helps future conference planners. This will be discussed more at the next board meeting

**Past President's Award (Micah Holmes):** This was discussed at the Nebraska conference and is still in the planning process.

**ACI Google Groups (Micah Holmes):** Micah encouraged magazine editors and videographers to sign up for these online groups to interact with their counterparts in other states.

**ACI Facebook Page (Micah Holmes):** Jane Gustafson and Robin Cahoon are admins for the ACI Facebook page. Micah asked if anyone else has an interest in working with it. Tom would like to have access to promote the Arizona conference.

**New Business (Micah Holmes):** Don King has been in touch with Cindy Delany and she has sent in a proposal for conference coordination. Micah will send this out for board members to review. Regina is very interested in seeing the proposal as they may wish to use her for the 2016 conference coordination.

**Next Meeting Date (Micah Holmes):** October 8 was set as the date for the next board meeting.

### **Adjournment**

Michael Gray made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Regina seconded. Motion passed.

*Submitted by Kim Nix, Secretary*