

**Association for Conservation Information
Board Meeting** (conference call)
10/8/14

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

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

Approval of Minutes: Phil Bloom moved to approve the August 28, 2014, board minutes. Regina Knauer seconded. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report (Judy Stokes Weber): The checking account balance at the end of September was \$72,046.16. Expenses since the last meeting include \$1,000 to Randy Zellers for the Balance Wheel and \$299 to the Nebraska ACI Conference Account. Due to New Mexico state procedures, Lance Cherry's ACI conference registration check could not be sent to the Nebraska, so the treasurer accepted and deposited it and then sent a check to Nebraska for \$299.

Judy will make contact with Jane Gustafson regarding the final statement and proceeds on the 2014 Conference. Once activity is closed on 2014 conference, we will keep the account open and transfer it to Tom Cadden for use as the 2015 Conference Account. Secretary Kim Nix provided Judy with a letter authorizing her to request signatures cards to be mailed to Micah Holmes to get him on the checking account.

The audit is not yet completed.

Judy asked if it was acceptable to open a CD for \$7,500 as discussed in an earlier meeting. Randy Zellers made a motion to move \$7,500 into a CD and Phil Bloom seconded. Motion passed. Judy will check rates at ACI's current bank and if they are reasonable/similar to other banks she will use them.

Membership Report (Judy Stokes Weber): Membership and awards invoices will be mailed September 1, 2014.

The following agencies have renewed their membership as of August 27, 2014:

- Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation (new agency member - needs approval)
- Florida
- Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources
- Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife
- Minnesota
- Missouri Department of Conservation
- National Shooting Sports Foundation

- N.H. Fish and Game
- Nebraska Game and Parks
- New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
- North Carolina Wildlife Resources
- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Texas Parks and Wildlife
- The Wildlife Society
- Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Association
- Utah Division of Wildlife Resources

The following sponsor members have renewed:

- National Bowhunter Education Foundation (\$500)
- Southwick Associates (\$250)

The Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation has applied for membership as an agency member.

Agency Membership: Any formal national or international agency or organization engaged in fish, wildlife, and/or conservation information and educational efforts shall be eligible for membership in the Association, with the approval of the Board of Directors. Information and education departments of private organizations, federal and state agencies and Canadian provincial and territorial agencies with natural resources management responsibilities shall be eligible to join.

From the CSF's website -- Since 1989 the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation (CSF) has maintained a singleness of purpose that has guided the organization to become the most respected and trusted sportsmen's organization in the political arena. CSF's mission is to work with Congress, governors, and state legislatures to protect and advance hunting, angling, recreational shooting and trapping.

The unique and collective force of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus (CSC), the Governors Sportsmen's Caucus (GSC) and the National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses (NASC), working closely with CSF, serves as an unprecedented network of pro-sportsmen elected officials that advance the agenda of America's hunters and anglers.

CSF's stature as the sportsmen's leader on policy issues has steadily grown through active involvement within the hunting and fishing conservation community, including staff leadership and engagement in the American Wildlife Conservation Partners (AWCP), Council to Advance Hunting and Shooting Sports (CHASS), National Fish Habitat Partnership Board (NFHP) and FishNet at the national level, the Western Governors Association (WAG) GetOut West! Advisory Group, Families Afield and the Sunday Hunting Coalition at the state level.

Additionally, CSF is the only organization represented on the four federally chartered advisory councils (FAC) dealing with hunting and recreational fishing – the Wildlife and Hunting Heritage Conservation Council (WHHCC), the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council (SFBPC), the Marine Protected Areas (MPA FAC) and the Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee (MFAC). - See more at: <http://www.sportsmenslink.org/about#sthash.1n8bNgyz.dpuf>

Judy Stokes Weber made a motion to accept the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation as a new agency member. Kim Nix seconded. Motion passed

Glint Communications has requested associate membership.

Associate membership: Associate membership may be granted to organizations or individuals less directly engaged in conservation education and/or information work, but which wish to support and further the aim of the Association, with the approval of the Board of Directors.

Judy Stokes Weber made a motion to accept Glint Communications, an associate ACI member. Don King seconded. Motion passed.

Micah sent out list of contacts that he will be reaching out to for potential membership. He will also work with Jeff Eschler to revamp the membership page on the website.

Conference Report (Tom Cadden): A "save the date" email was sent out last week to potential conference attendees. The list consisted of people who attended one of the last three conferences and the ACI directory. An announcement will also be put out via the listserve.

Tom mentioned that the July 13-17, 2015 dates are in conflict with ICAST. This might be a conflict for some sponsors, but shouldn't be a conflict for most agency people.

The conference hotel has assigned a conference planner for ACI. A small group from Arizona Game and Fish will have an on-site visit to meet the planner soon. Tom is also going to the Grand Canyon to do a site visit there as well.

Tom has gotten some leads on possible speakers. Matt Dunsby is on board as is Robin Phillips. Jeff Kurris from NE has offered to facilitate a magazine roundtable session. He is looking for someone who can do the same for video.

Tom will need a check to reserve the bus for the trip to the Grand Canyon and he will get with Judy on that. He has received a lot of suggestions for potential sponsors and will be following up by making contact with them soon.

Registration for the 2015 conference will be \$300. Micah emphasized that the earlier we can get agenda announced and the registration open, the better it will be.

2016 Conference (Regina Knauer): She is taking with a potential host hotel and will be looking at dates to make sure there are not conflicts with other conferences.

Futures Report (Kay Ellerhoff): New Hampshire has decided they cannot take on the 2018 conference. She will be getting in touch with other potential states to see if they are interested in hosting in 2018.

Balance Wheel Report (Randy Zellers): The report on last issue of the Balance Wheel showed a 32 percent open rate and a click-thru rate of 19 1/2 percent, which is the best so far. The next issue will be sent out mid-month. The online survey for AZ conference has received 10 more responses.

Micah indicated that he liked Judy's idea to recognize ACI sponsors in the newsletter to get them some more recognition and show our appreciation. Judy will work with Randy to feature the Bowhunter Education Association since they are a \$500 sponsor who just renewed.

Awards Committee (Julie Hammonds): Julie has been looking into companies who provide software and hosting online awards entry services. She did demos with three of them. Any of them can provide what we need, but there is an expense that ranges from \$2,400 to \$9,995 in the first year and extra charges each additional year, depending on which vendor we pick. It would be a very different system of how we have been doing it. With an online system, category chair roles would be diminished because the awards chair would take over communicating with judges. One important consideration is also how people could view winning entries.

There was some discussion about making a big change in the awards program and taking on an additional expense. Kim mentioned that the awards program is the organization's largest income-producer and payment to administer it would significantly cut into that income. It was decided to hold off on committing to one of these companies but Julie will explore avenues of how to make it easier for agencies to submit entries electronically.

Julie plans to put the category descriptions online for comments and then start seeking category chairs in Oct.-Nov.

Recruitment Plan Discussion (Micah Holmes): Micah led a discussion about spending 15,000 to get more attendees and new attendees to the conference. We also have the Geoffrey Schnider Scholarship available.

Tom Cadden said it would be good to target agencies/organizations who have sent people to ACI in the past but not recently. We can also target states that currently are not members. Kim Nix suggested a survey be done to find out the barriers to attending the conference. Tom will work on survey and would like input on questions as well as who the survey should be sent to.

Judy Stokes Weber mentioned that one idea we discussed is to promote the conference to the host state's surrounding states.

Old Business (Micah Holmes): Micah asked that we be thinking about an honorary membership option that can be used for people who may be retired but still want to attend the conference and be involved in ACI.

Next Meeting Date (Micah Holmes): The next conference call meeting will be December 10, 2014 at 1 p.m. Central time.

Adjournment

Randy Zellers made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Regina seconded. Motion passed.

Submitted by Kim Nix, Secretary