

Association for Conservation Information
Board Meeting (conference call)
2/11/2015

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

Roll Call (Kim Nix): Micah Holmes (President, OK), Don King (Immediate Past President, TN), Tom Cadden (AZ), Randy Zellers (AR), Aaron Meier (NV), Julie Hammonds (Awards, AZ), Kim Nix (Secretary, AL), Kay Ellerhoff (Futures, MT), Michael Gray (KY), Rachel Piacenza (RBFF), Jane Gustafson (NE)

Unable to attend: Robin Cahoon (Vice President, UT), Judy Stokes Weber (Treasurer, NH), Phil Bloom (IN), Regina Knauer (MO), and Kathy Garza-Behr (OH).

Approval of Minutes: Jane Gustafson made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 8, 2014 meeting. Kim Nix seconded the motion. Motion passed. After some discussion, Micah decided the minutes from the December 10, 2014, meeting did not need approval since there was no quorum at that meeting.

Treasurer's Report: In the absence of Judy Stokes Weber, Kim Nix gave the treasurer's report, which was provided by Judy prior to the meeting.

1. Financial Report: The checking account balance as of 2/1/15 is \$82,364.16. Expenses since the last call (12/10/14) include \$1,000 to Jeff Eschler for the website, \$1,000 to Randy Zellers for The Balance Wheel, and \$150 to Arrow Stage Lines (deposit). We have now provided Arizona with two payments toward the conference seed money totaling \$3,950 out of the \$5,000 established in the budget: \$3,800 for the conference center and \$150 for the bus deposit.

2. Money Market Account: In a prior meeting, Micah suggested that we deposit \$7,500 in a money market account. This has been done at the Northway Bank where our checking account is.

3. Nebraska Conference Report: Judy is working with Jane Gustafson to finalize last year's conference report and remittance of any proceeds. Jane apologized for the delay in finalizing this information.

4. Audit: The report should be done before the April meeting and arrangements have been made with the CPA to reserve time and a quick turn-around so that we have the current year's audit to review at the annual meeting.

5. Membership: 39 agency members paid since last report

Alabama Department of Conservation
American Sportfishing Association
Arizona Game and Fish Department
Arkansas Game and Fish Commission
Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
Florida Wildlife Commission
Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources
Indiana Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Kansas Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife
Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife
Michigan DNR
Minnesota
Missouri Department of Conservation
Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks
National Shooting Sports Foundation
N.H. Fish and Game
Nebraska Game and Parks
New Jersey Fisheries and Wildlife
New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
North Carolina Wildlife Resources
Oklahoma
Ohio Division of Wildlife
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
PA Fish and Boat Commission
Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation
Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment
S. Carolina DNR
Texas Parks and Wildlife
The Wildlife Society
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Association
Utah Division of Wildlife Resources
Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department
Virginia Department of Game and Fish
Wisconsin Wetlands Association (subject to vote)
Wyoming Game and Fish Department

South Dakota and Tennessee have been in touch and are working through their state systems to get the checks in the mail, so we will be at 41 agency memberships soon. Maryland is not interested this year.

The following sponsor members have renewed:

National Bowhunter Education Foundation (\$500)
Southwick Associates (\$250)
DJCase and Associates (\$100)

We have one Associate member, Glint Communication, and several individual members.

6. Action Item: Three new entities have applied for membership. Judy provided information on one of them, the Wisconsin Wetlands Association, and Kim distributed this information to the board prior to the meeting. The other two potential new members are state agencies: Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

Randy Zellers made a motion to approve all three organizations for ACI membership; Jane Gustafson seconded. Motion passed.

Futures Report (Kay Ellerhoff): Kay announced that since New Hampshire has declined to host in 2018 as previously planned, Alabama has said they will host that year. In addition, Pennsylvania Game and Fish has offered to host in 2019. New Mexico is also interested hosting a future conference.

Balance Wheel Report (Randy Zellers): Randy said everything is on schedule with the newsletter. The last email blast he sent was regarding the awards competition and he will be sending one more before it closes on March 13.

Awards Committee (Julie Hammonds): The awards competition opened on Jan. 23 and will close March 13. The competition has been promoted through email, Facebook and the Listserv. She will be continuing these types of promotions until the competition closes, and she asked that everyone promote the contest within their own agencies.

Julie had discussions with category chairs and had a conference call with several board members regarding some suggested changes to the awards process. The video categories were discussed at length, and a couple of changes were made, but Julie feels it needs more discussion at the conference before any more changes are made. Following are the recommended changes to the awards program:

1. Change the name of Big Ideas, Small Budget to Success on a Shoestring.
2. Allow up to two entries per organization in the Magazine category.
3. Online magazines are now eligible for the Magazine category and can enter by URL.
4. Online magazines can enter the article category by URL.
5. Columns written by agency personnel can be entered in the News Release category.
6. A CD is not required to enter the Photography category. Photos can be sent in electronically.
7. The number of entries per organization in the Video Other category is reduced from three to two, and entry is now by URL instead of DVD.

Tom Cadden made a motion to approve the seven changes. Kim Nix seconded. Motion passed.

Conference Report (Tom Cadden): Planning for the July 13-17 conference in Flagstaff, Arizona, is well underway.

1. Deposits/Reservations: The meeting space at High Country Conference Center has been reserved with a \$3,800 deposit. A room block (70) at the Drury Inn & Suites in Flagstaff was reserved with no deposit required. Two buses for the July 15 Grand Canyon trip have been reserved with a \$150 deposit.

2. Registration: The goal is to have a partial agenda to post and online registration open in mid-March. There was some discussion of registration online with a credit card, but the fees for that can be up to 6 percent. Jane suggested that a separate PayPal account may need to be set up. Tom will explore this idea some more.

3. Board Meeting: The board meeting is scheduled for the afternoon of Monday, July 13. The Balance Wheel/Scholarship meeting will be held the same day.

4. Surveys: Two surveys have gone out to assess potential attendance: a survey sent Friday (2/6) to non-member states or member states that haven't attended a conference in the past two years; and a survey sent Monday (2/9) to ACI members or attendees of the last two conferences.

5. Conference Fee: Arizona is looking at charging \$300 as the early-bird rate before a cut-off date to be determined, and \$350 afterward. This depends on the budget numbers. If necessary, they may bump the fee up to \$325 early-bird and \$375 late.

6. Sponsors: The sponsor levels and benefits structure was finalized and solicitations sent out to some companies/organizations that have been past sponsors. If anyone has recommendations on potential sponsors, please send the contact information to Tom.

7. Auction: Randy Zellers and Steve Wilson have agreed to coordinate the auction with some assistance from Arizona.

8. Agenda Topics/Speakers: Some have verbally agreed to making a presentation and some are still in negotiations. Arizona is working toward finalizing written agreements with speakers.

9. Awards: Julie Hammonds and Kim Nix are coordinating the competition.

10. Existing Scholarship Program: Arizona will be working with Robin Cahoon on this.

Stipend Report: (Tom Cadden) Tom said there are several options on how to use a stipend to attract new people to the conference. He can develop a target list of states who have not attended or who are not members for this effort. Another option is to set a dollar amount to cover registration and hotel and then the traveler is on their own for transportation. There is an issue of what to do about no-shows. Tom will work with the board to develop a structure and process for this. The budget for this stipend project has been set at \$15,000.

New Business (Micah Holmes): Micah asked if anyone knows who the manager is for the Listserv. No one on the call knew, but Micah will look more into this because some changes might need to be made to this communications tool.

Adjournment: Tom Cadden made the motion to adjourn and Jane Gustafson seconded. Motion passed.

Submitted by Kim Nix, Secretary