

Association for Conservation Information
Board Meeting (conference call)
4/8/2015

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

Roll Call (Kim Nix): Micah Holmes (President, OK), Judy Stokes Weber (Treasurer, NH), Kim Nix (Secretary, AL), Tom Cadden (AZ), Randy Zellers (AR), Phil Bloom (IN), Julie Hammonds (Awards, AZ), Kay Ellerhoff (Futures, MT)

Unable to attend: Don King (Immediate Past President, TN), Robin Cahoon (Vice President, UT), Regina Knauer (MO), Jane Gustafson (NE), Aaron Meier (NV), Michael Gray (KY), Rachel Piacenza (RBFF) and Kathy Garza-Behr (OH)

Approval of Minutes: Eight board members are required for a quorum. Since there was no quorum, approval of the minutes from the February meeting was postponed until the June meeting.

Treasurer's Report: The ACI financial review covering the fiscal year ending June 30, 2014, has been completed by a CPA and emailed to board members. Two hard copies are available. One will stay with treasurer's files and the second will go to the president, who will pass it forward to the next president. Based on the accountant's review, he is "not aware of any material modifications that should be made to the accompanying financial statements in order for them to be in conformity with the cash basis of accounting."

The Nebraska final conference report has been submitted but there are some questions and Judy is working through that with Jane Gufstason.

The checking account balance on 3/24/15 was \$74,954.16. Checks written in March and April include:

- \$100 to open conference account
- \$299.40 to Hosting4less (web hosting)
- \$1,000 to Jeff Eschler (webmaster)
- \$54.00 to reimburse treasurer for personal credit card payment of two state filings for nonprofit status maintenance (WY and NH)
- \$1,500 to keynote speaker Convince & Convert (AZ advance exceeds \$5,000; authorized by Micah.)

A money market account was opened on 2/6/15 with a transfer of \$7,500 from checking and the balance on 3/31/15 was \$7,500.55.

Micah asked for a recommendation for transferring additional funds to the money market account. The intended purpose of this transaction is to ensure we have two years of operating funds at hand should we encounter an unexpected problem -- such as having to cancel a conference unexpectedly, but still having to pay for some or all of the expenses without collecting the expected revenue.

Below is the FY14 income and expenses from the CPA Report.

Revenue

Memberships, award program, and other fees	19,238
2013 conference advance returns	2,241
Interest income	870
Total revenue	22,349

Expenses

2014 & 2015 conference advances	8,800
2013 conference fees “pass-throughs”	600
Scholarships	4,881
Awards	1,479
Website/web hosting	4,299
Balance Wheel newsletter	2,000
Conference travel reimbursements	1,500
Insurance bond	257
Postage/office expenses	367
Total expenses	24,184
Change in net assets	(1,835)
Net assets- beginning of year	78,441
Net assets- end of year	76,606

At the end of FY 2014 ACI had assets of \$76,606. Two years of expenses would range from \$24,184 spent in FY2014 to \$39,264 with the additional stipends for marketing the conference that was authorized for FY 2015. Taking an average of these two numbers, we get \$31,124. For two years of expenses, let’s use \$60,000 in round numbers. It would seem reasonable to move an additional \$10,000 to the money market account or even to a CD.

Futures Report (Kay Ellerhoff): Conference commitments have been accepted through 2019.

2016 Conference (Kim Nix reported for Regina): Regina Knauer sent word that she is working with Bass Pro and the hotel in Springfield regarding the ACI 2016 conference. There are several dates for consideration:

- July 9 (Sat) – 13 (Wed)
- July 10 (Sun) – 14 (Thur)
- July 11 (Mon) – 15 (Fri)
- July 19 (Tue) – 23 (Sat)

Balance Wheel Report (Randy Zellers): The next balance wheel will be going out soon. He will put something in it about the conference scholarships being available.

Awards Committee (Julie Hammonds):

We are currently in the middle of the judging process. The only issue she is aware of is that one state that did not get their entries postmarked by the entry date and all of them were disqualified.

She is continuing to do research on how to better automate the awards process and there is growing pressure among the agencies to make it easier to submit. She can give a presentation to the board in June regarding some options, but we need to have a conversation among members about this. She will bring it up at the awards committee meeting at the conference.

Travel Scholarship Report (Submitted by Robin Cahoon): There are 10 Geoffrey Schneider Travel Scholarship available for the 2015 conference in Flagstaff, Arizona. The scholarship covers the registration fee and four nights lodging (July 13-16) at the conference hotel. Lodging reservations for scholarship recipients are made by the host state.

The application period began April 1 and runs thru May 15. Applicants will be notified of their results by email May 18. The scholarships are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. The limit is one per member agency/organization. As of 5 p.m. (MDT) 4/7/15, three applications have been received. Robin posted a notice about the scholarship on ACI's Facebook page on 03/15. Once the scholarship recipients have been notified, the Scholarship Committee will send the names to the host state and formally request that the Treasurer send the host state the applicable funds.

Scholarship recipients are required to take notes of at least one conference session and complete at least one article for The Balance Wheel. Randy Zellers will meet with the scholarship recipients and hand out assignments at the conference. It would be helpful if the host state could set aside 20-30 minutes on the agenda for a scholarship recipient meeting directly after the Board Meeting at the start of the conference. Anyone interested in writing an article or covering a conference session for the newsletter would be welcome to attend.

Only individuals employed by member agencies/organizations or persons employed by potential member agencies/organizations are eligible to receive a Geoffrey Schneider Travel Scholarship (Article 7(a) of the ACI Bylaws).

Conference Report (Tom Cadden): Conference dates are July 13-17 in Flagstaff. A bank account for the conference has been set up in Arizona. Early registration will open by Friday and is \$325 until June 20; after that date, it is \$350. Currently, registration is only by a hard copy form that must be mailed in. They are looking at an online option.

A block of 70 rooms are reserved at the conference hotel, which expires on Jun 20. Rates are \$81 per night plus tax for a single, \$91 for double and up.

Sponsor invoices will go out this week. NSSF and Wildlife for Tomorrow are among the committed sponsors.

Meals included in the price of registration will be hors d'oeuvres at the welcome reception; lunch on Tuesday, Wednesday (sack lunch) and Thursday; dinner at the auction on Tuesday and the awards banquet on Thursday. The hotel serves a hot breakfast every morning so that is included with a room stay. Dinner on Wednesday night will be on your own.

Two busses will take participants to the Grand Canyon on Wednesday. Plans are to leave at 7:45 a.m. and arrive by 10 a.m. Sessions will end at lunch for free time at the South Rim. Busses should be boarded by 5 p.m. for the return to Flagstaff.

The agenda is pretty much set except for one of the roundtable sessions and Tom is working on that.

Stipend Report (Tom Cadden): Details still need to be worked out on how to use the \$15,000 board appropriation to get more people to the conference. Tom asked for some help with developing a process on how to offer it. Micah said that he will set up a call between Tom, Phil Bloom and anyone else that wants to assist with this project.

New Business (Micah Holmes): Micah would like to have some kind of welcome package to send new members that would give them information on ACI and its benefits. Judy suggested establishing a membership committee that could handle contacting new people.

Judy suggested that ACI might want to partner with another organization such as the Organization of Wildlife Planners for a future meeting.

Old Business (Micah Holmes): Micah said the idea of a past president's award needs to be revisited. After some discussion, this project was tabled.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by Kim Nix, Secretary