

Association for Conservation Information
Board Meeting (conference call)
10/7/15

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

Roll Call (Kim Nix): Micah Holmes (President, OK), Kim Nix (Secretary, AL), Judy Stokes Weber (Treasurer, NH), Don King (Immediate Past President, TN), Phil Bloom (IN), Kathy Garza-Behr (OH), Regina Knauer (MO), Aaron Meier (NV), Michael Gray (KY), Jane Gustafson (NE), Jenifer Wisniewski (GA), Blake Podhajsky (OK) Julie Hammonds (Awards, AZ), Kay Ellerhoff (Futures, MT)

Unable to attend: Lance Cherry (NM), Robin Cahoon (Vice President, UT), Randy Zellers (AR)

Additional Attendees:

Cindy Delaney of Delaney Meeting & Event Management

Approval of Minutes: Michael Gray moved to approve the July 13, 2015, board minutes. Judy Stokes Weber seconded. Motion passed.

Regina Knauer made a motion to accept the July 16, 2015, business meeting minutes. Phil Bloom seconded. Motion passed.

AFWA Report: (Micah Holmes) Micah congratulated Judy Stokes Weber, who received special recognition from AFWA at their annual conference.

Micah attended AFWA on behalf of ACI, and he recommends we send someone to their meeting on a regular basis. He spoke at the education/outreach meeting about ACI and the awards program, and also spoke to several directors and encouraged them to send people to the ACI conference.

Dave Chanda was elected president of AFWA. He has agreed to send a letter to AFWA directors on ACI's behalf if we write it. Regina volunteered to draft a letter with some guidance from Micah.

2016 Conference (Regina Knauer): Regina is still struggling with state contract issues so that the bank account can get set up. A separate bank account is needed to deposit the seed money and access it. Dates have not been set and she is still evaluating hotels.

There was some discussion concerning the uncertainty about the 2016 meeting. Micah suggested we set a deadline of Nov. 1 to have things nailed down in Missouri. If they cannot be nailed down, we will come up with another plan. Aaron said it is possible that Nevada could step in if needed.

2017 Conference Report (Aaron Meier): Aaron spoke with Cindy Delaney and his chief and they are going to use her services for 2017. Some initial meetings have taken place and they are looking at July 17-21 or 24-18 as possible dates. Tahoe is the first choice with Reno being the second choice for conference location. Cindy said she will be handling the hotel booking, sponsors and possibly registration; Aaron will be the lead on agenda, and speakers.

Recruitment Efforts: Micah asked if someone wanted to volunteer to head up the membership committee. Jenifer Wisniewski volunteered to chair that effort. He will send her his ideas and asked for other board members to do the same.

Awards Committee (Julie Hammonds): There doesn't seem to be a cost-effective way for ACI to be able to take the contest online. A conversation with another online vendor, iNet, yielded an estimate of \$20,000 to \$30,000 for their services. Judy Stokes Weber pointed out that the awards program is a major moneymaker for ACI and is important to our budget so we need to consider that when making any decision.

Julie has received suggestions that we move to a ranked voting system instead of scoresheets. There was an alternate idea of developing scoring rubrics as well. An email to category chairs from the past two years about scoring their categories yielded little response. This current system does not appear to be broken in a way that either a voting system or rubrics would fix. Julie will move ahead with reviewing the scoring on her own to seek any streamlining opportunities.

It was also suggested to make the five digital categories paperless and invite other category chairs to pioneer a paperless effort as well. Here again, although the current system is paper-intensive, it works. Relying extensively on email or file-sharing websites may just shift the paper burden until the end or create confusion.

Julie hopes very member state will provide at least one category chair for the next contest, and asks board members to assist in meeting that goal.

With Kim Nix's agreement, Julie Hammonds is now the chair rather than the co-chair of the Awards Committee.

Treasurer's Report (Judy Stokes Weber): The balance in the checkbook on July 1, 2015, was \$64,741.54 and the balance at the end of September was \$68,883.08. We have a balance of \$7,502.44 in the money market account.

Through the end of September, she has written checks for \$7,368.56. These include costs for the Balance Wheel, webmaster, travel reimbursement (Judy and Randy), accountant services, awards and some miscellaneous expenses/reimbursements.

At this time, we have received payments from 21 organizations renewing their memberships. We have no new members for approval at this time.

Judy volunteered to work with Jenifer Wisniewski on the membership recruitment committee.

Scholarship (Michael Gray): Michael Gray said he has spoken with Robin Cahoon, previous scholarship chairman, about the scholarship process and he will be working with Phil Bloom this year. He asked if we were going to have two rounds of scholarships this year as we did last year.

Judy said one pile was for the Geoffrey Schneider Scholarship, and the second amount was designed to get new people to the meetings. She felt this was confusing to people and there needs to be some discussion about what we will do this year.

Micah would like to offer 10 scholarships to current members and 10 to people who have not attended a conference before. How that is handled needs to be worked out so it is not confusing.

Conference Futures (Kay Ellerhoff): Future conference sites named are: Missouri: 2016; Nevada: 2017; Alabama: 2018; Pennsylvania: 2019; New Mexico: 2020; New Jersey: 2021; Georgia: 2022; Hawaii: 2023

New Business (Micah Holmes): Micah said Robin Cahoon will be transitioning out of ACI due to new job responsibilities. He feels like we can wait until the next conference to fill the vice president's position. We will talk about this at the next board meeting.

The proceeds from the Flagstaff conference were \$11,000, which is the highest ever returned. The number of awards entries broke a record and the auction made the second highest amount ever.

Next Meeting Date (Micah Holmes): The next conference call meeting will be, Dec. 2 at 1 p.m. Central time. Future dates will be Feb. 3 and April 6, and June 1, 2016.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by Kim Nix, Secretary