

**Association for Conservation Information**  
**Board Meeting** (conference call)  
**2/3/16**

**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), Regina Knauer (MO), Aaron Meier (NV), Michael Gray (KY), Jane Gustafson (NE), Jenifer Wisniewski (GA), Blake Podhajsky (OK) Lance Cherry (NM), Julie Hammonds (Awards, AZ), Kay Ellerhoff (Futures, MT), Randy Zellers (The Balance Wheel, AR)

**Unable to attend:** Kathy Garza-Behr (OH), Robin Cahoon (Vice President, UT)

**Approval of Minutes:** Regina Knauer made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 2, 2015, meeting. Michael Gray seconded. Motion was approved.

**Webmaster (Micah Holmes):** Jeff Eschler has resigned as ACI webmaster, but he will stay on until we find a replacement. We need a long-term and a short-term plan. Aaron Meier said the Nevada webmaster, Andrea Farnsworth, is willing to step in and take over. This would be a short-term solution and possibly a long-term solution if the board agrees this person is right for the job. Micah recommended that we interview Andrea for the position. He appointed Jenifer Wisniewski and Regina Knauer to conduct the interview on behalf of ACI, and to make a recommendation at the next meeting regarding the position. Michael Gray said he also has a candidate from Kentucky that he can recommend if needed.

**2016 Conference (Aaron Meier):** The dates for the 2016 conference are July 11-14 at Harrah's Lake Tahoe. A block of rooms at \$125 per night is reserved until June 20. The web page set up for the conference will be live next week and can take online registrations. Early registration by June 1 will be \$350; after that date it will be \$375. A one-day registration will be \$150 before June 1 and \$175 after June 1. Registration for guests will be \$170.

The closest airport is the Reno/Tahoe International Airport. Shuttles will be available from South Tahoe Airpporter to the hotel for \$29.75 one way or \$59 round trip.

Aaron is working on selecting speakers for the conference, and he will contact board members if he needs additional assistance. Cindy Delany's group will solicit for sponsors. He is looking for ideas for getting the word out about the conference.

The board meeting and scholarship meeting will take place Monday, July 11.

**Future Conferences Report (Kay Ellerhoff):** Indiana has been secured as the host state for 2017.

**2017 Conference (Phil Bloom):** The 2017 conference will be July 10-13, 2017, at Abe Martin Lodge at Brown County State Park. This is one hour south of Indianapolis. Room rates are \$105

for the hotel and \$70 per night for the rustic cabins. Participants can fly into Indianapolis or Louisville, which is a little farther, but airfare might be cheaper from there.

**Awards Committee (Julie Hammonds):** The contest is launched with 26 categories. We have chairs from 19 states. All but one chair is doing a new category or didn't chair last year, which means lots of new judges and fresh judging. The deadline for getting entries to category chairs is March 11. Julie is promoting the contest every Tuesday on Facebook to increase awareness of specific categories and boost the entry numbers. She will also do a couple of listserv messages, and Randy Zellers volunteered to use the Mail Chimp account to send three messages between now and the deadline. Julie was approached by an awards software company called OpenWater and talked with their sales rep, who said they could do everything ACI needed for \$4,500 a year. He promised to follow up in writing and if he does, she will bring it to the board.

**Membership Recruitment Efforts: (Jenifer Wisniewski):** A map indicating which states are members of ACI has been developed. She also has a "hit list" of states that we want to reach out to and needs the volunteers to make those contacts. Jane Gustafson recognized Jenifer for promoting ACI at a RBFF conference.

**Treasurer's Report (Judy Stokes Weber):** The checkbook balance as of Feb. 1, 2016, is \$76,676.62. We have a balance of \$7,503.70 in the money market account. Since the last meeting, three checks have been written: Webmaster (\$1,000); Balance Wheel (\$1,000); Conference Advance to Nevada (\$5,000).

At this time, we have 39 agency memberships. Illinois is a new agency member, and Colorado has also joined after not being a member for a while.

States who have not yet paid their invoices and are ineligible to participate in the awards programs include: WI, WA, IA, ID, CA, MN, MI, LA, UT, NY, MD, MA, DE and AZ. However, MA and AZ dues are in the pipeline and she expects them to be paid soon.

**Scholarship (Michael Gray):** Now that we know some details about the next conference, we can move ahead with planning for the scholarship announcement. His goal is to get details announced in March.

**New Business (Micah Holmes):** If anyone wants to put something on ACI's Facebook page, please send it to him, Aaron Meier or Julie Hammonds.

Jenifer Wisniewski is working on a SEAFWA project where a \$5,000 grant was given to the southeastern states to send two people each for a three-day meeting in Georgia. This will bring communications people from each state together April 19-21.

Micah said that we need a volunteer for the Google magazine managers group. If anyone knows someone who would like to do this, please let him know.

**Balance Wheel (Randy Zellers):** The next Balance Wheel will be coming out in March. He will use our Mail Chimp account to send out announcements about the awards program in Feb. We currently have 467 people subscribed to that list.

**Adjournment**

A motion was made, seconded and carried to adjourn the meeting.

*Submitted by Kim Nix, Secretary*