

MINUTES

Association for Conservation Information Board Meeting

Conference Call ● Jan. 6, 2021 ● 10 a.m-11 p.m. MST

ITEM NO. 1: Meeting Called to Order.

ITEM NO. 2: Roll Call.

- ✓ Jenifer Wisniewski (TN, President, Conference Co-Chair, Auction)
- ✓ Lance Cherry (NM, Vice President)
- ✓ Sara DiRienzo (WY, Secretary, Scholarships)
- ✓ Judy Stokes Weber (VT, Treasurer)
- ✓ Scott Ball (FL, Communications)
- ✓ Kay Ellerhoff (MT, Futures)
- ✓ Tim Akimoff (OR, Board)
- ✓ Patricia Allen (AFWA, Board)
- ✓ Jason Harmon (TN, Board)
- ✓ Darrin Hill (OK, Board)
- ✓ Kyle Martens (NE, Board)
- ✓ Aaron Meier (NV, Awards)
- ✓ Alix Pedraza (SC, Board)
- ✓ Nadia Reimer (KS, Board)
- ✓ Ashley Sanchez (NV, Board)
- ✓ Craig Sanchez (NM, Board)

Unable to Attend:

- ✓ Micah Homes (OK, Ways & Means)
- ✓ Kim Nix (AL, Immediate Past President)

ITEM NO. 3: Approval of Minutes.

MOTION: Jason Harmon moved to approve the November 2020 board meeting minutes. Craig Sanchez seconded the motion.

VOTE: Voice vote taken. All present voted in the Affirmative. **Motion carried unanimously.**

ITEM NO. 4: Opening Remarks.

Presented by Jenifer Wisniewski, President

Great start off to 2021.

ITEM NO. 5: ACI multistate grant update.

Presented by Jenifer Wisniewski, President

We are well underway for the locavore grant. Opportunities for online and perhaps in person. Take the workshop to learn how to connect people to hunting through food.

Last year, we awarded five states \$50,000. We have more opportunities to come for 2021. The new grants are coming in the next week and due mid-Feb for hunting and shooting R3 efforts. Look for project summaries in the next Balance Wheel.

ITEM NO. 5: Communications Report.

Presented by Scott Ball, Membership Communications Chair

Membership

- As of 01/05/2021, ACI has
 - 47 Agency-level members, including...
 - 39 state agencies, representing 37 states
 - 1 federal agency
 - 7 NGOs
 - 2 Sponsor-level members
- As Judy receives dues payments from members, she forwards the info to me for posting on the [ACI website](#).
- Reached out in December to members who haven't paid dues yet, providing plenty of time to do so by end of year and qualify for awards consideration. Effort resulted in several renewals.

Communications

- Next issue of The Balance Wheel will be published Jan. 15 and emailed to 587 subscribers (586 last report; +1)
 - Major challenge remains collecting fresh content for each issue. (Thank you, Judy, for recent tip/link to a relevant article on website bounce rates.)
- 625 Facebook likes (+1)
- 743 Facebook followers (+2)
- 5 Facebook posts (Nov.-Dec.)

ITEM NO. 6: Treasurer's Report.

Presented by Judy Stokes Weber, Treasurer

NOV						
PP Transfer	11.10.20	S3.com annual membership	\$195.30	\$89,803.46	xx	
PP Transfer	11.12.20	2021 Dues NC Wildlife Resources	\$195.30	\$89,998.76	xx	
PP Transfer	11.13.20	2021 USFWS Awards Payment	\$938.58	\$90,937.34	xx	
PP Transfer	11.17.20	2021 KY Dues Payment	\$195.30	\$91,132.64	xx	
10254	11.24.20	Refund IA Late request via PP	\$280.00	\$90,852.64	xx	
Check	11.24.20	2021 CA dues payment	\$200.00	\$91,052.64	xx	
10253	11.24.20	AFWA Affiliate Membership	\$250.00	\$90,802.64	xx	
Direct Deposit	11.25.20	AZ 2021 Dues and awards	\$360.00	\$91,162.64	xx	
DEC						
Check	12.9.20	CT 2021 Dues	\$200.00	\$91,362.64	xx	
Check	12.14.20	MT 2021 Dues and Awards	\$800.00	\$92,162.64		
Check	12.14.20	IA 2021 Dues and Awards	\$280.00	\$92,442.64		
PP Transfer	12.16.20	WY 2021 Dues and Awards	\$782.10	\$93,224.74	xx	
Check	12.16.20	DJ Case and Associates Sponsor	\$250.00	\$93,474.74	xx	
Check	12.16.20	SC 2021 Dues and Awards	\$840.00	\$94,314.74	xx	
Check	12.28.20	CA 2021 Awards	\$200.00	\$94,514.74	xx	
10255	12.28.20	WCP reimb SOS filings, efileBiz1099	\$71.00	\$94,443.74	xx	Balanced

Things are warming up as we work to get in the final memberships before the awards program opens up. Interesting stories too. A new person made a mistake using a state credit card to pay their PayPal invoice, had to refund their money long after we transferred the PayPal payment to our checking account. I like Wyoming so much I didn't invoice them this year, but we figured that out and all is well.

Sara, again, my apologies. Homeland Security here in Vermont got MT's check and stamped it with "for deposit only Homeland Security." I am still untangling that one. Who says this isn't a fun job?

One item for your consideration. I recommend that we close-out our NH ACI account. We had kept this open to help out some states that had direct deposit set-up there. We have transitioned most of them and the one left I will work with over the coming months to change our listing in their accounting system. No small task but we can get it done.

MOTION: Judy Stokes-Weber moved to close out ACI checking account at Northway Bank in Plymouth NH. Funds from that account will be transferred or by check into the current account at Community Bank in Vergennes, VT. Jenifer Wisniewski seconded the motion.

VOTE: Voice vote taken. All present voted in the Affirmative. **Motion carried unanimously.**

ITEM NO. 7: 2020 ACI Conference Update.

Presented by Lance Cherry, Vice President

Lance reported New Mexico restrictions are not expected to ease until September. Should ACI consider moving to a virtual conference?

Aaron said that state travel restrictions are extremely limited. Some states have restrictions until the end of March. Many cannot make arrangements to go in time, and the state approval process is difficult in short time periods.

Judy reminded the Board there are some upsides to online conferences. The online AFWA meeting was rich – new people and lots of quality discussion. Others agree there is lots of value and opportunity still.

Kay said in the past months she attended two virtual mass funerals. They went smoothly, and there was a strong sense of community still.

Following discussion, the Board determined the overall feedback is that we need to move to a virtual conference for 2021.

If we go online, we could reduce the costs, and potentially offer more opportunities for scholarships. Sara recommended offering more scholarships to allow more people from a single agency to attend on a scholarship.

Judy suggested the same scholarship budget could go further online. ACI usually spend about \$10,000-\$15,000 on scholarships each year. We are in a very good financial place with ACI, and could offer very low attendee fee. The scholarship could cover quite a few people to attend. The rate for other similar conferences is \$100-125, but there is potential to go lower with our flush account.

Lance was encouraged that we can still bring all the elements from ACI online.

Jenifer recommended bringing a great keynote and investing in some good speakers.

Jason asked if the registration would pay for the platform we use. Lance said yes, it would be used to cover the platform.

The online conference dates will be the same as planned.

ITEM NO. 8: Auction Report.

Presented by Jenifer Wisniewski, Auction Chair

Nothing to report.

ITEM NO. 9: Futures Conference Report.

Presented by Kay Ellerhoff, Future Conference Hosts Chair

Our host in 2022 was NC, but with recent changes in contacts, they are resigning the host role. However they will remain high on the futures list.

BIG NEWS!!! TN boldly steps forward to host in Nashville for 2022.

Kay intends to check in with each agency on the futures list.

ITEM NO. 10: Scholarship Report.

Presented by Sara DiRienzo, Scholarship Chair

Sara will work closely with NM to revise the 2021 scholarship opportunities.

ITEM NO. 11: Awards Report.

Presented by Aaron Meier, Awards Chairs

Three new people to help with awards! Contest will be open in the coming weeks.

ITEM NO. 12: Ways and Means Report.

Presented by Micah Holmes, Board Member and Ways and Means Chair

Nothing to report.

ITEM NO. 13: New Business.

- LOGO UPDATES: Ready to vote at the conference in 2021 by membership.

ITEM NO. 14: Adjournment.

MOTION: Craig Sanchez moved to Adjourn. Jennifer Wisniewski seconded the motion.

VOTE: Voice vote taken. All present voted in the Affirmative. Motion carried unanimously.

With no further business on the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m. MST. The next meeting will be March 3, 2021.

Submitted by Sara DiRienzo, Secretary