

Association for Conservation Information

Business Meeting

7/14/16, Lake Tahoe, Nevada

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

Roll Call:

Board Members in Attendance: Micah Holmes (President, OK), Kim Nix (Secretary, AL), Judy Stokes Weber (Treasurer, NH), Don King (Immediate Past President, TN), Aaron Meier (NV), Jane Gustafson (NE), Jenifer Wisniewski (GA), Lance Cherry (NM), Michael Gray (KY), Regina Knauer (MO), Blake Podhajsky (OK), Julie Hammonds (Awards, AZ), Kay Ellerhoff (Futures, MT)

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

Agency Membership in Attendance:

Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Arizona Game and Fish Department

Arkansas Game and Fish Department

Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission

Georgia Department of Natural Resources

Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources

Indiana Department of Natural Resources

Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism

Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries

Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Missouri Department of Conservation

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks

Nebraska Game and Parks

New Jersey Fisheries and Wildlife

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish

Nevada Department of Wildlife

Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation

Ohio Division of Wildlife

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation

South Carolina Department of Natural Resources

Tennessee Wildlife Resources

Texas Parks and Wildlife

Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department
Council of Western State Foresters

Supporting Members in Attendance:

William Creighton

Individual Members in Attendance:

Scott Ball (FL)

Treasurer's Report: Judy Stokes Weber reported that membership is continuing to grow. Currently we have 47 agency members; five NGOs; two supporting members; one sustaining member; and three individual members.

A CPA firm has gone over the books and their report was presented at the board meeting on Tuesday. No anomalies were found with ACI's financials. If anyone would like to see the report, it will be on the website.

Members should be on the lookout for Invoices for membership dues and award entries in August.

Auditing Committee Report: Blake Podhajsky (OK), Bonnie Holding (ME) and Dan Dennison (HI) were appointed by President Micah Holmes as the auditing committee. Dan Dennison reported on behalf of the committee that Judy has done a good job as treasurer. There were some additional receipts that the auditing committee would like to see kept on file and they have related this to Judy for future reference.

Auction Committee Report: Randy Zellers (AR) said approximately \$3,200 was raised during the auction Tuesday night. He expressed that one thing lacking this year were trips to auction. He encouraged agencies to develop a trip related to their work such as bird banding or bear research. These trips would interest fellow members.

Award Committee Report: Julie Hammonds (AZ) Julie reported that we had a total of 362 entries this year. This is very close to last year's all-time high of 364 entries. The newest category of Conservation Post of the Year garnered 14 entries in its first year, which is a great start. Changes to the awards contest included making clarifications of some of the rules, adjusting the video categories and improving the scoring criteria for six categories.

Twenty people attended the awards committee meeting on Tuesday and the main topic of discussion was taking the contest online.

The Awards Committee recommends that ACI transition to an online contest while continuing to produce a contest that rewards excellence and encourages craft improvement.

To achieve this goal, the Awards Committee recommends:

- Selecting a vendor that can deliver contest software at a reasonable price.
- Working with the vendor to customize the platform so that key aspects of the contest remain unchanged.

For the first year, the Awards Chair will work either with a small committee or with a larger group of category chairs who will:

- Consult as needed on the process of developing and testing the new platform.
- Find judges.
- Serve as expert consultants for those judges during the process.
- Assist with implementation as needed..

Although most of the entry process will be done online, for categories in which paper quality and other printing decisions are especially important, entrants will also be required to submit three printed samples for judging. This will affect the magazine, calendar, and graphic design categories.

To offset some of the cost of developing and maintaining the platform, the Awards Committee recommends that ACI raise the cost of each entry from \$30 to \$40.

As craft improvement remains an important goal of the contest, the Awards Committee recommends that further thought be given to display of entries at the conference.

Michael Gray (KY) made a motion to approve the recommendation of the awards committee. Amanda Stroud (SC) seconded. Motion passed.

Future Conferences: Kay Ellerhoff announced that 2017's conference will be at Indiana's Brown County State Park and Phil Bloom will serve as the conference chair. Marty Benson (IN) read a letter from Director Cameron F. Clark that formally invites ACI to Indiana July 9-12, Sunday-Wednesday, for the conference

Stephanie Hussey (RBFF) made a motion to accept Indiana's invitation. Bonnie Holding (ME) seconded. Motion passed.

Kay announced the futures lineup as it now stands:

2018 Missouri

2019 - Hawaii

2020 New Mexico

2021 New Jersey

2022 Georgia (possibly joint with SC)
2023 Oklahoma

Joanie Straub (MO) said they are looking at St. Louis or Springfield as possible locations for 2018 and she welcomes feedback on this.

Dan Dennison (HI) said that it may be a challenge for travel to his state, but he is hoping that planning this far ahead will allow him time to work toward making the cost affordable.

Kay reported that the futures list still has Granite Ranch WY, Iowa, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Washington and Michigan who are interested.

Policies and Procedures: Treasurer Judy Stokes Weber made a proposal to modify the policies and procedures as they relate to how and when agencies receive bills for dues. The current policy is out of synch with the awards program and is confusing. The new policy will state that if dues are not paid by the end of December, the agency will not be a member in good standing. This means the agency will be ineligible to enter the awards contest, so it's important to make sure the dues get paid on time. The change involves Policy and Procedure 5, which will now reflect the following:

POLICY AND PROCEDURE 5 – Membership Status: Good Standing, Delinquency, Termination

Purpose: To provide direction and guidance in determining when a member or member agency is deemed to be in “good standing,” “delinquent,” or when a membership should be terminated for non-payment of dues.

Procedure: To obtain “good standing” status in the Association for Conservation Information, Inc., member agencies and members are required to pay the appropriate amount of money (dues) as established by the Board of Directors and contained in ACI Bylaws, Article 3. ACI membership rights and privileges are granted for a period of one year from the last day of the month of the initial payment of dues. A member agency or member shall be considered in good standing if the ACI Treasurer receives dues by December 1. ~~no more than three (3) months from the billing date.~~

~~A member agency or member shall be considered “delinquent” if dues are more than three (3) months but less than six (6) months in arrears. Membership in the Association for Conservation Information, Inc. shall be considered vacated, and then automatically terminated without action of the ACI Board of Directors if dues payment has not been received within the six (6) month period after initial billing. Only member agencies and other members in good standing or delinquent may participate in Association business, including but not limited to serving as an officer or Board member, participating in the awards program, voting at business meetings and receiving any other benefits as a member of the Association. Delinquent members must pay their dues to continue participating in Association business.~~

Billing Procedure:

1. ~~Invoice sent approximately one month prior to deadline; example: Aug. 1.~~
2. ~~First “past due” notice sent with copy of original invoice approximately two months after initial billing; example: Nov. 1.~~
3. ~~Second “past due” notice, and “final notice” announcement sent with copy of original invoice approximately four months after initial billing. This is to be sent by certified mail, signature required; example: Feb. 1.~~
4. ~~Notice of membership termination sent after seven month period of initial billing; example: March 1.~~

(Effective July 2005. Modified July 2012, 2016)

Jane Gustafson (NE) made a motion to change the dues policy as outlined; Jenifer Wisniewski seconded. Motion passed.

Registration Scholarship for Lifetime Member: Jenifer Wisniewski outlined a plan where ACI will recognize and encourage lifetime membership by providing one registration scholarship per year to the annual conference for a lifetime member. Interested lifetime members should write to the ACI president to ask for this scholarship in advance of the conference. It will be awarded by the president on a first come, first served basis.

Bonnie Holding (ME) made a motion to provide the registration scholarship to a lifetime member as stated. Michael Gray (KY) seconded. Motion passed.

Changes to Bylaws: Micah Holmes said the board has decided to change several bylaws to reflect a new communications position and a modification on how the awards chair is compensated.

The board recommends creating a Membership Communications Chair position which will be paid \$5,000 per year on a quarterly basis. This position will involve serving as the webmaster, keeping the membership directory current, developing an e-newsletter, posting on social media and other duties the board might assign. The goal would be to have someone in the position by the next scheduled board meeting.

A second proposal creates some compensation for the awards chair. The chair will continue to have conference registration waived, but will also be reimbursed a maximum of \$1,500 for travel to the annual conference.

Micah read the proposed bylaws changes:

Article 7e

(new language) The Membership Communications Chair shall be paid \$1,500 per quarter upon satisfactory performance as determined by the board of directors. In addition, registration to the annual conference shall be waived. The Membership Communications Chair shall be reimbursed a maximum of \$1,500 for travel to the annual conference.

Article 7j

(new language) The ACI Awards Committee Chairperson shall have their registration to the annual conference waived and the chair's accommodations shall be paid for by ACI. The chairperson shall be reimbursed a maximum of \$1,500 for travel to the annual conference.

Add a new Committee under Article 9 (previously Article 10):

Membership Communications Committee: With input from the Board, the president shall appoint a Membership Communications Chair for the purpose of providing ACI members information regarding ACI-related news to members and to foster communication between members.

Policy and Procedure 6 outlines general duties of the Communications Chair:

- Maintain membership data.
- Bimonthly Balance Wheel e-newsletter to all ACI members, including but not limited to pertinent member news, state project highlights, conference promotions, summary of conference presentations and industry news.
- Actively recruit new members to share the benefits of ACI.
- Serve as the keeper of the email database, list serve and Google Groups.
- Maintain the Association's website.
- Add content at least biweekly through ACI's social media outlets.
- Implement follow-up communication to new members.

The additions outlined above will necessitate striking Article 8 of the bylaws relating to publication of the Balance Wheel; striking of Policy and Procedure 2 relating to Complimentary Annual Conference Registration for the awards chair; and replacing Policy and Procedure 6 relating to Membership Communications.

Lance Cherry (NM) made a motion to approve the bylaw and policy and procedures changes related to the items discussed. Jenifer Wisniewski (GA) seconded. Motion passed.

Honorary lifetime membership: Micah Nominated Scott Ball, formerly of the Florida Wildlife Conservation Commission, to receive honorary lifetime membership in ACI.

Don King (TN) made a motion to approve the designation. Stephanie Hussey (RBFF). seconded. Motion passed.

Nominating Committee Report: President Micah Holmes appointed Don King (TN), Judy Stokes Weber (NJ) and Scott Ball (FL) to the nominating committee to select a slate of officers and board members for the membership to vote on at the business meeting. After due consideration the Committee offered the following:

President: Kim Nix, Alabama
Vice President: Jenifer Wisniewski, Georgia
Secretary: Lance Cherry, New Mexico

Board members – 3-year term, expiring 2019
Mandy DiMartino, New Jersey
Dan Dennison, Hawaii
Jeff Kurrus, Nebraska

Board Members – 2-year term, expiring 2018
Joanie Straub, Missouri
Bonnie Holding, Maine

The President asked if there were any other nominations from the floor. Being none he asked for a motion to approve the slate of officers and board members.

Stephanie Hussey (RBFF) made a motion to approve the slate of officers. Andrea Jones (MT) seconded. Motion passed.

Adjournment

With no further business on the agenda, the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by Kim Nix, Secretary