



MINUTES

Association for Conservation Information Board Meeting

Virtual Conference Call ● May 14, 2025 ● 11 a.m.-12 p.m. CDT

ITEM NO. 1: Meeting Called to Order

ITEM NO. 2: Roll Call

- ✓ Blake Podhajsky (OK, President)
- ✓ Aaron Meier (NV, Vice President)
- ✓ Joanne Martonik (RBFF, Secretary)
- ✓ Judy Stokes Weber (VT, Treasurer)
- ✓ Linda DiPiano (NJ, Board-24)
- ✓ Brent Drinkut (IN, Board- 26)
- ✓ Bobby Jones (NV, Board- 26)
- ✓ Beth Quillian (OR, Board-26)
- ✓ Faith Heaton Jolley (UT, Board)
- ✓ Jane Gustafson (NE, Board- 27)
- ✓ Jonathan Carlucci (NJ, Board- 27)
- ✓ Jenifer Wisniewski (National Deer Association, Grants Committee Chair)

Unable to Attend:

- ✓ Lance Cherry (CAHSS, Immediate Past President)
- ✓ Dan Dennison (HI, Board- 25)
- ✓ Cory Chandler (TX, Board-27)
- ✓ Jason Harmon (TN, Fundraising/Auction Committee Chair)
- ✓ Micah Holmes (OK, Ways and Means Committee Chair)
- ✓ Chris Martin (WY, Awards Committee Co-chair)
- ✓ Patty Allen (AFWA, Communications Committee Chair)

ITEM NO. 3: Approval of Minutes

- March 2025 Board Meeting minutes attached
- **MOTION:** Linda DiPiano moved to approve the March 2025 ACI Board Meeting minutes as presented. Jane Gustafson seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

ITEM NO. 4: Opening Remarks. Presented by Blake Podhajsky, President

- Blake Podhajsky welcomed everyone to the meeting

ITEM NO. 5: 2025 ACI Conference Update. Presented by Linda DiPiano, 2025 Conference Coordinator

- Registrations are slowly coming in and she's expecting to have more in May and June
- Sponsorships have declined due to federal funding issues
- She's working with the hotel on food and beverage and AV
- Hotel can accept check or credit card after the conference. They can provide a certified credit application too
- The hotel cannot give Bonvoy points to a group. Linda DiPiano is looking into if she can get the points and transfer them to ACI.
- Scholarship awardees hotel room nights needed should be sent to Linda and she will share with the hotel
- Sponsor letters went out in late April and she's working on reminders
- Agenda is filled except for a slot to try to find someone to present on AI. Judy Stokes Weber offered to help
- Her team is still working on planning excursions



- Linda DiPiano and Lance Cherry adjusted the timing of sponsor presentations so if new sponsors come in, they can more easily be worked into the agenda; at the discretion of the conference planner.
- Whova has a very easy process to refund registration fees

ITEM NO. 6: 2026 ACI Conference Update. Presented by Blake Podhajsky, President

- Action Item- Official vote needed to approve Oklahoma receiving \$5k advance, plus additional \$5K
- The 2026 Conference will be held in Oklahoma City.
- There already was a virtual vote to allow OK to receive the 5K advancement and 5K seed money in addition
- **MOTION:** Jenifer Wisniewski moved to approve the funding requested. Jane Gustafson seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

ITEM NO. 7: Treasurer's Report. Presented by Judy Stokes Weber, Treasurer

- Treasurer's Report attached
- Judy Stokes Weber went through the Operations Account information, calling out a few items:
 - Based on Board approval, the CD was cashed in
 - In mid-April, the \$10,000 for the 2026 conference was transferred
 - There was a donation of \$5,000 from the Sportsmen's Alliance
 - ACI is in a good position with over 100K going into the conference season
- She also explained various items in the Conference Check Register
 - The account received the first transfer from stripe account of around 8k for conference registrations
 - Keynote speaker has partially been paid for
- ACI is paid up for web hosting through June via Hosting 4 Less. She expects the new host company will be paid in July. Blake Podhajsky thinks this timeline is appropriate but will keep in touch if there are changes.
- Blake Podhajsky, Judy Stokes Weber, and Lance Cherry are going to connect about how often the funds should be moved from the Stripe account to ACI and what the steps are needed to make this happen.
- Action Item 1- Official vote needed to approve conference travel reimbursement for Dan Dennison as Treasurer in waiting
 - Since Judy Stokes Weber is transferring Treasurer duties to Dan Dennison, it's important for him to be at the conference. He's retiring before the conference so HI cannot pay for him to attend
 - The Board agreed previously to provide him with a scholarship to cover his registration and hotel fees. The cost of his travel still needs to be covered
 - Previously, there was a virtual vote to allow ACI to cover his travel expenses
 - **MOTION:** Jon Carlucci moved to approve that ACI cover Dan Dennison's travel expenses as he is the Treasurer in waiting. Jane Gustafson seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
- Action Item 2- Vote needed to approve paying Judy Stokes Weber stipend for her Treasurer services 90 days post conference. Both Dan Dennison and Judy Stokes Weber will receive pay as they overlap.
 - Judy Stokes Weber will be staying on as Treasurer for 90 days post conference to ensure everything is done and accounted for; meaning she and Dan Dennison will overlap as Treasurers for that time.
 - There's a lot of post-conference transactions and membership renewals at that time
 - The Treasurer receives \$1,250 per quarter so both Judy Stokes Weber and Dan Dennison could receive the payment while they overlap for July and the 90 days following the conference (Q3)
 - **MOTION:** Jane Gustafson moved to approve providing both Dan Dennison and Judy Stokes Weber with the stipend funds while their work overlaps. Jenifer Wisniewski seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

ITEM NO. 8: Awards Committee Report. Presented by Beth Quillian and Chris Martin, Awards Committee Co-Chairs

- There are about 9 more days left for judging. The deadline has been extended to 5/23 to accommodate new judges just signing on. She is sending out a reminder to all judges today.
- She reminded everyone to ensure your category says 'complete' in Awards Force.
- Blake Podhajsky will send her the new ACI logo for the plaques
- While changing the awards to something else was discussed, it was determined to keep things the same
- Beth Quillian and Linda DiPiano will connect to discuss shipment of plaques for the conference

ITEM NO. 9: Communications Report. Presented by Patty Allen, Communications Chair

- Blake Podhajsky provided a quick update since Patty Allen was not on the call
- He expects the next Balance Wheel to go out next week
- The latest podcast by Tim Akimoff is finished and should be live any time

ITEM NO. 10: Scholarships Report. Presented by Joanne Martonik, Scholarships Committee Chair

- There were 17 applications- two were not applicable
- Provided the 10 scholarships to applicants who have never attended before
- All applicants have been notified. Those who won a scholarship were given a passcode to register without paying the fee. Joanne Martonik is collecting hotel room dates needed and will provide Linda DiPiano
- RBFF's funding for the new fiscal year has not yet been received. It is unclear when, or even if, they will receive the funding. If they do not, Joanne Martonik, nor anyone from RBFF will be able to attend the conference.
- Someone else on site will need to manage the scholarship meeting on the first day of the conference
- She will also need someone to take over her Secretary duties on site
- Joanne Martonik and Blake Podhajsky will connect to go over these details

ITEM NO. 11: Auction and Fundraising Report. Presented by Jason Harmon, Auction and Fundraising Committee Chair

- Blake Podhajsky commented since Jason Harmon was not on the call
- He encouraged all board members to send some sort of auction item to the conference
- Linda DiPiano said she and Jason Harmon have been in touch regarding the auction process

ITEM NO. 12: Multi-State Grants Report. Presented by Jenifer Wisniewski, Grants Committee Chair

- The grants are all in process. RI is presenting on their work from one of the grants at the R3 Symposium
- It is unclear if the multi-state conservation grants will happen in 2026 but she is going to prepare to submit for grants; especially to continue the grant that provides 50K to states for marketing.
- She has spent time writing the grants while also working for NDA. She is hoping the 5K donation from the Sportsmen's Alliance could go to NDA so that they are not paying her to write grants for ACI
- Moving forward this will not be an issue. She will write in her work as "grant development fees" into the proposals
- **MOTION:** Judy Stokes Weber moved to approve sending the 5K donation to NDA for Jenifer Wisniewski's grant writing time. Jane Gustafson seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
- Jenifer Wisniewski said that NDA can send ACI an invoice and Judy Stokes Weber will write the check for this.

ITEM NO 13: New Business. Presented by Blake Podhajsky, President

- Reminder that there is another Board Meeting in June, prior to the conference

ITEM NO. 14: Adjournment

- **MOTION:** Brent Drinkut moved to adjourn the meeting. Jane Gustafson seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Joanne Martonik

Submitted by Joanne Martonik, Secretary



Treasurer's Report

April 30, 2025

Dear Colleagues,

This is the April 2025 Treasurer's Report with check register entries to date since our last report for 2 accounts. Please feel free to ask any questions you may have about the entries.

Activities of note:

- We are winding down our web hosting relationship with Hosting4Less as the new website design project includes hosting. New web host expected to take over July 1. We will confirm this at our May board meeting to avoid loss of old site before new site is open for business.
- After a board vote, we transferred the seed money for the 2026 Oklahoma event to the ACI conference account and sent a check for the deposit to hold the hotel that Blake has secured.
- Dan and I continue to meet in preparation for the transition. I expect to stay on to assist Dan Dennison as he sets up accounts and conducts the annual invoicing beginning in August; file our form 990 with the IRS; finalize the conference report; and close out the accounts in Vermont following that assessment.
- Upcoming expenses -
 - Expect to receive the annual Awards Force invoice in June (appx. \$5500)
 - Expect 2 more installments for the website design work (\$5125)

It continues to be an honor and great pleasure to serve as ACI's treasurer.

Sincerely,

Judy

Judy Stokes Weber, M.S., APR
ACI treasurer

5.7.25

ACI operations account:

MAR						
Debit Card	3.1.25	Libsym		\$15.00	\$81,804.43	x
Debit Card	3.22.25	The UPS Store - docs sent to Blake		\$76.00	\$81,728.43	x
Wire transf	3.24.25	EverBank CD matured		\$27,525.37	\$109,253.80	x
Wire transf	3.24.25	Wire transfer fee		\$20.00	\$109,233.80	x
Debit Card	3.26.25	3 months of Web hosting (expires 6/30/25)		\$89.85	\$109,143.95	x
APR						
Debit card	4.1.25	Libsym		\$15.00	\$109,128.95	X
10343	4.2.25	Focused Image Inc Payment#2		\$2,562.50	\$106,566.45	
Transfer	4.11.25	To Conf Acct for OK ACI 2026 Conference hotel		\$10,000.00	\$96,566.45	X
10344	4.14.25	Treasurer Stipend JSW		\$1,250.00	\$95,316.45	X
MAY						
Debit card	5.1.25	Libsym		\$15.00	\$95,301.45	
Donation	5.7.25	Sportsmen's Alliance		\$5,000.00	\$100,301.45	

FY 2025 ACI Conference Check Register

Transaction ID	Date	Description	Amount	Balance	Balanced
	11.14.24	Beginning Balance		\$50.00	x
NOV					
Debit	11.16.24	Checks for new account	\$16.95	\$33.05	x
DEC					
Transfer	12.2.24	Transfer NJ conference seed money	10,000.00	\$10,033.05	x balanced
JAN		no transactions			x balanced
FEB		no transactions			x balanced
MAR					
1001	3.21.25	David Shiffman Consulting, Inc.	\$3,000.00	\$7,033.05	x balanced
APR					
Transfer	4.10.25	Fordson Hotel Deposit OK ACI 2026	\$10,000	\$17,033.05	X
1002	4.11.25	Fordson Hotel Deposit OK ACI 2026	\$10,000	\$7,033.05	X
Debit card	4.11.25	Express Mail, US Post Office, OK deposit	\$31.40	\$7,001.65	X Balanced
MAY					
Stripe	5.5.25	First transfer- registrations/sponsors	\$7,991.50	\$14,993.15	

Note: the 5.5 conference sponsorships and registrations deposit is net of Whova and Stripe fees.