MINUTES
Association for Conservation Information Board Meeting
Virtual Conference Call ● January 14, 2026 ● 11 a.m.-12 p.m. CDT

ITEM NO. 1: Meeting Called to Order

ITEM NO. 2: Roll Call

☐ Aaron Meier (NV, President)
✓ Linda DiPiano (NJ, Vice President)
✓ Lance Cherry (CAHSS, Secretary)
✓ Dan Dennison (HI, Treasurer)
✓ Blake Podhajsky (OK, Immediate Past President)
✓ Brent Drinkut (IN, Board- 26)
☐ Bobby Jones (NV, Board- 26)
✓ Beth Quillian (OR, Board-26)
✓ Jonathan Carlucci (NJ, Board- 27)
✓ Jane Gustafson (NE, Board- 27)
✓ Devon Lindley (Choctaw Nation Wildlife Conservation-28)
☐ Natalie Andes (GA Department of Natural Resources-28)
✓ Katie Paey (NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife-28)
    ✓ Jenifer Wisniewski (National Deer Association, Grants Committee Chair)
    ☐ Jason Harmon (TN, Fundraising/Auction Committee Chair)
    ☐ Micah Holmes (OK, Ways and Means Committee Chair)
✓ Patty Allen (AFWA, Communications Committee Chair)

ITEM NO. 3: Approval of Minutes

- November 12, 2025 Board Meeting minutes

Jane Gustafson made a Motion to approve the Minutes from the November 12, 2025 Board Meeting to be approved without changes. Jenifer Wisniewski seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

ITEM NO. 4: Opening Remarks
Presented by Linda DiPiano, Vice President

Linda shared that Aaron Meier had reached out to Tristana Bickford about filling the vacant board position in December, but had not yet received a response. The Board discussed consideration of Mischelle Diaz from Texas for the vacant seat, noting Texas's commitment to host the conference in two years.

ITEM NO. 5: Treasurer's Report
Presented by Dan Dennison, Treasurer

- Treasurer's Report

Dan presented the Treasurer's Report, highlighting issues with tracking membership dues and billing contacts. He requested help in reaching out to delinquent members and suggested updating the registration process to include billing contact information. Updates on membership balances and plans to improve communication with state contacts were also shared.

***Action Item:** Board requested Lance Cherry send membership list from website archive to all Board members.

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

Blake provided an update on the conference planning, highlighting that the agenda is 75-80% complete with two keynote speakers confirmed: Andy Austin, an outdoor photographer, and Ashley Coffey, an AI and tech consultant. They have secured two paid sponsors at the $2,500 level and have about $7,500 worth of auction items.

Blake shared updates on potential excursions, including the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum, First Americans Museum , OKC Whitewater Center, and a possible team-building activity at the Oklahoma City boathouse during the 2028 Olympics, though timing might be challenging due to worldwide competitions. Additional discussion was had about the potential need to charge attendees $10-20 for excursions.

Blake also discussed swag bag items and reached out to Osprey for backpacks, while Linda offered to mail auction materials to Blake and mentioned bringing save-the-date cards for the NEAFLA conference in West Virginia, with Patricia suggesting distributing around 150 cards at the North American Conference. The board discussed conference registration timing, aiming for an early March launch, and Blake noted that scholarship program details should be finalized at the same time.

ITEM NO. 7: Communications Report
Presented by Patty Allen, Communications Chair

Patty shared the Balance Wheel release was occurring following the meeting and highlighted recent updates to the website, including the Awards page. Patty requested Board approval for the implementation of a button tool for the website.

Linda DiPiano made a Motion to approved a $25 purchase for website button functionality and authorization for Patty Allen to proceed with the payment. Jane Gustafson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Linda noted that the President or Vice President can approve purchases at this level without Board vote, but accepted the vote as Board concurrence in the purchase being important and needed.

ITEM NO. 8: Awards Committee Report
Presented by Beth Quillian, Awards Committee Co-Chair

Beth announced that Devon Lindley has accepted the role as the Awards Committee Co-Chair.

The ACI awards platform opened for submissions on January 14, with a deadline of April 2. Beth requested help finding new group chairs for magazine, social media, audio, video, and graphics/photo categories.

ITEM NO. 9: Auction and Fundraising Report
Presented by Jason Harmon, Auction and Fundraising Committee Chair

No report presented.

ITEM NO. 10: Scholarships Committee Report
Presented by Vacant
No report presented.

ITEM NO. 11: Grants Committee Report
Presented by Jenifer Wisniewski, Grants Committee Chair

Jenifer stated ACI did not receive any grants this year; therefore, there is nothing to report.

ITEM NO. 12: Ways and Means Report
Presented by Micah Holmes, Ways and Means Committee Chair

No report presented.

ITEM NO. 13: New Business
Presented by Linda DiPiano, President

No report presented.

ITEM NO. 14: Adjournment

Jane Gustafson made a Motion to adjourn the meeting. Jenifer Wisniewski seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Submitted by Lance Cherry, Secretary

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