



MINUTES

Association for Conservation Information Board Meeting

In Person (State Boardroom) – July 21, 2025 – 4 p.m.- 5 p.m. EST

ITEM NO. 1: Meeting Called to Order

ITEM NO. 2: Roll Call

Blake Podhajsky (OK, President)
Aaron Meier (NV, Vice President)
Judy Stokes Weber (VT, Treasurer)
Linda DiPiano (NJ, Board-24)
Patty Allen (AFWA, Communications Committee Chair)
Dan Dennison (HI, Board- 25)
Brent Drinkut (IN, Board- 26)
Bobby Jones (NV, Board- 26)
Chris Martin (WY, Awards Committee Co-chair)
Cory Chandler (TX, Board-27)
Lance Cherry (CAHSS, Immediate Past President)
Jane Gustafson (NE, Board- 27)
Jenifer Wisniewski (National Deer Association, Grants Committee Chair)
Jason Harmon (TN, Fundraising/Auction Committee Chair)

Unable to Attend:

Joanne Martonik (RBFF, Secretary)
Faith Heaton Jolley (UT, Board)
Beth Quillian (OR, Board-26)
Jonathan Carlucci (NJ, Board- 27)
Micah Holmes (OK, Ways and Means Committee Chair)

ITEM NO. 3: Approval of Minutes

- May 2025 Board Meeting minutes attached
- **MOTION:** Dan Dennison moved to approve the June 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 thanked everyone for making it to the conference and spoke about how nice it was to meet in person.

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

- Linda DiPiano reported that switching to the Whova Event Management platform has been very successful and reaffirmed that using Whova instead of using an outside event management company was the correct call.
- Linda DiPiano reported a total of 107 participants had registered for the 2025 ACI Conference.
- A total of \$27,000 was raised in sponsorship money for the conference. Linda DiPiano stated that soliciting sponsors was more difficult than usual in the current political climate.
- The plaques for the awards night are scheduled to arrive tonight.
- One speaker had to cancel last minute, but a replacement had already been found.

ITEM NO. 6: Treasurer's Report. Presented by Judy Stokes Weber, Treasurer

- Judy Stokes Weber spoke about how this was her final conference as ACI treasurer as she is stepping down at the conclusion of this year's conference.

- Judy Stokes Weber reported that she has been working with Dan Dennison (HI) to replace her as the new treasurer after the conference. She stated that she has been training Dan and getting him up to speed for much of the year in preparation.
- Judy Stokes Weber reviewed the 2026 ACI budget with the board. Edits were made regarding website payments and increases in awards costs.
- **MOTION:** Chris Martin moved to approve the 2026 ACI Budget with changes to the website and awards. Jane Gustafson seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

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

- Patty Allen reported that continued work on the new ACI website is going well, and that the contractor was still working on adding additional pages.
- Lance Cherry reported that he has finished archiving the previous ACI website.
- Blake Podhajsky brought up adding a member directory to the new site.
- Patty Allen added that a grant information for the new site was forthcoming as information from the Federal level became available.

ITEM NO. 8: Membership Report. Presented by Aaron Meier, Vice President

- Aaron Meier reported that there was nothing new to report from the previous board meeting other than three new individual members and a possibility of bringing Delaware back into ACI.
- Aaron Meier stated that he would present a full membership report at the upcoming business meeting.

ITEM NO. 9: Awards Committee Report. Presented by Chris Martin, Awards Committee Co-chair

- Chris Martin reported no major updates from the previous board meeting.
- The contest received a total of 492 entries.
- Aaron Meier will host the awards night.
- Chris Martin mentioned that judge recruitment continues to be a challenge.

ITEM NO. 10: Auction and Fundraising Report. Presented by Jason Harmon, Fundraising/Auction Committee Chair

- Jason Harmon reported that several items had been donated, and more items were arriving at the hotel before the auction.
- Jason Harmon mentioned that donations had been lighter this year than the previous couple of years and asked for help in brainstorming ideas for next year's auction.

ITEM NO. 11: Nominating Committee. Presented by Blake Podhajsky, President

- Blake Podhajsky mentioned that this was a big year with several seats on the board opening up along with the president, vice president and secretary positions all becoming available.
- Blake Podhajsky assigned Jenifer Wisniewski, Bobby Jones and Dan Dennison to the Nominating Committee and asked that they give their recommendations at the upcoming Business Meeting.

ITEM NO. 12: Auditing Committee. Presented by Blake Podhajsky, President

- Blake Podhajsky assigned Cory Chandler, Brent Drinkut, and Jane Gustafson to the Auditing Committee and asked that they meet with ACI Treasurer Judy Stokes Weber to review the end of the year financial report.

ITEM NO. 13: Scholarships Committee Report. Presented by Blake Podhajsky, President

- Blake Podhasky reported on behalf of Scholarship Committee Chair Joanne Martonik, who was unable to make it to the Board Meeting.
- Blake Podhasky stated that a total of 10 scholarships were awarded, including nine first time attendees.
- Scholarship recipients will meet following the board meeting and will be required to write on speakers presenting at the conference for the Balance Wheel newsletter.
- Patty Allen mentioned requiring photos of each recipients to include with their stories in the newsletter.

ITEM NO. 14: Grants Committee Report. Presented by Jenifer Wisniewski, Grants Committee Chair

- Jenifer Wisniewski reported that she had no news to report regarding possible ACI grants and that she was waiting to hear what the US Fish and Wildlife Service had decided on ACI's application.

ITEM NO. 15: Future Conference Report. Presented by Blake Podhajsky, President

- Blake Podhajsky reported that next year's ACI Conference will held in Oklahoma City, OK. The hotel has already been locked down and he will give a presentation and official invitation at the Business Meeting.
- The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission will host the 2027 ACI Conference with Texas slotted for 2028.
- Blake Podhajsky stated that he is in the process of building a conference committee that will help the host state each year with specifics.

ITEM NO. 16: New Business. Presented by Blake Podhajsky, President

- Blake Podhajsky discussed the possibility of individuals representing ACI and the annual Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies conferences.
- Blake Podhajsky and Cory Chandler (TX) both mentioned that they would be attending the next AFWA conference and could run an ACI table.

ITEM NO. 16: New Business

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

Submitted by Aaron Meier, Vice President