Hello. I’m Suzanne Davis, and I’m so happy to be able to talk with you today. As your elected Vice President, I have the privilege of being the program chair for our annual conference. This has been an interesting year for our annual meeting, to say the least.

So, we were supposed to be in Salt Lake City right now, as you may remember, and I want to start by acknowledging that messaging and notification about our planned, in-person meeting this year was difficult and frustrating. As I’m sure you’re now aware, we were operating under legal constraints that governed both our negotiations about the meeting and how we could communicate about it. This was necessary to fulfill our fiduciary responsibility to AIC and ensure that our organization’s financial viability wasn’t compromised. I want to apologize for any stress this caused members who were unsure about what to do with their travel plans, and I want to thank you for your patience as we navigated an unprecedented situation.

As you know, revenue from the annual meeting is important to our organization’s financial health, and I know you probably have questions about this. To give you a brief update: by negotiating a new, 2024 date for a meeting in SLC, we avoided the huge financial penalties we would have paid if we’d cancelled outright. But it’s also the case that other annual meeting expenditures had already occurred, and could not be entirely refunded, and – of course – we knew that our registration numbers might decline as well. For these reasons, we had an early forecasted loss of $60-100K on the meeting but, thanks to strong registrations, this is currently projected to be around $45-50K. We won’t have a final answer on this for a while, since registrations are still continuing. Speaking of which,

Our conference schedule is now online, on our annual meeting webpage, it’s pretty easy to find on our website, and I invite you to check it out - You can still register. The fee is $175, which is half the amount of our least expensive, early-bird, in-person rate. The price reflects the cost savings of hosting the meeting online, and also acknowledges all the lost opportunities for face to face interaction, while - at the same time - helping us minimize losses to the organization. The AIC annual meeting is 48 years old this year, and it’s been kind of a hard year. This was our first time grappling with a global pandemic. It has been a new and largely unwelcome experience, but we are excited about our virtual meeting which began yesterday.

Here is a snapshot of the schedule, I took this from our website, just with the snipping tool on my computer. We have about 100 hours of programming, so you just see a little bit of it right here, and you’ll notice that we’re scheduling content differently from a traditional conference. We’ll be holding sessions in two hour time slots most days of the week, Monday through Thursday, because we felt this would be more manageable for most of our audience, speakers, and for the staff who are making all this work. It will feel less like a traditional conference, and more like an ongoing webinar series, but the big bonus is that we’ll be providing great content, every week, for the next three months. If you’re not able to attend a session live, most will be recorded and you’ll be able watch them later on demand. I hope you’ll look forward to this and be inspired by the work of your colleagues.

I want to quickly highlight staff contributions to the meeting this year. Every year, all AIC and FAIC staff pitch in on the meeting regardless of their normal areas of responsibility. This is a really small group of people, as I think you can see, who make an amazing amount of stuff happen. This year they’re working
differently and more collaboratively than ever before, and I want to specially recognize a few in
collection to this year’s meeting. First, Ruth Seyler, AIC’s meetings and advocacy director, whose name
you see in purple here, made an incredibly agile switch from hosting an in-person meeting to running
one online. Tiffani Emig and Sarah Saetren, whose names are in bold, are the in-office gurus for the
virtual meeting software we’re using; and Eryl Wentworth, our executive director, among all the other
things that she does, worked very closely with this entire team of amazing people to transform our 2020
meeting into a vibrant virtual conference. My thanks also to Kate Lee and Bonnie Naugle, who are
working all the tech for this business meeting.

6. Slide: 47th Mtg
Our annual meetings are only possible because of the contributions of our members, who come
together to exchange knowledge and share their work and ideas. A big thank you to all our speakers and
attendees this year. We’re making a big switch this year, and I’m very grateful for your patience and
your courage as we do that.

7. Slide: Program Committees
Finally, the content for the meeting is solicited, reviewed, and organized by a lot of members who
volunteer in leadership positions. Network and specialty group programming, just in case you don’t
know, is organized by those groups’ executive officers. So if you like what you see and hear in those
programs, please thank you officers in those groups. We also have two program committees who review
submissions for the posters session and for the plenary or general sessions. I’m grateful to all these
members for their hard work, and I’ve got their names here on the screen.

8. Slide: Thanks
If we were in person, I’d ask you to applaud now to thank all the people I’ve just talked about, who
make our conferences such a success. But since this virtual platform isn’t conducive to applause, I
encourage to express gratitude directly; so over the course of the meeting, if you notice something you
really like – please reach out and thank the person or people who made it possible by sending a quick
email or note.

9. Slide: Jacksonville Hyatt Regency
Moving on to our 2021 meeting next year in Jacksonville, FL. Normally what I do here is to show slides of
the beautiful city and venue, and we’ll definitely do that in a couple of minutes. But before we have a
nice time imagining ourselves on a sunny river terrace,

10. Slide: Hyatt w COVID
I want to acknowledge that COVID-19 will most likely still be active at this time next year, and that this
creates a lot of uncertainty for us. The health of our members is our biggest concern, and over the next
year AIC will be continuously monitoring the situation. We are planning to meet in-person as long as it is
safe. As necessary, we will post all updates to the Annual Meeting webpage and message out to
members about the meeting through our member community.

11. Slide: Virtual Meeting
This year, of course, we are developing our capacity to host virtual content, and this is something we will
evolve, as needed, as way to host and enhance future annual meetings and promote the work of our
members. To help us in this endeavor, I invite you to think critically about your experience of the virtual
meeting this year and share with me what you think works well, and what you think could be improved
or developed further.
12. Slide: Hyatt
But if everything goes well, we’ll be here in May of 2021, at the Hyatt Regency in Jacksonville, FL. I went to college in north Florida and I can tell you that this is a really beautiful part of the country. If you’re able to attend the meeting, I think you will really like it.

13. Slide: Cummer gallery
There are good museums in Jacksonville, like the Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens, which you see on screen and where we can apparently enjoy some wine while right next to the artwork in the galleries, which is every conservator’s dream, I know.

14. Slide: Cummer garden
As you might guess from the name of this museum, the Cummer also has beautiful gardens. And Jacksonville many other cultural resources as well, including a Natural History Museum, and we’ll also be planning tours to nearby cities.

15. Slide: St. Augustine
Including St. Augustine, FL, which you see pictured here, as well as Savannah, GA, and Gainesville, FL which is the home of the University of Florida and great conservation labs.

16. Slide: Sunset
If that’s not all attractive enough, this part of Florida has beautiful freshwater springs and beaches, and Jacksonville has the largest urban park system in the United States. This photo come from a park that’s actually inside the city limits. I hope to see you there next year, and please feel free to be in touch with me at any time about our annual meeting. Thank you.