

AERC Board of Directors Midyear Meeting Minutes, Virginia

10/21/06

Prior to the meeting John H. Parke renewed the Board discussion of AERC's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The discussion provided valuable input to subsequent discussions on AERC's future directions and allocation of resources.

Meeting called to order by President Stagg Newman at 8:32 am, EST

Houskeeping:

In attendance: Stagg Newman, Mike Maul, Patti Pizzo, Jennifer Nice, Connie Caudill, Joyce Mocilan, Joe Long, Jan Stevens, Stan Eichelberger, Tom Dean, Terry Woolley Howe, John H. Parke, Susan Kasemeyer, Joe Schoech, Roger Taylor, Jeff Trinkle, Barry Waitte, Kim Fuess, Jerry Fruth, Laura Hayes, Dinah Rojek, C. Mike Tomlinson.

Excusals:

- Midyear Meeting. Gail Williams due to a family emergency, Robert Ribley had a work conflict, Nick Warhol had his plane flight canceled. Motion passes unanimously.
- Oct 2nd phone meeting: A motion was made to excuse Stan Eichelberger and Mike Jaffe from the October 2nd meeting due to a family emergency and schedule problem. Motion passes unanimously.

Motion by Nick Warhol to approve minutes of the Oct. 2nd phone meeting, motion passes unanimously.

Stagg reminds everyone to be sure to sign and submit their conflict of interest statements and return to Kathleen.

Stagg speaks about the objectives for the meeting.

- The main focus is the long range plans of the AERC, while dealing with today's operational tasks.
- A focus for this meeting will be Marketing and membership due to our net growth rate of zero this year.
- Litigation risks
- New areas of protest and grievance and drug testing policy.

Committee Reports:

Trails committee: Jerry F. Jerry reported on his recent visit to Washington, D.C. He also reported that he and Dr. Phillip Ottinger will be putting together a ride with the BLM in Susanville, CA. Jerry is also working to secure a permanent site for the Trail Masters classes in the West.

Education Committee: Dinah R gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding the ongoing plans of the committee including the mentoring program, seminar and briefing material available for use by members for clinics and briefings at rides, and upgrading of the educational section of the AERC website. Stagg mentions that in his term as President there has been much work completed by the Education committee to date, especially the education material available on the web site.

Mike Tomlinson reports that some riders/horse owners from the National Championship fifty mile ride asked the board to present their opinion regarding the 50-mile distance and the fact that they felt it was inappropriate to have a vet check at the 49 mile mark. Stagg Newman had Mike Tomlinson met with the group and present their views to the board. The group requested a sense of the board on this issue. The board discussed the issue and concluded in a sense of the board vote that at this stage it would be inappropriate for the Board to intervene in a ride management decision. As background AERC gives ride management the discretion to determine where to place vet checks given local conditions. For safety reasons related to a tragic event many years ago and given where paved roads are the Old Dominion ride management has always had a vet check at the place in question. In the future Board should will examine the placement of vet checks at the AERC Championship ride and also ensure that this information is available to riders well ahead of time.

Barry Waitte advised an official request for sanctioning of the Great Santa Fe Trail Horse Race Endurance Ride has been resubmitted. The Ride Management has complied with the recommendations made by those in attendance at the in-person meeting. Regional sanctioning directors Roger Taylor and Jennifer Nice support the sanctioning provided appropriate insurance separate from the normal AERC policy is obtained. Sanctioning Committee Chair Susan Kasemeyer indicated that her committee had no objections to special sanctioning. Ride officials have agreed to the independent insurance. Insurance Committee Chair Roger Taylor will correspond with Diane Leshner of Equisure to clarify the AERC is properly protected. Sanctioning of the ride is postponed until the motion can be reworked to reflect the discussion.

Stagg makes a quick announcement that no motions will be entertained without the proper motion form being filled out in advance.

International Committee: Kathy B, AERC International Chair, provided an update of International's 2007 plans including AERC convention plans for two speakers, Becky Hart and Robin Groves. Kathy mentioned the 07 Pan Am's and European Championship rides. She mentioned the selection process for the 2008 World championship ride in Malaysia or England. Stagg thanked Kathy for her efforts and for providing two speakers that will help draw people to the convention.

Junior Committee: Jan S, Chair, presented a motion for approval of Kirsten Kimbler as the USEF Youth Council Representative for AERC for a 2-year term. Motion passed unanimously.

National Championship Committee: Connie C (for Robert R) reports that the group has developed a contract for the 2007 championship ride that clearly states AERC's requirements and expectations. This contract will be forwarded to ride manager Stephanie Teeter shortly for signature.

Governance Group:

- John Parke, Chair, advised that his group is working on rewriting the AERC rules, due to how ambiguous and unclear they are. This is a large project due to the amount of work required. The rewrite should make the rules much more clear and consistent across the AERC. John reports the style of our rules are to legalistic, and need to be more clear, and speak differently, to make it easier to understand and apply. The project will begin in 07, and may not be enacted until 08 or later, but it will be done right.
- The Board discussed the memorandum from Equine Canada that informed AERC that the Canadian government is requiring Canada to form an organization somewhat similar to USEF for endurance riding in Canada. Equine Canada wishes to work with AERC to develop a constructive relationship. Kathy Brunjes, Mike Tomlinson and John Parke will work together on this issue along with the many other committees that may be affected, report regularly to the BOD, and develop analysis and recommendations for consideration.
- Protest and Grievance process and rules: John Parke discussed the revision of the process and rules, most specifically Rule 14. John will provide the current ideas for rewrite of this section in writing to the Board for review and response.

Lunch break for one hour – meeting resumed at 1:09 p.m.

Welfare of the Horse Committee: Laura Hayes, Chair, advised the committee is working on some proposed new rules pertaining to the age of horses for BOD and membership consideration. (Age of horse, post ride evaluation time from 60 to 30 minutes, others) The Welfare of the Horse Committee is working with the Vet Committee and will report in the future regarding their findings before submitting any motions. An article will be written for EN on the proposals for member feedback. The WHC continues to be quite active in quietly counseling riders as well as investigating and reporting on any fatalities. The BOD heartily thanks the WHC for this work.

Membership Committee: Jan S, Chair, presented a PowerPoint presentation regarding the committee's ideas on membership retention and plans for a future membership campaign. Stagg thanked Jan for taking over leadership of this group. Membership turnover is still a

problem that needs addressing right away. Jan presents several ideas, proposals, and time frames on how to attract new and retain current members, both of which are critical to the success of the AERC.

Marketing Group: Barry Waitte, Group Leader, gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding AERC brand marketing and redesign of AERC web site. Jenni Smith will be heading up the project. Three audiences are targeted- existing members, new members, and the world at large. The goal is to make the design of the site more user friendly and easy to use. The other main idea is to enable the web site to be revenue generating. This work shows great promise for moving AERC forward and obtaining additional members for the future. This work closely supports what the Membership Committee will be doing.

Past President's Committee: Dr. Matthew Mackay-Smith, Former President and AERC Hall of Fame member, addressed the Board regarding the future of AERC and endurance riding, expanding beyond his article in EN. Matthew presented many provocative ideas for the Board to consider. These will be presented in EN for the membership.

Convention Committee: Kathleen presented an update regarding convention 2007. Plans are progressing nicely – great speakers are lined up and it looks promising for a great trade show. These plans will be reported in EN for the membership.

Marketing Communications Committee: Jennifer Nice, Chair, presented her committee's report, providing ad samples and a campaign proposal for the coming year. The tag line is Your Trails, Your Horse, Your Sport, Your Way. The BOD greeted her ideas enthusiastically. Jennifer described how she and her committee are working to write and place articles in the equine publications that have the readership from which we are likely to recruit new members. Jennifer described cost effectively using our advertising budget to complement these articles. Jennifer has the go ahead for the new advertising campaign.

Sponsorship Committee: Barry Waitte gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding the AERC Sponsorship Program and offered many suggestions for updating the program and offering more detailed perks to proposed sponsors, including a standard sponsor contract, a consistent approval process, and an account management program. The two main areas the group is working on are identifying sponsorship levels and the components involved with each level.

Veterinary Committee: Melissa Ribley, Chair.

- Melissa gave the Board an update of the Veterinary Certification Program and introduced the revision of Rule 13 (drug testing) with the Board. She introduced John Parke for further discussion of the revision of this very complicated rule. John used a very well structured PowerPoint presentation to guide the BOD through a discussion of this very complex matter. John advised a re-write will be

presented in more detail at future meetings and presented to the membership through EN. The goal is to have a proposal for consideration by the time of the convention BOD meetings.

- Melissa gives a brief update on the recommendation of the outsourcing of the drug testing to USEF. Once the drug rule is in place in 12-18 months it will be easy to transition to the new plan.
- Melissa describes a motion to insure that the present drug testing funds remain in the drug testing program, and not be channeled into other areas. There are questions about the fees: old or future? Stagg asks for a sense of the board on how they would vote, and asks that the motion be clarified for a future vote. Modification: Stagg asks Melissa to table the issue until the next meeting.
- Melissa reports on the volunteer vet certification program. There are currently over 80 certified Vets that have completed the exam. The feedback has been 100% positive.

New Business:

Barry Waitte presents a motion from the sanctioning committee regarding sanctioning of the Great Santa Fe Trail Horse Race Endurance Ride and the appropriate insurance. The insurance solution may take too long to resolve before the ride needs to be sanctioned. Motion passes unanimously.

Stagg Newman presented a mid-year report on the state of AERC. A written version of this report will be in EN.

- Business of the AERC- member growth has become static, but work is progressing on growth.
- Financials- we are in a positive cash flow situation now, and we need to think about what to do with the income.
- Governance- we are making improvements. P&G committee, rules re-writes. The BOD and committees are working well.
- Services to the membership: Research program has been stalled, but needs to be brought back and looked at, since it is part of our charter.
- Trails, education, technical areas, vet committee, welfare of horse, all doing very well. The office continues to operate superbly.

The BOD went into brief executive session.

Meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm

The BOD then attended dinner at the AERC Championship Saturday night dinner.