

## **AERC Board convention meeting minutes -March 7, 2019**

Acting President Monica Chapman called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

Board members present were Nick Kohut DVM, Bob Marshall DVM, Marcia Hefker-Miles, Connie Caudill, Heather Reynolds, Jan Stevens, Mollie Krumlaw-Smith, Angie Mikkelson, Terry Woolley Howe, Lisa Schneider, Michael Campbell, Susan Kasemeyer, Mike Maul, Vance Stine, Troy Eckard, Jessica Cobbley, Naomi Preston, Tonya Stroud-Oaks, Mary Howell, John Parke, Paul Sidio, Olin Balch DVM and Christoph Schork. Also present were incoming directors Nina Bomar, Tim Worden and the Executive Director Kathleen Henkel.

A motion to accept the agenda was made by Olin Balch DVM, seconded by Marcia Hefker-Miles. Motion passed

Connie Caudill made a motion to replace NE Director Mary Howell, who will resign after the meeting on Sunday, with Dawn Hilliard at that time. Seconded by Tonya Stroud-Oaks. Motion passed

Nick Kohut DVM made a motion to approve the 2/11/19 Board meeting minutes. Jan Stevens seconded. Motion passed

Connie Caudill made a motion to excuse Andrew Gerhard from the meeting, Nick Kohut DVM seconded. Motion passed

Kathleen Henkel gave the statistical report;

Membership as of 3/5/18 3854

Membership as of 3/4/19 3529

Sanctioning fees as of 3/1/18 \$10,205

Sanctioning fees as of 3/1/19 \$11,760

Rider fees as of 3/1/18 \$8,958

Rider fees as of 3/1/19 \$6,491

New members as of 3/5/18 273

New members as of 3/5/19 227

Monica Chapman reported that Kathleen Henkel has signed the USEF/AERC operating agreement and the Drug Testing agreement. Both will terminate on December 1, 2019. The Board had voted to sign the affiliate agreement in the January meeting to be terminated by December 1, 2019. This is just an operational agreement. AERC is no longer the USEF affiliate. This agreement will give the ride managers and riders time to prepare for the termination and Jay Mero DVM and the vet Committee time to make alternative arrangements for the drug testing program.

Monica Chapman gave an update on the status of Safe Sport in relationship to AERC. With the decision to terminate AERC's relationship with USEF our obligations have changed in regards to Safe Sport. We are no longer required to have a system up and running by 7/31/2019. That was a date USEF gave to its affiliates. Lianne Dorian, Jan Stevens, and Monica Chapman have had conference calls with the US Center for Safe Sport. AERC will no longer be held to the same standards as National Governing Bodies. It is in our interest to have a policy in regard to safe sport to protect AERC. Over the next months we will be developing a policy and have it ready to roll out at the mid-year meeting.

Monica Chapman led a discussion on ideas to have open meetings that would be easily accessible for any of our members. Currently any member can attend the AERC Board meetings but would have to attend at the AERC office in Auburn, California. The board would like to be more transparent to the members and by having the open meetings easier to attend.

The Board members set up Zoom, (similar to “Go to Meeting”) on their phones and computers. This is not a free call unless you have unlimited long distance. Marcia Hefker-Miles has set up a free trial of this program that the Board members will test in April. There is a fee for AERC each time it is accessed but it is minimal. This is also a program that committee meeting can use. If the call is under 40 minutes there is no charge. Hopefully the meetings will be easily accessible for all members and up and running in the next couple of months.

Terry Woolley Howe presented the Competitions Committees’ motion- Establishing 40- and 45-mile rides. This motion was also discussed during last year’s Board meeting. Terry Woolley Howe said that some rides don’t have the trail system that supports 50-mile rides, or they may not have the terrain to allow for a 50-mile ride to be completed in the time frame. This motion would allow sanctioning of 40 and 45 mile rides to be counted as endurance miles. She realizes that this would take a bylaw change in order to enact the rule but feels it is valuable and that the members would be willing to vote for this bylaw change. The feedback from the committees and Board members were mixed.

The comment from the Research Committee was that it may help riders with their pacing skills if the mileage with accurate reported.

Nick Kohut DVM complemented Terry Woolly Howe for trying to come up with solutions but felt it wouldn’t solve the problem of having short rides and may help in making them shorter. Others felt distances under 45 miles should fall under LD rides. Many felt it was a good concept, but felt it wouldn’t help in accurate reporting of mileage. While not in support of this motion, Marcia Hefker-Miles stated that there are some great 42 mile rides and would like to see some 40 mile pioneer rides. She agreed something needs to be done in order to have accurate reported mileage. Christoph Schork stated that he can see more work for the ride managers with this motion, adding another best condition award for the middle distance but thought it was a good discussion. He felt it may be best to just call all distances endurance and put them all in the same category. Olin Balch DVM also thanked Terry Woolly Howe but feels we need more than what this motion is offering. Paul Sidio stated that if a ride manager can’t measure 50 miles then they won’t be able to measure 40 miles either. John Parke stated that in the old days no one had instruments to measure miles but now since we have the gps we think that some are short. He went on to say there would be a lot of rule and bylaw changes in order to incorporate this motion. He also stated that many are getting older and we need to find a way to attract millennials so we should talk to them. Mary Howell said that having the correct distance is the integrity of our sport and felt it was important. She also said that newer members like the shorter LD and Intro rides. Tonya Stroud-Oaks also commented that accurate mileage is the integrity of our sport and AERC should provide our ride managers with resources to help with measurement. She felt that 40 miles should be under the LD umbrella. Naomi Preston said to be kind to the ride managers, and we need to work with them to make their rides possible. Mike Maul likes the concept of the motions but doesn’t think it will change the strategy of the short rides. Terry Woolly Howe feels this is something that we will have to deal with. She doesn’t think it will be more complicated because ride managers will choose a distance that works for their trail system. She says we will lose members if we put the moderate mileage into the LD and not the endurance division. Lisa Schneider stated that a partial solution would be to allow stand alone LD rides. John Parke said that in ultra runs that times are adjusted according to terrain. Mollie Krumlaw-Smith remarked that if we are going to present this to the members for a bylaw change we need to have all the

details worked out first. The Board agreed that there is a need to come up with a good solution for Ride Managers to accurately measure their trail mileage.

After the thorough discussion, Terry Woolley Howe withdrew the motion. She will take it back to the Competitions Committee for further development and will bring back motion at a later date.

Nick Kohut made a motion for a 10-minute recess, second by Heather Reynolds. Motion passed

Meeting was called back to order by acting President Monica Chapman.

Connie Caudill presented a motion from the Sanctioning Committee that would reduce the sanctioning time frame requirement for Special Events and Special Qualification rides from the current requirement of 180 days to a 90 day requirement which is the same as all other rides. Some Board members were concerned about the special qualification rides with not allowing enough time to research them. They were in agreement on the Special Event rides (Pioneer Rides) having a reduce time frame. Connie Caudill said she would take it back to the Sanctioning Committee and bring back a revised motion that would be more inline with the discussion of the Board.

The Board reviewed the NW Membership Drive motion that was set in place last year to help the ride managers in the region. The motion had reduced non member fees at rides and supplied some completion awards in the NW region ride managers. Kathleen Henkel reported that from 6/1/18 through 11/30/18 there were 828 member and 175 day rider starts for the region. The loss of day member fees amounted \$2,450. The cost of the awards provided were \$4,359. For the previous year the NW region had 1084 member and 183 day rider starts. This was a 21% drop in ridership over the year. Even though the ride managers were thrilled to have the support, the NW directors Naomi Preston and Jessica Cobbley were not convinced it was super useful and didn't feel it was important to the Ride Managers. They felt their Ride Managers are under a lot of stress but think Ride Managers nationwide need support. But they felt things were looking up for AERC rides in the NW with more rides being AERC sanctioned this year and were hopeful it meant a turnaround in NW membership.

Vance Stine made a motion to discontinue the NW ride manager program, Heather second. John Parke stated there was already a motion in place so we just need to vote it up or down. Vance Stine withdrew the motion.

The Board vote to extend the program another year was conducted. One member abstained and all other members voted no. The program will be discontinued.

AERC Treasurer, Mollie Krumlaw-Smith reviewed the financials. She explained how to read the reports. She stated that she doesn't get too excited about the report until about May. Membership is determined by when people start riding. She hasn't had a chance to see how the separation from USEF will affect our finances. We will be working with USEF on drug testing and co sanctioning until November 30, 2019. Contrary to some rumors, she stated that funds from the AERC-I account will not be absorbed into the AERC general funds. Those funds would follow AERC-I.

Mollie Krumlaw-Smith has sent a copy of the budget to the Board but will send it out again for the new members or they can go back to the archives on the yahoo group site and locate them.

Kathleen Henkel reported that the Convention had met the quota on the rooms. Vance Stine stated the Endurance News was a big expense. He said some organizations use a publisher that helps keep the cost down and thought we should look into other options. Mollie Krumlaw-Smith said if we want to make a change that we should just go online with the magazine. Troy Eckard would like us to look into digital vs

printed with the Endurance News. Paul Sidio stated that member dues pay for this benefit. John Parke said that younger people want digital and so do advertisers. We need to poll our members to see what they prefer. Vance Stine said he would look into options.

Lisa Schneider gave an overview of the Strategic Plan and the reasons that we have it. It provides leadership and direction. The strategic plan is the guiding principal of the organization and should be driving AERC forward. It will keep us from getting mired down in the day to day issues.

Each group will have an implementation plan that will keep us on target. Board members are assigned to one of the following groups.

1. Membership
2. Finances
3. Trails
4. Education, Equine welfare
5. Governance- How we run the organization

We will work within our groups on Sunday's Board meeting. Each group will need to focus on defining the implementation plan and looking at key metrics to achieve. We need to be familiar with the plan and work on moving it forward. Committee chairs should read the implantation plan before their committee meeting.

Monica Chapman is still working on the BLM MOU. Things aren't moving as fast as we would like but it is being taken care of.

Monic Chapman requested board members to attend the hot topic sessions during the convention. Lisa Schneider thanked outgoing Board members for their service.

At 9:20 pm, Connie Caudill made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Nick Kohut DVM. Passed

Respectively submitted by

Connie Caudill