

## AERC Board Meeting minutes February 8, 2021

President Nick Kohut DVM called the meeting to order at 8:05 pm EST.

Board members present on the call were Olin Balch DVM, Michael Campbell, Connie Caudill, Monica Chapman, Jessica Cobbley, Chalice Coward, Gordie Cowan, Dawn Hilliard, Andrew Gerhard, Susan Kasemeyer, Nick Kohut DVM, Bob Marshall DVM, Mike Maul, Angie Mikkelson, , John Parke, Maribel Paulson, Naomi Preston,, Lisa Schneider, Christoph Schork, Mollie Krumlaw-Smith, Jan Stevens, Vance Stine, and Tim Worden. Also present were Executive Director Kathleen Henkel and Kyra DeMartini and Legal Committee member Barbara Baris. Also on the call were Laurie Underwood and Tami Rougeau.

Vance Stine made a motion to accept the agenda, seconded by Olin Balch DVM. Motion passed.

Connie Caudill made a motion to excuse Stephanie Palmer-DuRoss, Susan Garlinghouse DVM due to employment conflicts and Heather Reynolds due to a personal unexpected issue, seconded by Christoph Schork. Motion passed.

Vance Stine made a motion to approve the 1/11/21 conference call minutes, seconded by Susan Kasemeyer. Motion passed with one abstention.

The Statistical report was presented by Kathleen Henkel

Membership 2/5/2020	3160
Membership 2/5/2021	3013
Sanction fees 2/5/20	\$9760
Sanction fees 2/5/21	\$7910
Rider fees 2/5/20	\$1652
Rider fees 2/5/21	\$3610
New members as of 2/5/20	149
New members as of 2/5/21	187

Connie Caudill presented from the Sanctioning Committee a motion for approval of a first year pioneer ride, the Twisted Trails Pioneer to be held on May 1-3, 2021, in Saskatchewan, Canada. Jessica Cobbley and the Sanctioning Committee has given their approval of the ride. Motion passed unanimously.

AERC Treasurer, Mollie Krumlaw-Smith held a discussion on the 2021 budget. She feels the general economic forecast for the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> quarters shows signs of a gradual improvement in terms of lost revenues related to CV-19 and hopes our membership will start to pick up late spring to early summer. Fiscal 2020 showed an operational loss of (90)K which was attributed to a (70)K loss of revenue related to reduced ride and membership fees. AERC received a 39K PPP1 loan/grant (all of which will be forgiven) and because of this, the AERC operational loss was reduced to (51)K. The net loss for 2020 was (9)K.

Mollie Krumlaw-Smith has presented the AERC budget for 2021 at a breakeven point but emphasized that revenues need to increase (through increasing members and riders) in the future to keep things running well. It was stressed that AERC needs to be creative in gaining members.

John Parke made a motion to approve the budget for 2021, Olin Balch DVM, seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Nick Kohut, DVM thanked Mollie Krumlaw-Smith and the AERC Office staff for working hard in keeping cost down during some tough times.

Mollie Krumlaw-Smith updated the Board on the progress of the AERC Legacy Foundation (ALF). The foundation has opened a bank account and is up and running to accept funds. She has already received some calls from members wanting to contribute. John Parke had written an article in the most recent Endurance News detailing the Foundation.

Lisa Schneider conducted the continuation of the discussion on the revision of the AERC bylaws. The Board was joined by California attorney, Chris Delfino. Lisa Schneider reviewed the revisions that were discussed during the previous meeting and the Board was updated on each of the changes by Chris Delfino.

After the discussion, Lisa Schneider moved to vote to approve the revised AERC Bylaws, seconded by John Parke. Motion passed unanimously.

John Parke will host a webinar to help educate members on the purpose of the need for the bylaws revision. Kathleen Henkel will follow through with email blast, facebook and website announcement to inform the membership of the revision. Lisa Schneider as head of the Governance group will help with writing the announcement. The revised bylaws will go to the members for a vote.

The Board held a brief discussion on declining membership, horse ownership and all breed organizations. There were some ideas on why we need to make changes and the need to think outside of the box. This was one of the reasons which led for the need of the bylaws revision.

Barbara Baris presented the proposed AERC - ADA (American Disability Act) Policy. She took the lead for the Legal Committee which was given the task of writing an ADA policy. With the help of California attorney Monica Folsom, who specializes in the ADA, the following policy was created:

AERC Policy on the ADA Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (“ADA”) (42 U.S.C. §12101) prohibits private entities offering activities to the public, such as the American Endurance Ride Conference (AERC), from discriminating against individuals with disabilities. AERC is committed to complying with its obligations under the ADA. Endurance riding is a fundamentally hazardous, unpredictable sport and rides often take place in remote venues. The ADA mandates that, to the extent possible, individuals with disabilities be afforded reasonable accommodation to facilitate their participation in our sport. As such, AERC strives to ensure that ride venues and facilities at the ride venues are available and accessible to disabled individuals. Similarly, AERC will consider requests for reasonable accommodations that do not fundamentally alter the nature of the endurance riding activity. AERC will allow service animals, as defined in the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design and applicable state laws, in all areas where members of the public are allowed, to the extent the service animal’s presence does not present a danger to other attendees or participants and the service animal remains under the control of the handler. To assist in making ride activities, venues and facilities more accessible to disabled individuals, persons requesting accommodations must, within a reasonable time in

advance of the ride date, advise the Executive Director of AERC of the need for an accommodation due to a disability, and state with specificity the accommodations requested. Upon receipt of such request, the Executive Director will disseminate the information to the ride manager and others, as needed. The failure to timely request an accommodation may result in denial of the requested accommodation. AERC together with the ride manager will make an individualized assessment of the accommodation request. Requests may be denied if they would result in a direct threat to the health and safety of other participants or would fundamentally change the nature of the sport. Please note that the ADA does not require personal services be provided to a disabled individual.

John Parke stated that the policy was appropriately drafted. Gordie Cowan noted a typo which was corrected in the amended policy. The Board was appreciative of the effort and time that Barbarba Baris had put into writing this document.

Lisa Schneider made a motion that AERC adopt the amended ADA policy. Gordie Cowan seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Lynn Kenelly and Tom Rajala presented a team event concept from the AERC-I Committee. The discussion centered around the idea of a team challenge ride in 2022. The ride would take place every other year with the Young Riders team event taking place in the off years. The event would be held over two days with the first day offering a 75 mile distance and the second day a 100 mile. Both distances would be team events, with teams from each AERC region. Canada would have their own teams being divided into Canada East and Canada West. Each region would have unlimited individual entries, provided all competitors are willing to ride on a regional team. There would be qualifications for the riders. The ride would hopefully generate enthusiasm, knowledge sharing to compete and complete with the goal being to get your team to finish.

AERC-I regional representatives would choose both a Chef d'Equipe (team coach) and a Veterinarian to represent their respective regions. Awards would emphasize team completions, keeping with AERC's motto "To Finish is to Win." The most consistent riders would be sought after as team members. There would be awards for individual placement, top ten and best condition horse in each distance as recognized by AERC.

This event would be self-funded. The ride would respect the AERC Championship Ride as well as other established rides for location and timing.

Lynn Kennelly noted that the AERC-I Committee has spent a lot of time and effort on the team competition concept but before investing more time on it wanted to see if the Board was supportive of the idea. In the discussion the Board members indicated that they were appreciative of the committee's effort to think outside of the box to revive some excitement in offering another goal that some riders may enjoy. This would be an AERC event and not USEF/FEI orientated. The Board applauded the Committee's efforts to reinvent themselves. Lynn Kennelly thanked the Board for their time and with AERC's blessing the committee will continue working on the Team Challenge event.

Nick Kohut DVM led a brief discussion concerning a question that he had recently received. May members receive AERC mileage credit when competing in an USEF Endurance Lite ride that is not AERC sanctioned? The Board agreed that the rule is specific and does not allow mileage credit for rides that are competing organizations.

**Rule 8.4** Career mileage credit only for AERC members and equines who participate in endurance rides in a foreign country at least 50 miles long and sanctioned by an AERC recognized organization to be confirmed, in advance of the rider's participation, through the AERC office.

Nick Kohut DVM announced that the March Board meeting would be held on the first Monday of the month and not held on Thursday before the convention. During the convention, there will be a General session meeting with the membership. Robert Ribley will swear in the Regional Directors at this time. The members will have the opportunity to connect with the Board members to comment and ask questions during this session.

Olin Balch DVM formally requested that a Research Summit be held in 2022 like the one that was held a decade ago. Nick Kohut DVM stated he would speak with Peggy Brosnahan DVM, chair of the Research Committee.

Connie Caudill made a motion to adjourn at 9:45 pm, Jan Stevens seconded. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by Connie Caudill