

## **AERC Board Meeting Minutes, March 6, 2022**

President Nick Kohut DVM called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Board members present- Olin Balch DVM, Connie Caudill, Monica Chapman, Jessica Cobbley, Gunnar Frank, Bridget Helms, Dawn Hilliard, Susan Garlinghouse DVM, Nick Kohut DVM, Bob Marshall DVM, Mike Maul, Stephanie Palmer-DuRoss, John Parke, Maribel Paulson, Naomi Preston, Tami Rougeau, Lisa Schneider, Christoph Schork, Mollie Krumlaw-Smith, Jan Stevens, Vance Stine, Laurie Underwood, Tim Worden, and outgoing member Michael Campbell. Also, present Executive Director Kathleen Henkel.

Nick Kohut DVM thanked the AERC office staff - Kathleen Henkel, Troy Smith and Kyra DeMartini for their hard work in making this convention a success. Their friends and family worked tirelessly and are very much appreciated by the President and the BOD.

Christoph Schork made a motion to accept the agenda, seconded by Jan Stevens. Motion passed.

A motion to excuse Linda Rudolphi, Susan Kasemeyer and Kelly Williams-Stehman was made by Christoph Schork and seconded by Jan Stevens. Motion passed.

Nick Kohut DVM read the following resolution, which was unanimously approved by the Board.

On behalf of the entire AERC Board of Directors and the office staff, I would like to offer our gratitude to Susan Kasemeyer for all that she has done over the years of her service to AERC. This is the first meeting that Susan has been unable to attend. We miss you and wish you a speedy recovery.

Nick Kohut DVM introduced Diane Leshner of Equisure to the Board. She thanked AERC and mentioned that she had worked with AERC for many years. She suggested that AERC discuss supplemental accidental insurance policy for the members. She encouraged AERC to explore that cost and the benefits. The per-member fee is normally for approximately \$50 per member and would provide each member with \$10,000 medical insurance.

Diane Leshner said that Equisure's logo will be changing since one of the owners bought out the other but the company underwriter, Lloyds of London, would remain the same for AERC.

Diane will provide a generic (without names) summary of claims. Around 550 members are taking advantage of the \$20.00 excess liability policy that is offered to AERC members. This policy provides excess liability over primary homeowners insurance.

A question concerning D&O insurance for ALF came up, but since ALF currently has very few assets, Mollie Krumlaw-Smith did not think it was needed.

Nick Kohut DVM thanked Diane Leshner for everything she does for AERC.

Nick Kohut DVM appointed Lisa Schneider to the Executive Committee. Stephanie Palmer-DuRoss made a motion to approve Lisa Schneider as a member of the Executive Committee, Tim Worden seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Nick Kohut DVM appointed two new committee chairs, Tim Worden to the Rules Committee and Tami Rougeau to the Education Committee. Laurie Underwood made a motion to approve the appointments, seconded by Jan Stevens. Motion passed unanimously.

Monica Chapman reviewed the Strategic Plan groups - She explained that these groups are not committees but Strategic Plan groups. Each Board member is assigned to a group.

2022 Strategic Plan Groups:

Membership – **Kathleen Henkel**, Tim Worden, Stephanie Palmer-DuRoss, John Parke

Governance – **Lisa Schneider**, Connie Caudill, Jan Stevens, Kathleen Henkel, Monica Chapman

Finance – **Mollie Krumlaw-Smith**, Mike Maul, Christoph Schork, Vance Stine, Linda Rudolphi

Trails – **Monica Chapman**, **Dawn Hilliard**, Maribel Paulson, Jessica Cobbley, Bridget Helms

Horse Welfare– **Laurie Underwood**, Olin Balch, Naomi Preston, Kelly Williams Stehman, Bob Marshall

Education - **Tami Rougeau**, Susan Garlinghouse, Susan Kasemeyer, Kyra DeMartini, Gunnar Frank

The April 11 Board meeting will be the date for each group to review and update the goals to the Board. Group leaders will send them to Kathleen Henkel in writing.

Zoom calls will be held on March 16 and 21 to help the leaders.

On the June Board meeting, a vote will be conducted on the Strategic Plan revision and updates.

Discussion continued from Thursday's meeting motion on consecutive 100-mile rides. The Rules Committee met during the convention and revised the motion to read:

Motion - It is AERC's policy to require Special Sanctioning of consecutive 1-day 100-mile rides at the same venue or sanctioned event. The purpose of this policy is to maintain equine safety and event quality.

The Rules Committee felt this policy would give the Sanctioning Committee more authority to question the Ride Manager.

The issue of whether a horse should be permitted to compete in more than one 1-day 100 mile ride at an event was discussed. Nick Kohut DVM stated that the Sanctioning Committee could require the ride manager to put that restriction on their entry. Susan Garlinghouse DVM felt we should have a motion that specifically prohibits the same horse from competing in back-to-back 100s at the same event. Tim Worden felt a rule like that would have more strength coming from the Vet Committee and he didn't think this would be a proper policy item but a rule item. Nick Kohut DVM clarified that if we pass a policy, it will immediately go into effect but a rule would not go into effect until the next ride season.

Jessica Cobbley felt we should at least make a statement to address the horse welfare issue of a horse riding more than one 1 day 100-mile ride in an event. Dawn Hilliard stated that a policy would give the vet some flexibility to permit a second start for events as a rider losing a shoe and pulling early in a ride or getting lost. John Parke said we should rely on our vets to make the decision.

Naomi Preston made a motion to amend the motion to add: AERC prohibits the same equine from participating in two 1-day 100s in the same event. Jessica Cobbley seconded the motion. After discussion, motion failed due to wording, not on principle.

Christoph Schork made a motion to defer the motion from the Rules Committee and send back to the committee. John Parke seconded.

Additional discussion was held, some would like to see this as a rule not a policy.

Motion passes to defer the motion with two opposing votes.

Nick Kohut announced that the midyear meeting would be virtual. He is considering July 30<sup>th</sup> or August 6<sup>th</sup>. He asked the Board members to look at their schedules and get back to him. He reiterated that the only acceptable excuses for not attending are managing a ride, previous commitment to vet a ride, health issues or vacations that have been planned a year out. Riding in an event is not a viable excuse.

Nick Kohut once again thanked Michael Campbell for his service to AERC.

The Board took a 15-minute break. Nick Kohut DVM continued with the discussion from Thursday's meeting on how to attract members and how do we keep them. He emphasized this discussion is to do face-to-face brainstorming and not to make motions or decisions at this time.

Lisa Schneider suggested that if our rules were to allow stand-alone LD rides that we would attract more members. Some areas do not have camping facilities so this is an opportunity to have rides in areas that wouldn't normally be able to have them. She stated rule L-1 would need to be changed to allow the LD rides to take place without being in conjunction with an endurance distance.

The statement was made that LD rides would not be allowed to be sanctioned on top of an existing ride and if a ride would offer both LD and endurance distances then that ride would take precedent. Susan Garlinghouse DVM recollected a survey taken about 4 years ago with this question on it and the responses being very strongly against this concept. Someone mentioned that things have changed in the past 4 years so people may have different thoughts. Connie Caudill felt the members should take part in this decision before making a change like this. Stephanie Palmer-DuRoss worries about diluting our rider pool. Susan Garlinghouse DVM stated she would be willing to do a one-hour seminar on risk to horses to make riders aware of issues. Naomi Preston said there are positive and negatives: it is a popular distance but rides every weekend may make it hard to get a date in the calendar. Mollie Krumlaw-Smith said with the changes in our society that she is favorable to this move, horse ownership is way down and changes need to be made. She said structure would be needed for these rides, maybe more rules, but with special sanctioning, it could work. John Parke totally agrees with this move which is very different from how he felt a few years ago. Many of the rides in California have lost their trails but could have a 25-mile ride. He stated that we could require safety checks to make sure horses are good before trailering home. He also felt we need to be bold and try it for a couple of years before making a final decision on it. Laurie Underwood has concerns regarding new riders racing before they understand the sport and that the absence of riders riding the higher distances will negatively impact new riders, their horses and the sport. She also let it be known that her record shows she is an LD rider who relied on this type of mentorship. Jessica Cobbley has concerns about the rides that are further distances away from everyone. Will pioneer rides still exist if riders have a choice between traveling 8 hours to a pioneer ride or one hour to an LD ride? Her ride relies on LD riders, and she has concerns about losing those riders to a standalone LD. Christoph Schork felt that trails are diminishing, and we should use it or lose it. This change could possibly bring in more riders that could help us preserve our trails. Monica Chapman stated that equestrian use on trails is only 8%. We need presence in order to keep our trails open to horses. Maribel

Paulson felt we need a balance between the LD riders and the longer distance riders that may help bring them along.

Nick Kohut DVM said the discussion needs to be continued on the Board list, at the rides and in small groups. He would like for the Board members to talk to our membership and bring feed back to the BOD.

Nick Kohut DVM asks that Board members to look at the big picture. What can AERC do to increase membership? There was a discussion on some ideas from Board members. Such ideas as- email welcoming new members, team competitions, ride and tie competitions held in conjunction with endurance rides, addition of 36 to 49-mile distances, educational clinics, bring in other trails users, get grass roots involved, bring in new ride managers and have mentors for them, make u tube videos more accessible, the office consistently post about the videos, get information out to 4-H and other equine organizations.

Nick Kohut DVM said this was a great discussion and he would like to keep it going on the Board list and in the committees.

Nick Kohut DVM introduced Art Priesz who had requested to address the Board. He is working with USEF to help restore the grassroots endurance rider pool. He apologized for how the split between AERC and USEF happened and then went on to explain a five-point plan to move endurance forward within USEF from the grassroots up. After he spoke there were some comments and questions. Nick Kohut DVM said the conversation could continue in private conversations after the meeting ends but he had a plane to catch and needed to leave.

Connie Caudill made a motion to adjourn at approximately 11:30 a.m., seconded by Maribel Paulson. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by Connie Caudill