

## August 6, 2022 AERC Board meeting minutes

President Nick Kohut DVM called the meeting to order at 10:17 a.m. EST

Board members present were Olin Balch DVM, Connie Caudill, Monica Chapman, Jessica Cobbley, Gunnar Frank, Susan Garlinghouse, Bridget Helms, Dawn Hilliard, Susan Kasemeyer, Mike Maul, John Parke, Maribel Paulson, Naomi Preston, Tami Rougeau, Linda Rudolphi, Lisa Schneider, Mollie Krumlaw-Smith, Kelly Williams-Stehman, Jan Stevens, Vance Stine, Laurie Underwood, Tim Worden. Also present were Executive Director Kathleen Henkel and Kyra DeMartini.

A motion was made by Lisa Schneider, seconded by Susan Kasemeyer to excuse Stephanie Palmer-DuRoss (employment conflict), Bob Marshall DVM (working a ride) and Christoph Schork (out of the country with family emergency). Motion passed unanimously.

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Susan Garlinghouse DVM and seconded by Connie Caudill. Motion passed.

Jan Stevens made a motion to approve the July 11, 2022 Board meeting minutes, seconded by Naomi Preston. Motion passed.

Nick Kohut DVM thanked Kathleen Henkel and the office staff for all the hard work that they have done over this past year.

The membership report was reviewed by Kathleen Henkel.

Membership as of 7/26/2021	4455
Membership as of 7/27/2022	4296

Sanction fees 7/27/2021	\$10,915.00
Sanction fees 7/27/2022	\$12,055.00

Rider fees 7/27/2021	\$30,664.00
Rider fees 7/27/2022	\$29,179.00

New members as of 7/26/2021	546
New members as of 7/27/2022	479

### Financials

Mollie Krumlaw-Smith led a discussion concerning the AERC financial statements. She stated overall AERC is doing well. She explained that the loss of \$35,000 in the Wells Fargo investment goes along with the current fluctuating market. She is hopeful that as much as the market has been changing it may come back up. In the past she encouraged AERC to put the funds in a more conservative investment. Mollie Krumlaw-Smith suggested we put everything in laddered CD investments and feels now may be a good time to lock in.

John Parke would be in favor of augmenting some of the funds in reserve and would like to discuss a potential motion about it with Mollie Krumlaw-Smith.

Mollie Krumlaw-Smith is spearheading the Strategic Plan Finance group to advise the Board on what should be done. She noted that the 2022 convention did very well and made a \$28,000 profit. She applauded Kathleen Henkel for her efforts in keeping the expenses down by negotiating with the venue well in advance while still making it a great convention. Prices continue to skyrocket so moving forward we will need to be careful. Kyra DeMartini also worked extra hard in obtaining cash sponsors, which is greatly appreciated.

Some unexpected expenses incurred due to legal fees and the website. Mollie Krumlaw-Smith reported that we are still doing better than budget, but she has concerns that our financial model is weak due to declining rider participation, which could result in a loss of ride managers.

Vance Stine would like the Ride Manager Committee to discuss a raise in day member fees. Mike Maul reminded the Board that when membership fees went up, our income from this fee stayed the same but we lost members. John Parke suggested raising the Intro Rider fee from the current \$1.00.

Nick Kohut DVM thanked Mollie Krumlaw-Smith for the work she has been doing as our Treasurer.

#### Trademark Update

Kathleen Henkel contacted a trademark lawyer recommended by Chris Delfino to look into trademarking AERC's logo and she explained the process to the Board. John Parke said that we need more education on what we need and what we already have through common law trademark laws. He suggested that the attorney join us at our next Board meeting. Kathleen Henkel will invite him to speak with us.

#### Committee Reports

Nick Kohut DVM stated that most of the committees had turned in their midyear reports and asked that they be read by the Board members.

#### Motion to Ratify Executive Committee's actions

John Parke moved to ratify the decisions of the Executive Committee approving an emergency date change regarding the McDonald's Run ride (move from 7/23/2022 to 7/30/2022) and adding a third day to the Owyhee Halloween ride (now 10/28-22 – 10/30/2022), which makes it a first-year Pioneer ride. Jessica Cobbley and the Sanctioning Committee have approved. Motion seconded by Vance Stine. Motion passed unanimously.

#### Motion from Veterinary Committee

Nick Kohut DVM presented a motion on behalf of the Veterinary Committee to modify Rules 2.1.5, Rule 2.1.5.1 and Rule 15 to allow on-site disqualification by the Head Control Judge due to witnessed violations of Rule 11 and Rule 13. The proposed motion would add the following, shown in underline:

2.1.5 The control judge is responsible for making decisions in relation to all matters concerning equine health, safety, and welfare at events. The control judge may immediately disqualify (DQ) an equine for health, safety, and welfare issues including violations of AERC Rules 11 and 13. The control judges' decisions regarding disqualification must be final and ride management must stand behind the control judges' decisions.

2.1.5.1 Ride Manager may not overrule a control judge's decision on a judging, veterinary, safety, or welfare issue.

## 15. Violations and Penalties

All participants in AERC sanctioned endurance rides are expected to abide by the rules of the organization. Failure to do so may result in disqualification from competition by the ride manager or the control judge of the ride where the violation occurred and/or a protest being filed with AERC. In the event that a protest is filed for a rule infraction, the penalties listed below and any other that may be deemed appropriate may be applied by the Protest and Grievance Committee and the Board of Directors.

Some recent events have prompted a need to further strengthen Rule 13 to allow for immediate disciplinary action for those that are seen violating Rule 13 at the moment during competition, as opposed to those violations picked up during routine drug testing of horses during competition. Rule 13 is broad and expansive and prohibits certain treatments and manipulations of horses during competition, beyond just the administration of prohibited substances to horses while in competition. Both Appendix F – Prohibited Treatments, and Appendix G – Allowable Treatments specifically describe what is allowed and what is not allowed in relation to treating horses during the time of competition. In the current Rule 13 framework we have no mechanism for immediate disciplinary action against those who violate this Rule 13 in the moment during competition, versus the Protest route taken for a drug violation found weeks after a ride has occurred. Further clarification of possible violations of Rule 13 beyond just positive blood tests, is needed to continue to provide safety for the equines in our sport, along with a level playing field for all.

A thorough discussion was held. Board members agreed with the intent of the rule revision but felt this proposed rule puts too much responsibility on the control judge to spot any rule violation, so it needs some adjustment. There was concern that the revised rule, as written, potentially allows the head control judge to disqualify for any reason. The Ride Managers Committee felt the rule needed to be more specific with replacing the word “safety” to “dangerous behavior in the vet check”. John Parke also expressed concern that Rule 15 was too broad. Connie Caudill suggested that the language be clarified so that there is no doubt of the intent of the revisions. All agreed the head control judge should be able to disqualify a rider when they see a drug or “treatment “rule violation.

John Parke made a motion to defer this matter to the next Board meeting. Board members’ suggestions should be sent to the Board list so we can discuss and consider before the meeting. Seconded by Naomi Preston. Motion to defer passed unanimously.

### Motions from Rules Committee regarding Helmets for Junior riders & Young Riders

Tim Worden presented motions on behalf of the Rules Committee to clarify the use of helmets by Junior riders and Young Riders. The motions to clarify are:

#### Junior Riders

##### Motion to Clarify the Use of helmets by Junior Riders

This motion is to clarify the revision to Rule 10.1.1, which was passed by the Board at the March 3, 2022 Board meeting. The motion does not mirror the companion motion for a new rule requiring Young Riders to wear a helmet which was passed at the same time, and it did not take in account all the Board’s prior revisions.

Current Rule 10.1.1 - Whenever mounted, all juniors (whether sponsored or unsponsored) must wear properly fastened helmets.

Revised rule - "Rule 10.1.1 Whenever mounted, all juniors (whether sponsored or unsponsored) must wear properly fastened safety helmets which are for equestrian use."

### Young Riders

Motion to clarify use of helmets by Young Riders

This motion is to clarify new Rule 6(l) which was passed by the Board at the March 3, 2022 Board meeting. The motion does not mirror the companion motion for a revision to the junior helmet rule which was passed at the same time.

Current rule - Rule 6(l). Whenever mounted, all Young Riders below the age of 18 must wear properly fastened helmets.

Revised rule - "Rule 6(l). All Young Riders in AERC events, below the age of 18, must wear properly fastened helmets for equestrian use."

The Junior helmet rule and the Young Rider helmet rule are both to be implemented, December 1, 2022 Motions passed unanimously.

### Strategic Plan

The revised Strategic Plan was approved in the July 11, 2022 Board meeting. Monica Chapman asked the Strategic Plan group leaders to give an update.

Trails - Monica Chapman stated their group had a targeted date of October 2022 to finish the polling of ride managers to determine what types of land and ride camps they hold their rides on (i.e., state, federal, privately owned, BLM, etc.). The poll also asks for types of permits, such as an annual or 5-year. She is working with the Forest Service on renewing our MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) as it will expire at the end of September.

Finance - Mollie Krumlaw-Smith said their priority was to get the AERC Legacy Foundation (ALF) website up and running. She has engaged a programmer. The plan is to have the website up and running by next week.

Membership - Kathleen Henkel stated that an appropriate membership target number is 5,300 by the end of 2023. They will continue their grass roots efforts to increase and improve membership. Kathleen requested that members pass along any regional publications in which AERC can place ads. In the past, AERC has offered membership campaigns such as "Each one, add one" which helped increase membership.

Governance - Monica Chapman reported that the group would be meeting to discuss fleshing out the succession plans for the office and the IT Committee. These two goals were added during the July 11, 2022 Board meeting.

Education - Tami Rougeau stated this group was looking at educating the membership on best practices. They are working on collaborating and coordinating with other committees. The plan is to put together a webinar within the next two months.

Horse Welfare - Naomi Preston said this group has been looking at hosting a Research Summit. They will also be talking to ride managers to see how much they compensate the ride veterinarians. Vetting rides can be a labor of love for some established vets but veterinarians newer to the sport may need better compensation. The group plans to work with the Veterinary Committee to contact vet schools and establish liaison relationships to get students interested in endurance

Nick Kohut DVM thanked Monica Chapman and all the strategic groups for their work.

#### Committee Charters

Kathleen Henkel will send an email to the committee chairs reminding them to review their charters with their committee members and update as needed. Any updates or new charters should be sent to the office by the September 2022 meeting.

#### Ride and Tie Discussion

Steve Shaw of the Ride & Tie Association (R&T) explained how the partnership between AERC and R&T has been working out. A total of 21 R&T events took place in 2021 where AERC ride managers received assistance from the R&T organization. R&T gave \$2,500 to AERC to assist with webinars, education and more, then gave an additional \$5,000 to individual ride managers who hosted the events in conjunction with an AERC ride. This year is on track to have 21 R&T races. Steve Shaw stated that they would like to continue with the program for the third year and they are working on tweaking their MOU with AERC. Board members discussed how the events complement each other and have brought younger people to the events. The Eastern R&T events have been growing and hopefully the West will grow in the coming year. Steve Shaw asked for feedback on successes and setbacks that may help in future events. He expressed his appreciation for the association between the organizations and felt it adds to both sports.

Nick Kohut DVM thanked Steve Shaw for joining the meeting.

#### Junior/Young Rider Discussion

Maribel Paulson gave a presentation on behalf of the Young Riders and Junior Committee. The committee would like to have an event at the AERC convention tailored to this age group. The event would have its own seminar speakers, maybe a movie, door prizes, pizza and more. Maribel Paulson had many ideas which the Board members enthusiastically embraced. She has spoken with Kathleen Henkel and knows the scheduling will not be easy but feels it can be worked out. Event expenses and possible fees were discussed, and the consensus was to keep the cost either free or very low. Lisa Schneider and Tami Rougeau offered help and offered to sponsor the pizza. The Board members felt this type of event supports the future of AERC.

#### Executive Session

John Parke moved to go into Executive session at 1:37 p.m. EST, seconded by Susan Kasemeyer. Motion passed.

John Parke made a motion, seconded by Susan Kasemeyer, to leave executive session at 3:30 p.m. EST. Motion passed.

Connie Caudill reviewed the action items.

Susan Kasemeyer made a motion, seconded by Tami Rougeau, to adjourn at 3:40 p.m. EST Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by

Connie Caudill