

## **AERC General Session February 25, 2023**

President Nick Kohut DVM called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m. EST

Nick Kohut DVM welcomed everyone to the AERC convention and thanked the AERC office staff and their families who have been working the conventions for over twenty years. He thanked outgoing Board members Tami Rougeau and Christoph Schork for their work on the Board and has confidence that they will continue working with AERC by sitting on committees. He welcomed newly elected Directors at Large Melissa Ribley DVM and Eric Rueter as well as the recently appointed Midwest regional director Maureen Fehrs DVM.

Robert Ribley swore in to office Directors at Large Olin Balch DVM, Mollie Krumlaw-Smith, Bob Marshall DVM, Melissa Ribley DVM, Eric Rueter, Laurie Underwood and Tim Worden. Midwest Regional Director Maureen Fehrs DVM was also sworn in to office at this time. Mike Maul was absent.

Sadly, Nick Kohut DVM expressed condolences for the recent loss of two prominent AERC members, Midwest Board member Linda Rudolphi and Texas ride veterinarian Gail Conway DVM.

Regional Directors present were Connie Caudill, Monica Chapman, Jessica Cobbley, Gunnar Frank, Maureen Fehrs DVM, Bridget Helms, Dawn Hilliard, Susan Kasemeyer, Nick Kohut DVM, Susan Garlinghouse DVM, Stephanie Palmer-DuRoss, John Parke, Maribel Paulson, Naomi Preston, Lisa Schneider, Kelly Williams-Stehman, Jan Stevens and Vance Stine.

Nominations were opened for the election of AERC officers. Susan Kasemeyer nominated current President, Nick Kohut DVM, current Secretary, Connie Caudill and current Treasurer, Mollie Krumlaw-Smith, and Kelly Williams-Stehman to serve as Vice President. Vance Stine seconded the nomination. Motion passed unanimously.

Nick Kohut DVM opened the meeting up to the membership for comments, questions or concerns.

Good discussion was held on things that could help gain new members and retain current members. Topics included how to attract Juniors and Young riders as well as trail riders and equestrians from other equestrian sports. Discussion included reaching out to others through use of Tiktok, YouTube and other social media sites, and possibly 15-60 second videos, or “shorts” to encourage engagement with a newer generation of riders, building relationships and a sense of community between existing and new members, mentoring new riders, hosting clinics and helping to grow our sport by being welcoming. One member suggested having a subcommittee just for the purpose of getting things out on social media.

Becky Pearman offered to make some shorts to publish on social media platforms.

A question was asked about the Board’s focus in 2023. Nick Kohut DVM answered that the biggest concentration will be on finances, which may direct our path in the future. AERC needs a solid plan to insure we will be here in the long run. Trails and membership growth are big concerns. He is hopeful for a calm year that will allow us to work more on the important issues.

Nick Kohut DVM thanked everyone for the great conversation and encouraged our members to continue these conversations by communicating with the Board members.

Susan Kasemeyer moved to adjourn at 1:02 p.m. EST. Lisa Schneider seconded. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by Connie Caudill