

## March 13, 2023 AERC Board meeting minutes

President Nick Kohut DVM called the meeting to order at 8:04 p.m. EST

Board members present were Olin Balch DVM, Connie Caudill, Gunnar Frank, Maureen Fehrs DVM, Susan Garlinghouse DVM, Bridget Helms, Dawn Hilliard, Susan Kasemeyer, Nick Kohut DVM, Bob Marshall DVM, John Parke, Maribel Paulson, Lisa Schneider, Mollie Krumlaw-Smith, Kelly Williams-Stehman, Jan Stevens, Vance Stine, Naomi Preston, Laurie Underwood, Tim Worden, Eric Rueter and Melissa Ribley DVM. Also present were Barbara Baris and Dee McDonald of the Legal Committee, and Executive Director Kathleen Henkel.

A motion was made by Susan Kasemeyer, seconded by Vance Stine, to accept the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

Susan Garlinghouse DVM made a motion, seconded by Susan Kasemeyer to approve the February 23, 2023 and February 26, 2023 board meeting minutes, and the minutes from the February 25, 2023 general session members meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Olin Balch DVM made a motion to excuse Stephanie Palmer-DuRoss – employment conflict, Monica Chapman- date conflict, and Mike Maul, seconded by Connie Caudill. Motion passed unanimously.

Absent- Jessica Cobbley

Kathleen Henkel presented the statistical report to the Board.

Membership as of 3/11/2022	3391
Membership as of 3/10/2023	3086
Sanction fees as of 3/10/2022	\$10,530
Sanction fees as of 3/10/2023	\$10,625
Rider fees as of 3/10/2022	\$6,619
Rider fees as of 3/10/2023	\$6,292
New members as of 3/11/2022	222
New members as of 3/10/2023	217

### Approval of Committee Chairs

Nick Kohut DVM held a discussion with the Board concerning the IT Committee. Some felt it should be outsourced to the website designer who would be responsible for any mistakes made to the website and database software, and for security of the data. Others felt the IT Committee offered a needed service not only to the office but to the members. Melissa Ribley DVM, requested that the Board be sent the IT Committee charter to gain a better understanding of the function and responsibilities of the IT Committee. The discussion will continue at the April meeting where a decision will be made.

Nick Kohut DVM nominated the current chairs to the committees, as well as adding Melissa Ribley DVM to co-chair the Veterinary Committee with Jay Mero DVM. Lisa Schneider made a motion to accept the nominations, Vance Stine seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Nick Kohut DVM made a motion to form a new committee to be called the Ad Hoc Marketing Committee with Kelly Williams-Stehman as chair. This committee will explore ways to engage new and younger riders and market our sport and AERC. The committee will be more active on various social media platforms and will conduct a social media campaign. There is no cost to AERC for this committee. Connie Caudill moved to approve the new ad hoc committee and chair, seconded by Tim Worden. Motion passed unanimously.

Nick Kohut DVM had requested each committee to give a report on discussions that were held at the Jacksonville convention. The Trails and Ride Managers committees sent their reports to the Board. The committees which gave oral reports to the Board were Rules, Competition, Sanctioning, Juniors/Young Riders, Welfare of the Horse, and Veterinary.

Melissa Ribley DVM led a discussion on a potential rule change which would prohibit hazing during BC judging. She explained that the AERC Veterinary Handbook has had a policy for a very long time but felt that the policy should be spelled out in the rules to tell riders that hazing is not allowed during BC judging. She presented three separate versions of the rule which might be used to define hazing. A straw vote taken by the Board indicated that the Board would like specific verbiage to be included in the rule, such as no whips allowed to be in hand during judging, etc. This rule would only apply for BC judging and not for vetting on the line.

Susan Garlinghouse DVM offered to work on more precise verbiage which she will send to Melissa Ribley DVM and Tim Worden. The Veterinary and Rules Committee will work on a motion to bring to the April meeting for vote.

#### Strategic Plan Updates

Education - Susan Garlinghouse DVM is working with their group on a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for new riders.

Welfare - Melissa Ribley DVM stated their group was going to be working on a PowerPoint presentation to send to veterinary schools to try to attract new veterinarians to the sport. Ken Marcella DVM is working on the presentation, which will ultimately be distributed to veterinary schools by Bob Marshall DVM and Melissa Ribley DVM, and to the AAEP by Olin Balch DVM.

#### Finance

Mollie Krumlaw-Smith was asked by the Board to work on a plan to balance the operating budget.

Currently the 2023 budget shows an operating loss of \$87,000. This includes \$53,000 for Endurance News, \$15,000 for IT, as well as several other items.

Cost saving items she suggested were:

1. Increase membership dues by \$5.00 per member. This would increase income by \$22,000. Dues were last raised back in 2010.
2. Increase ride managers sanctioning fee on the first distance by \$5.00. No increase for other distances. This would increase income by \$1,000.
3. Raise day member fee by \$5.00. This would increase income by \$3,500.

4. Reduce cost of Endurance News by \$20,000. Kathleen Henkel noted that through recent negotiations with the printer, the cost will be decreased by \$1,500-\$2,000 per month.
5. Reduce discretionary spending by \$2,500.

Other items that we should consider:

1. Can we change the convention banquet or the meeting format?
2. Long term staffing- Consider restructuring office hours, which could save \$20,000.
3. Legal fees should be greatly reduced this year.
4. Credit Card fees - Start charging a convenience fee for people who pay with credit cards. The fees in 2023 were nearly \$18,000. The change would not be a savings of full \$18,000 due to in labor cost to process the checks and categorize the payments. Mollie Krumlaw-Smith will check the laws concerning convenience fees on debit cards. This would take a motion for the Board to make the change.
5. The office should work with our bank to install a remote capture check scanning machine, which would save time in running back and forth to the bank, with no need for deposit slips.
6. Trail conferences are important. Monica Chapman has made great strides with politicians in Washington DC and other heads of land agencies. We don't want to lose that connection but we should consider changing the policy to have the trails fund pay those expenses instead of using operating funds.
7. National Championship Ride – Mollie Krumlaw-Smith suggested the possibility of finding a sponsor for the belt buckles, which would save AERC \$2,000.

Kelly Williams-Stehman suggested we start getting the information out to our members, stating the reasons we are raising the various fees.

John Parke stated that Mollie Krumlaw-Smith was requested by the Board to make specific suggestions and recommendations to balance the budget and has done exactly what was asked of her. He requested that Mollie Krumlaw-Smith present a specific motion to be voted on by the Board at the April meeting.

Nick Kohut DVM thanked Mollie Krumlaw-Smith for her work and expertise.

Kathleen Henkel reminded the Board members to sign and return their mandatory Conflict of Interest statements.

John Parke moved to adjourn at 9:59 p.m. EDT. Susan Kasemeyer seconded. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by Connie Caudill