

## May 8, 2023 AERC Board meeting minutes

President Nick Kohut DVM called the meeting to order at 8:03 p.m. EST.

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

A motion to accept the agenda was made by Susan Garlinghouse DVM, seconded by Connie Caudill. Motion passed unanimously.

Olin Balch DVM made a motion to approve the April 10, 2023 Board meeting minutes, seconded by Susan Kasemeyer. Following a brief discussion regarding a requested edit to the minutes, the motion passed unanimously.

A motion to excuse Vance Stine due to an employment conflict was made by Susan Kasemeyer and by Susan Garlinghouse DVM. Motion passed unanimously.

Mike Maul was absent for health reasons.

The Statistical report was presented by Kathleen Henkel:

Membership as of 5/6/2022	3965
Membership as of 5/5/2023	3734
Sanction fees as of 5/5/2022	\$11,200.00
Sanction fees as of 5/5/2023	\$11,570.00
Rider fees as of 5/5/2022	\$14,659.00
Rider fees as of 5/5/2023	\$13,877.00
New members as of 5/6/2022	351
New members as of 5/5/2023	373

### Motion from the Trails and Land Management Committee

Dawn Hilliard presented the motion regarding the Virginia Highlands Horse Trail/Jones Creek (VA) Trail Grant request for trail rehabilitation.

The Trails and Land Management Committee moves that AERC, using designated Trails Grants, help fund the rehab of a portion of the Virginia Highlands Horse Trail between Highway 21 and SR 798 near Ivanhoe, VA, located in the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area and the George Washington Jefferson National Forest. Funds requested: \$2,000.

There are 12 areas with drainage and/or erosion issues identified on this section of multiuse trail. This is affecting both the safety of trail users and the water quality of

Jones Creek, a part of the New River Watershed. This project will result in a long-term, sustainable trail.

This group consistently contributes hundreds of work hours annually. The project is also receiving grant monies from BCHVH Trail Fund (\$5,000), FB Giving Tuesday Campaign (\$3,000), Harris & Frances Block Foundation (\$3,000) and SERA Trail Grant (\$1,000), as well as other fundraising monies from Iron Mtn Jubilee Endurance Ride (\$2,000), personal donations from the local community (\$5,300), a corporate match of \$2,000, and ongoing fundraising currently at \$2,100.

There is an established ride, the Iron Mountain Jubilee, which uses this trail. This ride plans to offer a 100-mile distance starting this season. Management has a 5-year permit with local land managers. Reduction in mud and erosion will improve safety for equines, benefit all trail user groups, and benefit all impacted by the New River Watershed. This large-scale project involves multiple groups and will be good publicity for AERC. Signage will be provided to show AERC's contribution. Work to begin spring of 2023 and be completed by winter of 2024.

Motion from committee passed unanimously.

Monica Chapman informed the Board that AERC received a letter thanking AERC for our letter of support of the Florida Equestrian Heritage Trail project. It appears that the project is going to be approved by the State of Florida.

#### Motion from Sanctioning Committee

Connie Caudill presented the following motion regarding a revision to Rules 16.2 and 16.2.1 regarding the process for sanctioning Pioneer rides. The requested revisions are shown in underline text below:

16.2 Special event rides are series of rides on consecutive days, totaling more than three days or 150 miles. Sanctioning of such rides must be sent to the AERC Executive Director for distribution to the Sanctioning Committee at least 90 days before the ride date. Special event rides shall require approval of the Sanctioning Committee for the first two years or at any time a request to change ride dates.

16.2.1 Special Qualification rides are rides with entry qualifications other than those contained in rule #3. A petition for approval of a Special Qualification ride must be sent to the AERC Executive Director for distribution to the Sanctioning Committee where the event is to be held at least 90 days before the ride date. Upon approval the petition will be distributed to the Board for comments. Such petition must include clear rationale for the qualifications and justification for this specialty ride. The board will render its decision within 60 days. The equines must be under the control of control judge(s) experienced with equines and endurance rides from pre-ride control checks through the post-ride final control check. Special Qualification rides shall require approval of the AERC Board of Directors for the first two years.

Background - The process in place now requires Board approval for the first two years of a Special event which is often slow depending on timing of the Board meeting. Since every region is represented in the Sanctioning Committee, the committee felt it would be prudent to only require approval from that committee. This motion also clarifies date changes for pioneer rides will need to be approved by the Sanctioning Committee.

Special Qualification rides will continue to require Board approval for the first two years.

Will be implemented December 1, 2023.

Discussion was held on the motion, which was then passed by unanimous vote.

Motion from the Rules & Bylaws and Welfare of the Horse Committee

Tim Worden presented the motion to establish the number of Limited Distance rides that equines younger than 60 months old may be ridden in one day.

Discussion on the motion led to Susan Garlinghouse making a motion to amend the language. Change the wording from “one day” to “calendar day”. Seconded by Mollie Krumlaw-Smith The motion to amend passed unanimously.

The motion, as amended, reads as follows:

Rule L2.1 Equines must be at least 48 months of age at the time of the ride. If a ride offers more than one limited distance ride per day, in order to meet the age requirements intended under rules L1.2.5 and L1.2.7, equines under 60 months of age may only be ridden in one limited distance ride per calendar day.

Background- This motion is to correct and refine current Rule L2.1 which states “Equines must be at least 48 months old at the time of the ride.” Some rides now offer two limited distance rides in one day. Our current rules were written before rides began offering multiple limited distance rides in the same day and need clarification for the welfare of the horse.

Will be implemented December 1, 2023.

The motion from committee to amend Rule L2.1 passed unanimously.

Motion from the AERC-I Committee

Motion Name – Young Rider Championship Funding Grant

The AERC International Committee made a motion titled “Young Rider Championship Funding Grant.” The motion requests \$500 to support the 2023 Young Riders Championship to reduce the entry fee cost for the riders.

The 2023 AERC Young Rider Championship will be held at the Wild West endurance ride in Nevada City, California on the weekend of June 16-17. The event will be a 75-mile ride. The managers of this ride are Samantha Ellis and Courtney Brain. This ride has been an annual ride in the West region for over 30 years. This ride is an established multiday ride. The AERC International Committee submitted a 2023 budget for \$6,500 of which, \$2,000 was budgeted to support Young Rider programs. This \$500 request pulls from the \$2,000 budget.

The grant money would help reduce the entry fee cost to the young riders and their families.

Motion from committee passed unanimously.

Motion from the Budget & Finance Committee

Mollie Krumlaw-Smith presented the motion, with two minor revisions, after a thorough discussion.

1. Increase single membership fees by \$5 per member and increase family memberships by \$10 per membership. Effective for the 2023-2024 ride season.
2. Increase sanctioning fees by \$5 for the first distance sanctioned for each event. Additional distances will remain the same. Effective December 1st, 2023.
3. Review the costs related to the Endurance News and work to reduce the annual loss to an amount of less than 30K annually. Effective with approval of this motion.
4. Begin charging a service fee based on blended average/actual cost on all card payment transactions. Effective September 2023.
5. Increase Day Member fee to \$20. Effective December 1, 2023.
6. Review operating hours and staffing as determined by Executive Director.

Background - Our office staffing has worked over the years to keep our operating costs as low as possible, however as inflation and economic changes impact the AERC the Board will need to make further efforts to balance the budget to a sustainable level.

Budget effect - Estimated improvement to annualized budget of 80K+ once fully implemented. Insures the continuity and sustainability of AERC.

Impact on AERC Office - Process improvements will need to be utilized to limit additional workload on the office.

Motion from committee passed unanimously.

#### Strategic Plan updates

Education Group - Susan Garlinghouse DVM reported on a productive trip to Edinburg, Scotland where she gave an educational seminar on endurance. She intends to conduct more seminars in the future although they may be in webinar format. She felt the trip was very good in forming some alliances between the countries for future exchanges of endurance riders.

Naomi Preston updated the Board on a webinar that she conducted on "TTouch for Endurance Riding". The Tellington TTouch Method is a positive, gentle and effective way to enhance performance, solve behavioral issues, and improve communication. The webinar was well attended.

Susan Kasemeyer made a motion, seconded by John Park to adjourn at 9:34 p.m. EDT. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by Connie Caudill