

October 9, 2023, AERC Board meeting minutes

President Nick Kohut DVM called the meeting to order at 8:11 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, Dawn Hilliard, Bridget Helms, Susan Kasemeyer, Eric Rueter, Nick Kohut DVM, Mollie Krumlaw-Smith, Bob Marshall DVM, Mike Maul, Naomi Preston, Maribel Paulson, Melissa Ribley DVM, John Parke, Lisa Schneider, Kelly Williams-Stehman, Vance Stine, Jan Stevens, Laurie Underwood and Tim Worden. Also present was Executive Director Kathleen Henkel. Tom Rajala, chair of the AERC-I Committee, and Meg Sleeper, DVM were also in attendance.

Motion to accept the agenda made by Susan Garlinghouse DVM, seconded by Lisa Schneider. Motion passed.

Motion for approval of September 11, 2023, board meeting minutes, made by Susan Garlinghouse DVM, seconded by Susan Kasemeyer. Motion passed.

Kathleen Henkel presented the statistical report:

Membership as of 10/7/2022	4515
Membership as of 10/6/2023	4339
Sanction fees as of 10/3/2022	\$12,240.00
Sanction fees as of 10/3/2023	\$12,765.00
Rider fees as of 10/3/2022	\$46,346.00
Rider fees as of 10/3/2023	\$43,317.00
New members as of 10/7/2022	596
New members as of 10/6/2023	588

Nick Kohut requested a breakdown of what regions the new members are coming from. Naomi Preston requested the year-end membership numbers over the past ten years. Kathleen Henkel said she will provide the information for the Board.

Update on the AERC-I Committee

Tom Rajala, AERC-I Committee chair, presented a committee update. He clarified that AERC-I has no formal relationship with USEF, but riders who wish to ride international cannot do so without going through the Federation. The Committee formed a working group to look at hosting international events in the West. The 2023 AERC Young Riders Championship anticipates 15-20 entries. The Committee approved the 2024 Young Riders Championship to be hosted in conjunction with the AERC National Championship ride. They will present a motion on this to the Board at the next Board meeting.

Competition Committee

Nick Kohut DVM nominated Naomi Preston as Co-Chair of the Competition Committee, seconded by Lisa Schneider. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion from the Competition Committee regarding Special Events Change from 155 miles to 150 miles
Naomi Preston presented this motion on behalf of the Competition Committee to change the criteria for Special event rides to 3 days or more, and a minimum of 150 miles by amending Rule 16.2.

Existing Rule 16.2:

16.2 Special event rides are a series of rides on consecutive days, totaling more than three days or 150 miles. Special Qualification rides are rides with entry qualifications other than those contained in rule #3. Special event and special qualification rides shall require approval of the AERC Board of Directors for sanction for the first two years.

Proposed change to Rule 16.2:

16.2 Special event rides are a series of rides on consecutive days, totaling three days or more, and a minimum of 150 miles. Special Qualification rides are rides with entry qualifications other than those contained in rule #3. Special event and special qualification rides shall require approval of the AERC Board of Directors for sanction for the first two years.

Benefit and/or Impact to Membership and/or the AERC Organization:

Ridership of all days of Special event ride called Pioneer Rides has been declining. Many riders opt to not ride the 55 mile day. By changing the requirement it would encourage more riders to ride all of these rides and simplify the trail for Ride Managers.

Connie Caudill made an amendment to the motion to change the effective date until the 2025 ride season, due to the rule books already being sent out and the motion being late. Seconded by Vance Stine. Discussion was held on the amendment and a vote was taken. Amendment to the motion failed.

Vote on the original motion passed with one no vote and two abstentions. To be implemented December 1, 2023.

Motion from the Competition Committee for Pioneer Award Category regarding LD Riders
Naomi Preston presented this motion on behalf of the Competition.

Motion:

Add an LD Pioneer Award for multi-day completions, to be modeled after the Endurance Pioneer award but which would be based solely on miles to de-emphasize racing. Equines must be a minimum of 5 years old before their first Pioneer ride to compete for this award. Awards would be for the top 3 rider/equine teams nationally.

A sponsor will be secured to provide these awards.

This award provides an incentive to our growing number of LD riders to ride more days at Pioneer rides, generating more excitement for riders, more riders for Ride Managers, and more income for AERC.

The Pioneer LD Awards would start with the 2024 season.

Discussion on the motion was held. Motion from Committee passed with one no vote.

Motion from the Technical Committee on Access Policy

Eric Rueter presented the revised Technical Committee Access Policy.

Motion:

The AERC Technical Committee is aware of the sensitivity and proprietary nature of the technical assets of the AERC. Therefore, the AERC Technical Committee members will all sign a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) prior to being granted any access to the AERC programs, database or flat files. The AERC Technical Committee requests the AERC Legal Committee to obtain a sample NDA form to use that is acceptable to the AERC Board of Directors and the AERC Executive Director.

Over time, varying degrees of access will be requested for individual members of the AERC Technical Committee. For the most part, any access will be what is commonly considered “read only”. In general, read only access only allows the “viewing” of programs and data / data structure or flat files, whether using an industry standard tool, or viewing these items in raw form. It does not allow for any changes to a program or data / data structure or the creation of any new programs or data / data structure.

In the interest of full disclosure, the Internet Service Provider (ISP – WPEngines) that AERC has chosen, only offers full access to the database. This means that even though read only access is requested, the normal limitations of a read only access are not enforceable by the software. It shall be the responsibility of the individual AERC Technical Committee members to honor the access that they have been granted.

If during the course of interaction of the AERC Technical Committee, an individual hasten the opportunity to create a solution to a request or problem, the solution shall be passed on to the current IT service provider (currently Brand Media Solutions) for actual installation / integration into the AERC programs or data / data structure. No installation or integration into the AERC programs or data/data structure shall be made without the prior written approval of the AERC Executive Director, Executive Committee or Board of Directors. The IT Tech Committee will not in any form or fashion make any modifications to any AERC program, data, data structure or flat file.

There may be times when an access level higher than read only is required, but those are expected to be limited in scope and frequency. The only reason for this level of access is to provide the ability to debug and test programs. This higher level of access should only be granted in a test environment. Any grant of a higher level of access than read only shall require the prior written approval of the AERC Executive Director, Executive Committee or Board of Directors.

A log of all work and access requests will be maintained by the AERC Technical Committee. This log will include a description of the request, the identity of the person making the request, any code generated, and an example and description of the results. A copy of the log shall be made available to the AERC Executive Director, Executive Committee or Board of Directors upon request.

The AERC Technical Committee is also aware of the confidential nature of the information provided by members of the AERC to the AERC and of the data maintained

by the AERC about its members. The AERC Technical Committee shall not compromise the confidentiality either of the information provided by members of the AERC to the AERC or of the data maintained by the AERC about its members. For the sake of monitoring the confidentiality of membership information and the AERC data base, any query or request for information from the AERC data base from members of the Board of Directors, AERC committee members, or AERC members shall be first submitted to the AERC Executive Director and shall require the prior written approval of the AERC Executive Director, Executive Committee or Board of Directors before any action on the query or request for information is taken by the AERC Technical Committee.

Implementation plan-Have the Legal Committee write Non-Disclosure agreements, get them signed and be issued user ids and passwords.

A lengthy discussion was held regarding the concept of “best practices”. Kathleen Henkel asked for clarification on the policy language regarding prior written approval. John Parke stated that requests for approval would first be submitted to the Executive Director and that the Executive Committee and/or the Board could approve in the event that the Executive Director is unavailable. The vote on the motion passed with 14 yes, 9 no, 1 abstention. Laurie Underwood recused herself.

Motion for Funding of a research project entitled “The Assessment of Hydration by Bioimpedance in Endurance Horses

Meg Sleeper DVM presented this motion on behalf of the Research Committee.

Motion:

This project will use a bioimpedance unit to measure the hydration status of endurance horses in a non-invasive manner. This data will establish proof of concept as to whether or not a bioimpedance unit would be a useful adjunctive piece of equipment to improve the standard of care for horses requiring treatment at rides.

In this study we will be evaluating a noninvasive technique that has been previously validated in horses (Bioimpedance using the ImpediVet probe) to assess body fluid loss and dehydration. The technique has been used to assess fluid shifts in other sport horses, but not in the endurance horse. We hypothesize that the ImpediVet bioimpedance probe will identify fluid loss in horses performing endurance activity, and that animals identified as having more significant loss (dehydration) will be more likely to have performance negatively impacted and require veterinary intervention (treatment). In the first phase of the project, we will assess proof of concept in endurance type horses at baseline and also after exercise activity. Testing in competing endurance horses will allow us to correlate the bioimpedance results with tools currently used to assess hydration during endurance events and performance markers (mucous membrane color, capillary refill time, jugular refill time, skin pinch testing, gastrointestinal sounds, heart rate and heart rate recovery). An objective and non-invasive method to measure hydration in horses has the potential to significantly impact endurance horse welfare.

The initial budget request was as follows:

2 bioimpedance units.....	\$10,000.00
Consumables.....	\$100.00
Travel.....	\$1,000.00
Total.....	<u>\$11,100.00</u>

The Research Committee approved and requested budget as follows:

1 bioimpedance unit.....	\$5,000.00
Consumables.....	\$100.00
Lab Fees.....	\$2,250.00
Travel.....	\$1,000.00
Total.....	<u>\$8,350.00</u>

The difference between the requested and approved budget is that the Research Committee voted to approve one bioimpedance unit, but also requested the addition of blood creatine on each horse so the lab fee line item has been added to cover this.

This project would seek to improve the standard of care that ride vets can provide at AERC rides.

Implementation plan- The data is planned to be collected during the winter season of 2023 – 2024. The Research Committee will require an annual report.

Discussion on the motion was held. Meg Sleeper DVM conveyed that having two units would be much faster and her discounted quote on the units was based on receiving two. The Research Committee has the funds for this project.

Connie Caudill made an amendment to the motion to fund both units as originally requested, seconded by Naomi Preston. The motion to amend passed unanimously.

A vote was held on the motion, as amended, to approve the request of the Research Committee. The amended motion from the Research Committee passed unanimously. Funding to come out of the Research Fund.

Update on the Stand Alone Limited Distance Ride Proposal

Discussion was held on the Stand Alone Limited Distance ride proposal and the results of the survey. Thirty percent of our members responded, with 50% being in favor, 43% against and 7% having no opinion. Kathleen Henkel will email the results to the members. Discussion will continue in future meetings.

Susan Garlinghouse DVM made a motion to go into executive session for legal and financial purposes at 10:21 p.m., seconded by John Parke. Jessica Cobbley made a motion at 11:06 p.m. to come out of executive session, seconded by Vance Stine.

Action items

1. Kathleen Henkel to send the AERC logo, AERC's motto "To Finish is to Win" and Endurance News to attorneys for trademark investigation. Update on 6/14/2023 - The attorney is currently researching. Update on 10/10/2023 – Kathleen is researching dates to determine when AERC started using items and terms.
2. John Parke will write a more expansive Conflict of Interest policy. He will provide a sample COI Policy.
3. John Parke will write a revised policy that limits the authority of the executive committee and Executive Director to enter into contracts. John will provide a sample non-profit operating policy.
4. Diane Rowley will work with the office on revising the protest submission form. Update on 10/10/2023 - Kathleen Henkel will contact Diane Rowley.

Susan Kasemeyer moved to adjourn at 11:13 p.m., seconded by Lisa Schneider.

Respectfully submitted by Connie Caudill.
