

May 13, 2024, AERC Board Meeting Minutes

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

Board members present were Bruce Burton, Khristen Seymore-Norsworthy, Connie Caudill, Maureen Fehrs DVM, Bridget Helms, Jan Stevens, Dawn Hilliard, Nick Kohut DVM, Naomi Preston, Regina Rose, Marci Cunningham, John Parke, Susan Kasemeyer, Vance Stine, Stephanie Palmer-DuRoss, Maribel Paulson, Susan Garlinghouse DVM, Tami Rougeau, Olin Balch DVM, Mollie Krumlaw-Smith, Bob Marshall DVM, Mike Maul, Melissa Ribley DVM, Laurie Underwood and Tim Worden. Executive Director Kathleen Henkel and AERC-I Chair Tom Rajala were also in attendance.

Susan Garlinghouse DVM made a motion to accept the agenda, Vance Stine seconded. Motion passed.

A motion was made by Susan Garlinghouse DVM to approve the April 8, 2024, minutes. Tami Rougeau seconded. Motion passed.

Connie Caudill made a motion to excuse Susan Kasemeyer from the April 8, 2024, meeting and Eric Rueter from the May 13, 2024, meeting, which was seconded by Vance Stine. Motion passed.

Kathleen Henkel presented the statistical report:

Membership as of 5/12/2023	3,802
Membership as of 5/10/2024	3,741
Sanction fees as of 5/10/2023	\$11,625
Sanction fees as of 5/10/2024	\$14,095
Rider fees as of 5/10/2023	\$15,950
Rider fees as of 5/10/2024	\$14,438
New members as of 5/12/2023	381
New members as of 5/10/2024	374

The most recent membership drive was a success, bringing in 85 members.

Update from the AERC-I Committee

Tom Rajala, Chair of the AERC-I Committee, reported that they continue to see a strong interest in the West in support for FEI rides. The Committee is looking to help ride managers in the western regions in 2025 to support 1* (65 mile) and 2* (75 mile) events. Tom Rajala reported having good attendance at the Ride in the Pines ride. Unfortunately, the ride appears to have hurt attendance at the Biltmore 100-mile ride. Moving forward, the Committee will help mitigate conflicts between AERC rides and the FEI sanctioned rides so that they won't impact the established AERC rides.

The Committee will be putting out an AERC-I newsletter for AERC-I members. They will also be updating the AERC-I section on the AERC webpage. The NE Team Challenge will be held in June and will include a 100-mile ride.

Ride Sanctioning Discussion

Nick Kohut DVM led a discussion regarding sanctioning of the Goethe Benefit ride (12/21/2024) and Dunns Creek Winter Gallop ride (12/7/2024). The Goethe Benefit ride manager requested that the ride

date for the 2025 ride season be moved from 12/21/2024 (the third weekend in December) to 12/14/2024 (the second weekend in December), due to the date being near to Christmas and wanting to make room on the calendar the Goethe Gallivant to take place two weeks after her ride. The sanctioning director denied the request because such a move would violate AERC's sanctioning policy that rides which are within 150 miles of each other may not be scheduled sooner than 2 weeks apart. The two rides are about 90 miles apart in distance. The Dunns Creek ride has been sanctioned for 12/7/2024. The Goethe Benefit ride manager appealed the decision to the Sanctioning Committee. The Sanctioning Committee reviewed the materials submitted by both ride managers, as well as AERC's sanctioning rules and policies. Upon review, the Sanctioning Committee upheld the decision of the sanctioning director.

The Goethe Benefit ride manager appealed the Sanctioning Committee's decision to the Executive Committee (EC) but she was informed that the appeal was out of the EC's authority due to the length of time until the ride, and that the matter would be submitted to the Board for a decision. After a thorough discussion, the Board unanimously upheld the decision of the Sanctioning Committee. If the ride manager of the Goethe Benefit desires, the ride will be approved for sanctioning on the third weekend of December as it has been for the past four years. Dunns Creek will be sanctioned on the first weekend of December. The Goethe Gallivant ride which had sanctioned this past December on the fifth weekend of the month will need to seek out another date that stays at least two weeks and 150 miles apart from the established rides.

Discussion Regarding Delinquent Ride Fees

This discussion involved the Buffalo Creek Hightail ride which was held on August 4, 2023 – August 5, 2023. As of the May 13, 2024, Board meeting, ride manager Chalice Coward still owed \$523 in rider fees. In 2023, the ride manager requested forgiveness of the amounts owed because attendance was low, and she lost a lot of money. The Board considered the request but concluded that approving the request would not be fair to other ride managers. Kathleen Henkel sent multiple emails to Chalice Coward inquiring about payment, and also offered a payment plan, with no response. Jan Stevens and Bridget Helms, the Mountain Region Directors, had also reached out to her.

After discussing the matter, the Board decided it had no recourse except to send Chalice Coward a letter by certified mail requesting payment and notifying Chalice that the matter would be sent to a debt collection agency if not paid.

Susan Kasemeyer made a motion to adjourn at 8:48 p.m., seconded by John Parke. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by Connie Caudill.