

Board of Directors Conference Call Meeting Minutes, January 13, 2025

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

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

Susan Kasemeyer made a motion to accept the revised agenda, Vance Stine seconded. Motion passed.

Connie Caudill made a motion for the approval of the December 9, 2025, Board meeting minutes, Susan Kasemeyer seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Vance Stine made a motion which was seconded by Olin Balch DVM to excuse *Stephanie Palmer-DuRoss and Susan Garlinghouse DVM, due to employment conflicts. Motion passed. *Stephanie Palmer-DuRoss was able to join the meeting late.

Kathleen Henkel presented the statistical report:

Membership as of 01/12/24: 2,200	01/10/25: 2,148
Sanction fees as of 01/10/24: \$10,560	01/10/25: \$11,005
Rider fees as of 01/10/24: \$575;	01/10/25: \$1,112
New members as of 01/12/24: 82	01/10/25: 74
Ride Starts - 2024 Season: TBA	2025 Season: 189

Tom Rajala, AERC-International committee chair, updated the Board on the AERC/FEI rides. He plans on getting the AERC-I committee election materials out to the AERC-I members in the next few weeks.

Drug Testing Update

Melissa Ribley DVM stated that specific areas of the drug testing program would need to be addressed by Jay Mero DVM who oversees the program.

The Veterinary Committee is looking at procedural issues that need to be addressed. California Equine Medication Program (CEMP) is the testing authority in California, and it performs drug testing of equine events within the state. AERC has historically relied on the California program in order to avoid double testing/charges. They use the same lab as AERC uses for testing blood samples. CEMP charges \$14.00 per horse for testing compared to AERC's charge of \$6.00 per horse. AERC has had a good relationship with CEMP. There was a change of leadership at CEMP and its current policy is that instead of notifying AERC, they will now notify the person whose horse tested a positive and then notify the event manager. Melissa Ribley DVM stated that this presents a real issue since AERC should be notified first. The matter has been discussed with CEMP and they have agreed to amend their policy so that AERC and the event manager will be notified at the same time. The Legal Committee recommends that California ride managers be required to sign a confidentiality agreement requiring them to not disclose any positive drug tests which may result from testing at their rides. The Legal Committee is working on the agreement and will send it to the Board.

John Parke asked if the Legal Committee considered writing a rule instead of a confidentiality agreement. He feels this would be worth exploring since some ride managers may not understand or sign the confidentiality agreement. Melissa Ribley DVM will have the Vet Committee investigate it.

John Parke also discussed the lack of testing in California. Melissa Ribley DVM stated that apparently CEMP now has sufficient personnel and will be doing more testing.

The Veterinary Committee will work on writing a rule stating drug testing notification to ride managers must remain confidential.

Junior/Young Riders Update

Maribel Paulson shared that Crater Hill, Echo Valley Ranch and others are donating tack and trophies for Junior Rider BC which some ride managers have begun to offer. The Young Rider/Junior program at the AERC Convention will be similar to the past event. Earle Baxter, Alanna Frank and Crater Hill are lined up to speak. A scavenger hunt is also planned.

Budget/Finances

Mollie Krumlaw-Smith led a discussion on the budget. At the time of our meetings AERC's 2024 net ordinary income was \$6,772, though there are several drug testing invoices the office is waiting for. Once the invoice totals are known and recorded, they will further reduce our income. These invoices will result in a loss for 2024 but still slightly favorable to budget. Favorable to budget line items included sanctioning fees, day members, horse registrations, Endurance News advertisement, sponsorship, and higher interest rates earning better than expected investment income.

Negative to the budget were the AERC convention, legal fees, credit card fees, office supplies and Endurance News. The office is currently exploring options to save on Endurance News printing. Membership was down 3.02%. The veterinary CE course and the wilderness training course both had significant losses.

Mollie Krumlaw-Smith made a motion at 9:10 p.m. to go into executive session to discuss payroll expenses, motion seconded by Connie Caudill. Motion passed.

At 9:47 p.m. John Parke made a motion to come out of executive session, Jan Stevens seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Moving forward the Board will look at avenues to save money and to bring in revenue by designating a dedicated person to work with our sponsors and potential sponsors. The 2025 convention will be held in Reno Nevada which traditionally does well financially.

Budget Motion. Tami Rougeau made a motion to accept the budget with the payroll adjustments. Motion seconded by Maureen Fehrs DVM. Motion passed unanimously.

Susan Kasemeyer made a motion to adjourn at 9:52 p.m. Motion seconded by John Parke. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by Connie Caudill, Secretary