

March 8, 2025, AERC General Session Meeting Minutes

President Nick Kohut DVM called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. PST.

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 and Laurie Underwood. Director at Large elect, Lara Worden, and incoming West Region Director, Erin McChesney, were also in attendance.

Mike Maul was unable to attend.

AERC President, Nick Kohut DVM, welcomed everyone to the meeting. He stated that three Board members, Mike Maul, Eric Rueter, and Susan Garlinghouse DVM, were unable to attend. He expressed appreciation for the current Board members and the office staff, Kathleen Henkel, Troy Smith, and Giulia Orth, as well as Kathleen Henkel's family for their annual efforts during the AERC convention.

West Region Director Susan Garlinghouse DVM will be stepping down due to her busy veterinary schedule. Erin McChesney agreed to replace Susan Garlinghouse DVM. A motion was made by Nick Kohut DVM which was seconded by Olin Balch DVM to approve Erin McChesney as the West Region Director. Motion passed unanimously.

Robert Ribley swore in the Directors at Large: Olin Balch DVM, Diane Connolly, Mollie Krumlaw-Smith, Bob Marshall DVM, Melissa Ribley DVM, Laurie Underwood and Lara Worden, and West Region Director Erin McChesney.

Naomi Preston made a motion to accept the slate of current officers for election this year, seconded by Melissa Ribley DVM. The motion passed unanimously. The officers will be sworn in at the National awards banquet on Saturday.

Various topics were discussed in the meeting by the AERC members including:

- Stand-alone LD and reasons for the motion not passing.
- Suggestions from NW Region members to have stewards at rides to resolve conflicts, with a committee recommended to address the issue. Melissa Ribley DVM noted that many Directors already fulfill this role.
- Questions about ride shutdowns during Covid and reasons some rides occurred but did not receive sanctioning.
- Trail marking issues and solutions such as using Ride with GPS when trail markings are sabotaged. Darlene Merlich offered to assist on a committee to advance this initiative.
- Concerns over US Forest Service campground closures. Nick Kohut DVM mentioned that Trails co-chair Monica Chapman-Pickett attended the "Hike the Hill" meeting in Washington DC, and advised ride managers to work closely with land managers and apply for permits early and to stay engaged.
- A member suggested involvement with the Back Country Horsemen (BCH), who have been participating in meetings, and recommended BCH reach out to federal lands with active agreements to work on trails.

Susan Kasemeyer made a motion to adjourn at 11:13 a.m., which was seconded by Vance Stine. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by Connie Caudill, Secretary.