

March 9, 2025, AERC Board Convention Meeting Minutes

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, Lara Worden, Erin McChesney and Laurie Underwood. Executive Director Kathleen Henkel was also present.

Vance Stine moved to accept the revised agenda. Jan Stevens seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Vance Stine made a motion to excuse Mike Maul which was seconded by Maribel Paulson. Motion passed.

Nick Kohut DVM announced that all current committee chairs (other than the Technical Committee, which he is working on) and the non-veterinary liaison to the Veterinary Committee are willing to remain in their positions and asked for Board approval. Vance Stine made a motion to accept the nominated chairs and the non-veterinary liaison to the Veterinary Committee. Khristin Seymore-Norsworthy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Discussion on the convention. The overall attendance this year was low but the dance was very well attended, as was the Vet CE program which had over 40 veterinarians in attendance. Thoughts for next years' convention were discussed. The Board may consider a virtual convention similar to the 2021 Covid year convention which was very successful and well attended. This would open up a wide variety of speakers. EquiSummit is an excellent virtual conference example. The Board will also be looking at other venues for in-person conventions.

Nick Kohut DVM explained the confidentiality protocols regarding several types of information which are received by Board members. One type is the confidential fatality reports which the Board receives from the Veterinary Committee. The Welfare of the Horse Committee conducts additional interviews and further research and prepares fatality reports for publication in Endurance News. Fatality summaries are prepared by the Welfare of the Horse Committee which are posted on the website for transparency. John Parke explained that fatality reports prepared by the Welfare of the Horse Committee are to educate our members and not to put a spotlight on treating veterinarians.

Another type of confidential information received by the Board occurs during executive sessions.

Role of the Executive Committee. John Parke led a discussion regarding the role of the Executive Committee. Authority of the Committee is referred to in the AERC Bylaws. Exchanges on the Board email list are not substitutes for meetings. Voting cannot take place on an email list.

Conflict of Interest Statements. John Parke thoroughly explained the concept of conflict of interest. Each Board member is required to fill out a conflict of interest statement. Examples of a conflict of interest are financial interests, or divided loyalties in other organizations. Conflict of interest statements are posted on the AERC website.

Hot Topics. Discussion was held on the Hot Topic meetings offered at the convention. John Parke felt it was good to hear members' input on the strategic plan and goals for AERC and also on the second topic which pulled Junior and Young Riders into the discussion.

Tami Rougeau led a discussion on the Strategic Plan which encompassed membership, junior riders, LD riders, changing perception of what endurance riding is to each person, mentorship programs, recognition of different awards, and bringing in new riders and intro rides. Tami Rougeau stated the Board has accomplished a great deal on the Strategic Plan but that it is time to update it and look forward to where AERC is going. She will give the Board a draft and follow up at the next meeting.

Nick Kohut DVM gave a brief summary of the roles of our committees. The committees do the work and research, to include checking with the office to see what the potential cost is and the workload that is involved, before bringing a motion to the Board. It is not the Board's job to work on committee motions, only to advise revisions so the committee chair can take back to their committee to tweak and finalize accordingly.

Susan Kasemeyer made a motion which was seconded by Olin Balch DVM, to adjourn the meeting at 9:21 a.m. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by Connie Caudill, Secretary.