

December 8, 2025, AERC Board Meeting Minutes

President Nick Kohut DVM called the meeting to order at 8:05 p.m. EST

Board members present at the meeting were Olin Balch DVM, Bruce Burton, Connie Caudill, Marci Cunningham, Jan Stevens, Bridget Helms, Maureen Fehrs DVM, Tami Rougeau, Dawn Hilliard, Nick Kohut DVM, Regina Rose, John Parke, Susan Kasemeyer, Vance Stine, Maribel Paulson, Erin McChesney, Bob Marshall DVM, Diane Connolly, Mike Maul, Melissa Ribley DVM, Stephanie Palmer-DuRoss, Mollie Krmlaw-Smith, Laurie Underwood and Lara Worden. Also present were Executive Director Giulia Orth, Samantha Ellis, Chair of the AERC-I Committee and Diane Rowley, Chair of the Protest and Grievance Committee.

A motion was made by Connie Caudill to accept the revised agenda which was seconded by Tami Rougeau. Motion passed.

A motion was made by Tami Rougeau to approve the November 10, 2025, meeting minutes which was seconded by Olin Balch DVM. Motion passed with 4 abstentions.

A motion was made by Vance Stine and seconded by Olin Balch DVM to excuse Khristin Seymore-Norsworthy (scheduling conflict) and Naomi Preston (family emergency) from the meeting. Motion passed.

Giulia Orth presented the statistical report:

	2024	2025	Change	% Change
Total Members through 11/30	4,229	3,960	-269	-6.36%
New Members through 11/30	596	528	-68	-11.41%
Rider Fees through 11/30	\$58,868	\$54,289 (1 ride pending)	-\$4,579	-7.8%

Sanction Fees through 11/30	\$15,495	\$17,855	\$2,360	15.2%
Starting Riders recorded from start of the ride season through 11/30	11,842	10,666 (1 ride pending)	-1,176	-9.93%

Committee reports were given by the committee chairs of the AERC International Committee, Marketing Committee, Trails/Land Management Committee and the National Championship Committee.

[Motion on behalf of the Sanctioning and International Committees regarding the 2026 Young Riders Championship Ride](#). Connie Caudill presented the motion:

Motion to Approve the 2026 Young Riders Championship ride to be held at the 2026 Biltmore Ride on Saturday May 2, 2026. Ride will be held in conjunction with a 75-mile open AERC ride.

Motion passed unanimously.

[Ethics Committee Charter](#). The Ethics Committee presented a committee charter for Board approval. After a brief discussion, Tami Rougeau made a motion for the charter to be sent back to the Ethics Committee to be reworked using feedback from the committees. Jan Stevens seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

[Member Communications](#). The Board discussed who should respond to member communications —the Executive Director, a committee, an individual Board member, or the entire Board — and whether members should receive immediate confirmation of receipt. It was agreed that AERC needs an up-to-date response protocol. Nick Kohut DVM, said the Executive Committee will review this issue and propose a policy for Board approval.

Nick Kohut DVM reported that the voting for Southwest Regional Director was very close. Maribel Paulson and Ashley Wingert have been elected to serve as directors for the upcoming two-year term beginning in March 2026. He expressed his appreciation to Stephanie Palmer-DuRoss for her service and contributions to AERC during her tenure on the Board.

John Parke made a motion to enter in Executive session at 8:42 p.m. to discuss insurance and the protest appeal. The motion was seconded by Tami Rougeau. Motion passed.

A motion was made by John Parke and seconded by Vance Stine to exit executive session at 9:41 p.m. Motion passed.

Nick Kohut DVM made a motion to grant Debi Sanger's appeal, which was seconded by John Parke. The vote was 6 in favor of the motion, 16 against the motion, and one abstention. Maribel Paulson recused herself. The motion failed, and the Protest Committee's decision remains.

John Parke made a motion to adjourn at 9:47p.m. which was seconded by Susan Kasemeyer. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Connie Caudill, Secretary