

## January 12, 2026, 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, Khristin Seymore-Norsworthy, Connie Caudill, Marci Cunningham, Jan Stevens, Bridget Helms, Maureen Fehrs DVM, Tami Rougeau, Dawn Hilliard, Nick Kohut DVM, Naomi Preston, Regina Rose, John Parke, Susan Kasemeyer, Maribel Paulson, Bob Marshall DVM, Diane Connolly, Mike Maul, Melissa Ribley DVM, Stephanie Palmer-DuRoss, Mollie Krumlaw-Smith, Laurie Underwood and Lara Worden. Also present were Robert Ribley, Chelsea Arnold, Ashley Wingert and Executive Director Giulia Orth.

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

A motion was made by Tami Rougeau to approve the December 8, 2025, meeting minutes which was seconded by Laurie Underwood. Motion passed

A motion was made by Connie Caudill and seconded by Tami Rougeau to excuse Vance Stine for a family emergency. Motion passed.

Giulia Orth presented the statistical report:

	2025	2026	Change	% Change
Total Members through January	1872	1757	-115	-6.1%
New Members through January	59	75	+16	+27.1%
Rider Fees through January 7	\$1,112	\$868*	-\$244	-21.9%
Sanction Fees through January 7	\$10,170	\$10,953	+\$783	+7.7%
Starting Riders recorded from start of the ride season through January 7	388	201*	-187	-48.2%

\* Results from 4 rides pending

Committee reports were received for Board review from the Competition, Junior and Young Riders, Ride Managers and the Veterinary Committees.

Motion to Approve Nomination of Chelsea Arnold for the Board of Directors. West Region Director Tami Rougeau nominated Chelsea Arnold to succeed Erin McChesney, who resigned from her position. The motion to approve Chelsea Arnold's nomination was proposed by Tami Rougeau and seconded by Olin Balch, DVM. The motion passed unanimously.

Robert Ribley, Chair of the Election Committee, formally administered the oath of office to Chelsea Arnold, as West Region Director on the Board.

Motion of Name the Trails and Land Management regarding the Prague Lake (Prague, OK) Trail Grant Request for Horse Pen Footing Improvements. Dawn Hilliard presented the motion:

The Trails and Land Management Committee made a motion requesting AERC to use designated Trails Grant funds to help fund footing improvements of the horse pens at the Prague Lake equestrian section of the campground, located in Prague, Oklahoma. Funds requested: \$2,850.

Prague Lake is a city-owned campground that has been used by equestrians and campers for decades. Prague Lake seeks to provide a meaningful public resource for equestrian riders for recreation, training, and competition. An AERC Grant helped fund the addition of permanent, safe horse pens in 2021. The current request will improve the footing in those pens by adding 4 inches of gravel topped by 4 inches of sand to all sixteen 12'x12' pens at the facility.

A matching grant for \$2850 has been obtained from the Oklahoma Equestrian Trail Riders Association (OETRA). OETRA is very active in this facility, with members volunteering approximately 15 hours a week year-round and hosting a work weekend annually to prepare for the endurance event. There is an established ride, the Cougar Prowl, at this venue.

Work will begin immediately.

Motion from Committee passed unanimously.

AERC Treasurer Mollie Krumlaw-Smith presented the 2026 budget for Board review and approval.

Mollie Krumlaw-Smith stated that the objective of the budget is to ensure operating income remains at or slightly above the break-even point. She clarified the distinction between the operating budget and funds allocated for committee expenses and grants. On the budget, she has listed a loss of \$10,000 but expects it will be closer to \$0.

She indicated that an additional \$14,000 will be allocated to the Trails fund from the Julie Jackson estate to support trail grants in the Midwest region.

Deb Moe, who has led the Green Bean program, will be stepping down at the end of the year. It is hoped that another IT professional will take on the responsibility of overseeing the program.

Tami Rougeau made a motion to enter executive session at 9:01 p.m., which was seconded by Susan Kasemeyer.

Connie Caudill made a motion, which was seconded by Tami Rougeau, to exit executive session at 9:22 p.m.

Tami Rougeau moved to approve the 2026 proposed budget, which was seconded by Connie Caudill. Motion passed unanimously.

Tami Rougeau inquired about the possibility of providing each regional director with a list of non-renewing members to facilitate follow-up regarding their reasons for non-renewal. Giulia Orth responded that she would be able to distribute this information to the respective regional directors when they are prepared to proceed.

John Parke made a motion to adjourn at 9:34 p.m. which was seconded by Olin Balch DVM. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by Connie Caudill, Secretary