

February 28, 2026, AERC Board Meeting Minutes

President Nick Kohut DVM called the meeting to order at 10:20 a.m. EST

Board members present at the meeting were Olin Balch DVM, Bruce Burton, Khristin Seymore-Norsworthy, Connie Caudill, Jan Stevens, Bridget Helms, Maureen Fehrs DVM, Dawn Hilliard, Nick Kohut DVM, Naomi Preston, Regina Rose, Marci Cunningham, John Parke, Chelsea Arnold, Susan Kasemeyer, Vance Stine, Maribel Paulson, Bob Marshall DVM, Diane Connolly, Mike Maul, Melissa Ribley DVM, Mollie Krumlaw-Smith, Lara Worden and Laurie Underwood. Also present were Ashley Wingert, newly elected Southwest Director, and Executive Director Giulia Orth.

Tami Rougeau was absent.

Nick Kohut DVM welcomed attendees and thanked the Convention Committee for organizing the Virtual Convention. He noted recent changes at the AERC office, including staff retirements, and commended Giulia Orth, Tiffany Keim, and Cindy Young for their contributions. He thanked the Board for their work and expressed his appreciation to outgoing directors Stephanie Palmer-Duross and Erin McChesney for their service over the past few years.

There have been two changes on the Board. Erin McChesney stepped down and Chelsea Arnold was nominated to replace her as a West Region Director. Ashley Wingert was elected to the Board as a Southwest Regional Director.

Robert Ribley, Chair of the Election Committee, swore in the Regional Directors to the AERC Board.

Nick Kohut DVM opened up nominations for the AERC Officers. Naomi Preston nominated the entire slate of current officers which was seconded by Vance Stine. The motion passed unanimously.

Robert Ribley swore in Nick Kohut DVM as President, Mollie Krumlaw-Smith as Treasurer and Connie Caudill as Secretary. Vice President, Tami Rougeau will be sworn in at the next Board meeting.

Nick Kohut DVM opened the floor to questions or comments from the members.

Nearly 300 people registered for the Virtual Convention, surpassing attendance at the 2025 in-person event. Many valued the virtual format for its accessibility, and several praised the speaker lineup. It was suggested to extend webinar availability beyond one month, though this depends on speaker consent.

Naomi Preston, Chair of the Education Committee, asked members to provide feedback on educational articles. Suggested topics included guidance for preparing for extended travel to events and strategies for conditioning in difficult weather. Members were

reminded that several educational webinars are available on the AERC website, including the latest one by Nancy Loving, DVM. Naomi Preston also announced an upcoming article about recruiting new members, called "Each One Get One." Additionally, a question was raised about the standalone LD, and it was noted that the Board voted against it because it was considered divisive.

Melissa Ribley, DVM, as co-chair of the Veterinary Committee, stated that the committee is actively providing articles and welcomes questions and suggestions for future educational topics.

There was a discussion on retaining members and recruiting new riders. The Membership and Marketing committees would be interested in receiving more ideas from our members.

The meeting adjourned at 11:01 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Connie Caudill, Secretary.