

BOD Meeting Agenda 7/13/26

Zoom Meeting Topic: AERC Board of Directors

Time: Jul 13, 2026 05:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82253489127>

Meeting ID: 822 5348 9127

One tap mobile

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Call to order and roll call

AERC members present:

Diane Rowley (Protest and Grievance Committee Chair)

Bonnie Girod (EDRA President and AERC member, NW Region)

Lancette Korner (AERC member, SW Region)

Housekeeping

- Acceptance of Agenda
- Approval of BOD meeting minutes of 6/8/26 [### end of document](#)
- Excusals from 6/8/26 meeting: Vance Stine; possible excusal from 7/13/26 meeting for Mollie Krumlaw-Smith due to family commitments

Statistical report by Giulia Orth

	2025	2026	Change	% Change
Total Members through July 1	3673	3,520	-153	-4.2%
New Members through July 1	393	411	+18	4.6%
Rider Fees through July 1	23,922	24,898	+\$976	+4.1%
Sanction Fees through July 1	17,305	17,208	-\$97	-0.6%
Starting Riders through July 1	5630	5107	-523	-9.3%

* Pending results from 5 rides on 7/1/26

Competition Committee Report

1. The Committee is working on a draft of a motion for 50 mile rides, similar to the one passed last year for 100 mile rides, which would give full points to riders on 50 mile rides that have 5 or more riders. We will have this motion ready for the Mid-Year Board meeting. Currently, in many regions, Days 2 and 3 on 50 mile rides frequently have just a few riders, while the LD riders are many.
2. The Committee received a letter from a member requesting us to evaluate a formal 'riding mentorship' for new riders. She proposed having a formal program where experienced members volunteer to ride with a new rider on their first LD or 50. She also suggested a monetary reward for these volunteers, such as a free ride entry, or payment from AERC. While the committee appreciated her proposal, we all agreed it would not be feasible for a number of reasons. We thought it would be difficult to find riders willing to mentor someone they didn't know, as well as setting it up well ahead of time. Ride Managers need every entry to make ends meet, so the idea of a free entry is not feasible. The consensus of the committee was that informal ride mentorship already exists, through word of mouth and social media. Oftentimes new riders will post that they are looking for someone to ride with, and more often than not, there is someone willing. We encouraged this member to reach out to her local club (Arizona riders), and through social media to find folks to train and ride with.

Respectfully submitted,
Naomi Preston

Junior/Young Rider Committee Report

We now have 69 New Members who are Juniors and Young Riders for this ride season. We are still sending welcome e-mails to all of them. Lisa Schneider has resigned from the committee, so Mary Jane Fridley and I are taking turns on the e-mails.

Here is the breakdown by region:

Central 4, MW 10, MT 10, NE 10, NW 6, PS 2, SE 13, SW 2, W 12

We provided free entries for Juniors at two rides: Dry River ride and Caja del Rio. We also provided the Jr BC at Dry River.

At the YR Championship, several board members were in attendance, including Tami Rougeau from the Jr/Yr committee. AnnaMaria Clarke, another committee member, rode and completed the 100. Tami reported that the Young Riders did well. There were two pulls. They exhibited great horsemanship and sportsmanship. Avery Betz was the first YR in the open division.

We have been working hard on a motion for a raffle for Juniors to ride for free. An anonymous donor has offered to kick start the program. The details will be in the motion. We hope to present it at the July 13 Board meeting.

We continue to submit Junior based articles for Endurance News.

Respectfully submitted, Maribel Paulson Jr/Yr committee chair

Ride Managers Committee Report

The Ride Managers Committee has continued to focus on current issues affecting ride management and the endurance community. Through our recent *Endurance News* articles, we have addressed topics including rider conduct and sportsmanship, the increasing costs of putting on rides in today's economic environment, awareness of the New World Screwworm situation, and we've also made an effort to include some lighter, enjoyable content, such as highlighting the many fun-themed fall rides on the AERC calendar.

Within our private Ride Manager discussion group, we've had productive conversations regarding professional ride manager conduct, the importance of fully disclosing all ride-related fees in ride flyers, and practical approaches to feeding volunteers while balancing the expectations of individuals who provide only minimal assistance. These discussions have provided valuable opportunities for ride managers to share experiences and best practices.

As directed, the committee has also reviewed and provided input on motions originating from the various AERC committees as they have been presented.

Respectfully submitted,

Mollie Krumlaw-Smith, RM Committee Chair

Veterinary Committee Report

Actions of the Veterinary Committee since January, 2026

- 1) Have continued sending out periodic informational emails to AERC Veterinarians
- 2) Continued work on fatality reporting
- 3) Counseled control judges and treatment veterinarians as needed.

- 4) Administered the AERC Drug Testing Program and wrote opinions on adverse analytical findings. Advised the Protest and Grievance committee on the significance of positive drug tests.
- 5) Wrote monthly articles for the Vet Forum column in EN
- 6) Answered questions about prohibited substances to members
- 7) Counseled new ride managers on control of rides
- 8) Worked with Protest and Grievance Committee to develop a motion to limit the available time for a respondent to request the testing of the “B” sample in the case of a protest filed for a violation of the AERC drug rule.
- 9) Put three motions before the board updating the drug rule: 1) levamisole metabolites, 2) selective androgenic receptor modulators (SARM), selective estrogen receptor modulators (SERM) and P450 aromatase inhibitors to Rule 13, Appendix B categories of prohibited substances. Added ostarine (classified as a SARM) to Appendix A, prohibited substances 3) Added ophthalmic application of cyclosporine to Appendix C allowed substances.
- 10) Have begun the planning of the 2027 AERC Veterinary CE

Goals and current projects:

- 1) Complete the review and update of the veterinary certification exams
- 2) Continue periodic informational emails to AERC Veterinarians
- 3) Planning for the AERC Veterinary CE in 2027
- 4) Consider updating Rule 13, the AERC drug rule to prohibit “stacked” NSAIDS or NSAIDS used in combination (non steroidal anti-inflammatory agents) regardless of detected levels.
- 5) Develop motion to prohibit synephrine and SGLT2 inhibitors as a category
- 6) Finalize fatality reports that are outstanding

EDRA Proposal discussion

MOTIONS

Juniors and Young Riders Committee - Junior Ride Entry Vouchers

Proposing Committee: Junior/Young Rider committee

Date of Motion: July 13, 2026

Classification of Motion Request (e.g. new): New

Proposed Motion: To establish a fund for Junior ride entry vouchers.

Background, analysis and benefit: We have over 65 new Jr/Yr members who have joined this ride season. We want to keep them engaged. An anonymous donor has offered \$10,000 to start this program. We would set up donation opportunities on the membership renewal form, both on the website and on the paper form. There would be an opportunity for donations through the year using the website or phone/electronic transfer donations. We will not start the voucher raffle process until the donation has been made.

There is talk of having a raffle or silent auction at the upcoming convention to add to the Junior Ride Entry Voucher fund.

We are planning on having two opportunities to win:

1. We are proposing that there will be a drawing for vouchers of all existing juniors on December 31, 2026. There will be at least one voucher given to a junior in each region, depending on the funds available. We are considering making the number of vouchers in each region proportionate to the membership numbers in each region. We would like to budget the funds we have, for the program to run for an experimental 3 years.
2. Every month, there will be a drawing for the new juniors who have joined since December 31. All winners will be removed from the pool.

In 2027, the vouchers, at this time, will be for \$100 and have a unique ID #. They will be sent to the juniors' e-mail, and will be valid for 12 months. They will be able to print or give to the Ride Managers digitally. They can be used for intro rides through 100 milers. When the Ride Manager turns in their ride results, they can deduct the amounts of vouchers they have from the fees owed to AERC so they can have immediate financial benefits. If the entry fees are less than \$100, the juniors will forfeit the balance. Say if they enter an intro for \$70, they will forfeit the remaining \$30. This way we will not have to deal with refunds.

The vouchers will not be able to be exchanged for cash, nor will they be transferrable to their friends. If they are not used, the money will remain in the fund for the next raffle. The vouchers will not be put on hold.

The money awarded to the vouchers would be transferred from the Junior Voucher fund to Rider Fee revenue for that ride, ensuring that accounting records remain balanced. The fund activity will be reflected in AERC's Year End Financial Statements and Budgets in the same manner as other restricted funds such as Trail Funds.

We are discussing ways to incorporate thanks to the donor in the vouchers. One way might be to put Maribel Paulson's e-mail on the vouchers. The juniors would be asked to e-mail me a story about their ride, or a fun fact about their horse, and I could compile them for an article for Endurance News.

Benefit and/or Impact to Membership and/or the AERC Organization:

To keep the junior members involved, to attract new junior members and to make the financial part of entering rides easier on the parents.

Impact on AERC Office (Workload, budget): Low impact. About an hour to set up donation avenues on Membership renewal forms and website. There will need to be a spreadsheet made up to keep track of donations and awarding and redeeming of the vouchers. The office will also need to keep track of new members and the monthly raffles and issue the vouchers.

Implementation plan (Schedule, resources, financial): 2027 Ride season.

Committee and Office Feedback

All committees consulted

National Championship Committee - Young Rider Championship

Motion Name

Eliminate the separate Young Riders Championship ride. Young Rider division will continue to be included in the AERC National Championship Ride, making just one Young Rider Champion in both the 50 and 100 mile rides.

Proposing Committee

National Championship Committee

Date of Motion (Date to be presented to BOD)

July 13, 2026

Classification of Motion Request (new, change, add, delete, by-law, rule, policy)

Change

Proposed Motion (use exact wording)

The Young Rider Championship ride will be incorporated into the 50- and 100-mile AERC Championship rides, consistent with the other divisions, and will no longer be held as a separate event.

Background, analysis and benefit (describe the problem this motion is solving)

Annie Whelan proposed a 75-mile Young Riders Championship ride several years ago because the AERC program did not yet include a separate Young Riders division, giving young riders a way to compete directly against one another. Since the program now includes a Young Riders division, the NC Committee, in consultation with Annie Whelan, requests eliminating the separate ride. The Young Riders Championship has traditionally drawn fewer than 10 riders, who had to choose between entering the AERC NC ride or the Young Riders Championship. Eliminating the separate event will allow these riders to enter the AERC NC ride while still competing directly with others in the Young Riders division and with all AERC NC participants. This change will make it less confusing in the Young Rider division when determining who is the Young Rider National Champion.

Budget effect/impact (Attach spreadsheet if appropriate) None, Annie Whelan pursued sponsorships for the Young Rider Championship,

Benefit and/or Impact to Membership and/or the AERC Organization

All NC riders will compete together in separate divisions in the AERC NC Ride.

Impact on AERC Office (Work load, budget) None

Implementation plan (Schedule, resources, financial) Beginning at the 2027 season

Supporting materials (List of any other documents and/or spreadsheets)

Committee and Office Feedback (Include feedback from the office and the following committees, Competitions, Education, Finance, International, Junior/Young Rider, Membership, Research, Ride Managers, Rules & Bylaws, Technical, Trails, Veterinary, and Welfare of the Horse.)

Supporting approvals (proposing committee, participating committees)

Protest and Grievance Committee

Proposing Committee: Protest & Grievance Committee

Date of Motion: July 13, 2026

Classification of Motion: New

Proposed Motion:

- 1) 14.1 Introduction. Any AERC member, other than a single event member as defined in the AERC Bylaws, may bring a protest with the AERC Protest and Grievance Committee alleging violation of AERC Rules by anyone participating in any manner at an AERC sanctioned ride, including, but not limited to, a rider, equine owner, crew member, control judge, treatment veterinarian, ride manager or other ride management personnel. Anyone contemplating a protest must first attempt to resolve his or her complaint informally by discussing the alleged violation with the person committing the violation and/or the ride manager. In all cases, and in order to provide an additional opportunity to facilitate the resolution of a complaint, a regional director or a director-at-large from the region involved must be notified in writing of the intention to file a protest at least five (5) days prior to the filing of the protest. All filings, submissions and other communications relating to the protest shall be in writing and transmitted electronically (email) unless requested otherwise by any of the involved parties, in which case communication shall be by certified mail, return receipt requested. **In all cases falling within Rule 14 the filing date is determined by the date a filing is received by the intended recipient whether it be the AERC office or the Chair of the Protest & Grievance Committee.**
- 2) **14.4.1 The ruling of the Protest & Grievance Committee will be in effect as of the date of the Committee's decision and will remain so throughout the appeal process if an appeal is filed. Upon appeal, the Board of Directors may uphold, reverse or modify the Protest & Grievance Committee's ruling.**
- 3) 14.5.1 Initiation of Appeal. The protestor or respondent may appeal the decision of the Protest and Grievance Committee to the AERC Board of Directors by filing (either by electronic transmission or by certified mail, return receipt requested) with the AERC office a notice of appeal within ~~30~~ **15** days after the date of electronic transmission or mailing of the written decision by the Chair of the Committee.
- 4) 14.5.2 Submittals to the Board. Upon receipt of a valid notice of appeal, the AERC office shall serve the protestor, respondent and the Chair of the Protest and Grievance Committee either by electronic transmission (preferred) or by certified mail, return receipt requested, with a copy of the notice of appeal and the written statement of the grounds for appeal. Any party to the protest who chooses to oppose the appeal may file with the AERC office a statement of opposition to the appeal within ~~30~~ **15** days following the date of delivery of the electronic transmission or within ~~30~~ **15** days of mailing of the copy of the notice of appeal by the AERC office. After the time to file a statement of

opposition to the appeal has expired, the AERC office shall transmit to each member of the Board of Directors a copy of the complete record of the protest, including the original complaint form, all witness statements and other written materials submitted by the protestor and the respondent, all correspondence from the Chair of the Committee, any written extensions of time period for filing, any record of investigation or hearing by the Committee and the written decision of the Protest and Grievance Committee, together with all documents timely filed by either party to initiate the appeal or to oppose the appeal.

5) Rule 15.5 Upon motion by a Board member or the Chair of Protest & Grievance Committee and pursuant to Rules 15.3 and 15.4, the Board of Directors may impose a penalty for a violation under 15.1.b. Written notice of the motion shall be sent to the person(s) named in the motion with the opportunity to file with the AERC office within 20 days of notice of the motion a written response to the motion which will be presented to the Board together with the motion.

Background, analysis and benefit:

1) Rationale: This is to clarify what is meant by “filing.”

2) Rationale: There have been several attempts by parties to prolong the effective date of a P&G ruling by intentionally dragging out the appeal process. Although there currently is no Rule specifying when a ruling takes effect, it has been a long-standing unwritten policy of the P&G (existing well before the current Committee’s composition) to delay the effective date of its ruling in the case of an appeal until after the Board rules on the P&G decision. Because the proposed Rule 14.4.1 would be a change of existing practice, a new Rule clarifying the process is advisable. As the practice stands now, a party can effectively manipulate the appeal process to delay a final Board decision for up to 4 months or more after the date of the P&G decision. And, with the timeline for filing and responding to a protest built in, it could well be 7-8 months after a protest is filed before a final decision is made, allowing a rider who has been sanctioned under a P&G ruling to continue to compete long after the initial violation.. The proposed Rule is consistent with the practice in Criminal Law and will incentivize a party wishing to appeal to act as quickly as possible. Additional Rule changes tightening up the timeline in the appeal process to expedite things are also being proposed.

3) Rationale: This is intended to expedite the appeal process. Since a party cannot introduce any new evidence on appeal (Rule 15.5.3), 15 days should be adequate to prepare and submit an appeal. It is also consistent with the timeline that Board members have to review the record on appeal. Rule 14.5.4

4) Rationale: Again, because no new evidence may be submitted on appeal (Rule 14.5.3), a 15 day limit on the time to file any opposition should not pose an undue hardship. It is also consistent with the timeline that Board members have to review the record on appeal. Rule 14.5.4

5) Rationale: Currently there is no formalized mechanism for addressing a violation under Rule 15.1.b: "Failure to obey any penalty imposed by the AERC." Requiring a protest in such circumstances is unnecessarily cumbersome, requiring some party to file yet another protest and with the potential of further dragging out the process with appeals, etc. This rule would permit the Board to quickly address the issue with finality. As an aside, this proposed rule could be expanded to include any infraction under Rule 15.1. Rule 15 grants the Board the authority to take action in such matters and this would provide a mechanism for doing so.

Benefit and/or Impact to Membership and/or the AERC Organization:

The motions are intended to clarify and streamline the protest process which all too often is seen by the membership as taking an inordinate amount of time, with penalties only taking effect long after the violation. The rules, as they currently stand, are also subject to being manipulated by those who have a mind to do so solely for the purpose of delaying the imposition of a penalty as long as possible. This is especially so with the appeal process. Similarly, the proposed Rule 15.5 would allow the Board to act quickly and effectively in the case of a violation of an existing penalty.

Impact on AERC Office (Workload, budget): Changes to existing Rule Book.

Implementation plan (Schedule, resources, financial): Immediate with changes to take effect at the beginning of the 2027 Ride calendar.

Committee and Office Feedback

Rules Committee comments

14.5.1 and 14.5.2 The Rules Committee suggests a 20 day period instead of the 15 in the proposal due to the current postal service lag. However, 99.9% of protest communications are done via email. In the extremely rare situation where a party wants, in good faith, to communicate by USPS, the Chair of the P&G has the discretion to grant a brief extension.

15.5 The Rules Committee requested that the proposed Rule be "fleshed out" a bit to include a timeline and what happens with the response. These requests have been incorporated in the proposed rule as it now stands. In response to a question, such a motion would be treated the same as any other motion and not treated as an appeal.

Supporting approvals: Legal Committee

Veterinary Committee - B Sample Testing

Motion Name: Limit the time period to 15 days for the Person Responsible to request drug testing of the “B” sample

Proposing Committee

Veterinary Committee

Date of Motion (Date to be presented to BOD)

July 13, 2026

Classification of Motion Request Policy change

Proposed Motion (use exact wording)

Change the current AERC Drug Testing Policy to (changes in italic): The procedures for reviewing positive tests by the independent laboratory and filing protests are described in Rule 13 and the procedures for handling protests are described in Rule 14. Additionally, when the AERC Executive Director submits any laboratory report to the Veterinary Committee and the Legal Committee for their initial review under Rule 13, the Executive Director shall not include the name of the horse tested or its rider. Also, once a protest has been filed, the Protest and Grievance Committee shall *electronically* communicate with the protested party following the filing of a protest for violation of Rule 13 that shall give notice to the protested party of the right to a confirmatory analysis of the “B” sample at that party’s cost. *The protested party shall have 15 days from the date of notification to file a written request to the AERC office for confirmatory analysis of the “B” sample. The request can be submitted in writing or electronically but in either case must be received by the AERC office within the 15 day period.*

Background, analysis and benefit

The current drug policy does not indicate a timeframe in which the respondent has to request a testing of the B sample. This lack of clarification can result in the protest procedure being drawn out for an extended period of time.

Budget effect/impact None

Benefit and/or Impact to Membership and/or the AERC Organization

This addition to the drug testing policy provides clarification to persons responsible who wish to have a confirmatory analysis of a positive drug test.

Impact on AERC Office None

Implementation plan Immediate

Supporting materials The AERC Drug Testing Policy which is found at AERC.org

Committee and Office Feedback

All committees consulted

Supporting approvals Protest and Grievance Committee

Ethics Committee Charter revision

AERC ETHICS COMMITTEE CHARTER (REVISED)

Purpose

The purpose of the AERC Ethics Committee is to serve as an independent, fair, and impartial body to review and investigate complaints alleging violations of AERC policies or conduct unbecoming by Board members or Committee Chairs.

The Committee evaluates evidence, determines whether a policy violation or behavior deemed unbecoming of AERC leadership has occurred, and provides findings and recommendations to the Executive Committee. While the Committee operates in an advisory capacity, its processes shall reflect principles of fairness, consistency, transparency in structure, and confidentiality in case handling.

Committee Structure & Governance

The Chair of the Ethics Committee shall be appointed by the President and approved by the Board of Directors.

The Committee shall consist of five (5) AERC members in good standing who are not currently serving on the Board of Directors or as Chair of another AERC committee. Members should represent diverse AERC regions and demonstrate familiarity with AERC bylaws, rules, and policies.

Committee members shall be nominated by the Chair and approved by the Executive Committee. The names of committee members shall be disclosed to the Board of Directors and made available to the membership; however, members shall not be publicly associated with specific cases.

Members shall serve staggered terms of three (3) years to ensure continuity.

Any member with a conflict of interest in a matter must recuse themselves. A temporary replacement may be appointed by the Chair, subject to Executive Committee approval.

Standards of Review

The Committee shall evaluate all information using a “preponderance of the evidence” standard (i.e., whether it is more likely than not that a violation or poor behavior occurred).

The Committee may consider all relevant information, including witness statements and indirect evidence, assigning weight based on credibility, corroboration, and reliability.

Procedures for Filing and Reviewing a Complaint

Step 1: Filing a Complaint

A complaint must be submitted using the official AERC Ethics Complaint Form, obtained through the AERC office.

The complaint must:

- Be filed within thirty (30) days of the alleged incident (or last occurrence in a pattern of behavior)
- Include a clear description of the alleged violation or behavior
- Identify the individual involved
- Include all supporting documentation and evidence available at the time of submission

All submissions must be in writing and transmitted electronically.

Complaints determined to be frivolous, malicious, or submitted in bad faith may be dismissed, and the Committee may recommend further action against the complainant.

Step 2: Review and Response

Upon receipt, the Committee will review the complaint for completeness and relevance.

A redacted copy of the complaint will be provided to the respondent. Redactions will be limited to what is necessary to protect confidentiality and prevent retaliation.

The respondent shall have thirty (30) days to submit a written response, including supporting documentation and witness statements.

The respondent shall be given a fair opportunity to review the substance of the allegations and respond meaningfully.

The Committee may conduct further investigation, including interviews with relevant parties.

Step 3: Investigation and Findings

The Committee will evaluate all submitted materials and any additional information gathered.

The review and investigation process should be completed within thirty (30) days of receiving the complaint, when reasonably possible.

The Committee shall issue a written report to the Executive Committee that includes:

- A summary of the allegations
- A summary of the evidence considered
- Findings regarding whether a violation or poor behavior has occurred
- The rationale for the determination
- Any recommendations

If the complaint is determined to be unfounded, the Committee may recommend appropriate steps to restore the respondent's reputation where warranted.

Step 4: Executive Committee Determination

The Executive Committee will review the Ethics Committee's report within fourteen (14) days of receiving the report and determine whether action is required. If the Executive Committee adopts a decision, it will be reported in executive session to the AERC Board of Directors.

The Executive Committee will notify both the complainant and the respondent in writing of the decision within seven (7) days of the Board meeting.

Step 5: Record-keeping and Confidentiality

All proceedings shall remain confidential to protect both complainants and respondents.

Confidentiality applies to case details, evidence, and participant identities where appropriate; however, it does not extend to the structure or membership of the Committee.

The Executive Director shall maintain secure and confidential records of all ethics proceedings.

Date of the AERC Midyear meeting is August 22, 2026 starting at 7:00 am PST

June 8, 2026, AERC Board Meeting Minutes

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

Board members present were Chelsea Arnold, Olin Balch DVM, Bruce Burton, Connie Caudill, Marci Cunningham, Maureen Fehrs DVM, Bridget Helms, Dawn Hilliard, Susan Kasemeyer, Nick Kohut DVM, Bob Marshall DVM, Mike Maul, John Parke, Maribel Paulson, Naomi Preston, Melissa Ribley DVM, Regina Rose, Tami Rougeau, Khristin Seymore-Norsworthy, Laurie Underwood, Ashley Wingert, Lara Worden and Executive Director Giulia Orth.

Connie Caudill moved to accept the agenda with Olin Balch DVM seconding the motion. The motion was approved.

Tami Rougeau moved to approve the April 13, 2026, meeting minutes, which was seconded by Laurie Underwood. The motion was approved.

Bruce Burton moved, and Tami Rougeau seconded, to excuse Olin Balch DVM from the April 13, 2026, meeting (health reasons) and to excuse Diane Connolly (ride management commitments at the AERC National Championship rides), and Mollie Krumlaw-Smith, and Jan Stevens (lack of cell service) from the June 8, 2026, meeting.

Vance Stine was absent from the June 8, 2026, meeting.

Giulia Orth presented the statistical report.

	2025	2026	Change	% Change
Total Members through June 1	3554	3370	-184	-5%
New Members through June 1	349	370	+21	+6%
Rider Fees through June 1	\$16,558	\$19,015	+\$2,457	+14.8%
Sanction Fees through June 1	\$16,905	\$16,838	-\$67	-0.4%
Starting Riders through June 1	4,611	3,655	-956	-20.7%

*Pending results from 10 rides on 6/1/2026

Committee Reports were presented by the Education Committee, Membership Committee, Welfare of the Horse Committee, Marketing Committee, National Championship Committee and Trails/Land Management Committee. The committees have been working hard. The committee reports are located alongside the Board meeting minutes on AERC.org webpage.

Ethics Committee - New Charter

The Board reviewed and discussed a new charter for the Ethics Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the AERC Ethics Committee is to serve as an independent, fair, and impartial body to review and investigate complaints alleging violations of AERC policies by Board members or Committee Chairs.

The Committee evaluates evidence, determines whether a policy violation has occurred, and provides findings and recommendations to the Executive Committee. While the Committee operates in an advisory capacity, its processes shall reflect principles of fairness, consistency, transparency in structure, and confidentiality in case handling.

Committee Structure & Governance

The Chair of the Ethics Committee shall be appointed by the President and approved by the Board of Directors.

The Committee shall consist of three (3) to five (5) AERC members in good standing who are not currently serving on the Board of Directors or as Chair of another AERC committee. Members should represent diverse AERC regions and demonstrate familiarity with AERC bylaws, rules, and policies.

Committee members shall be nominated by the Chair and approved by the Executive Committee. The names of committee members shall be disclosed to the Board of Directors and made available to the membership; however, members shall not be publicly associated with specific cases.

Members shall serve staggered terms of two (2) to three (3) years to ensure continuity.

Any member with a conflict of interest in a matter must recuse themselves. A temporary replacement may be appointed by the Chair, subject to Executive Committee approval.

Standards of Review

The Committee shall evaluate all information using a “preponderance of the evidence” standard (i.e., whether it is more likely than not that a violation occurred).

The Committee may consider all relevant information, including witness statements and indirect evidence, assigning weight based on credibility, corroboration, and reliability.

Procedures for Filing and Reviewing a Complaint

Step 1: Filing a Complaint

A complaint must be submitted using the official AERC Ethics Complaint Form, obtained through the AERC office.

The complaint must:

- Be filed within thirty (30) days of the alleged incident (or last occurrence in a pattern of behavior)
- Include a clear description of the alleged violation
- Identify the individual involved
- Include all supporting documentation and evidence available at the time of submission

All submissions must be in writing and transmitted electronically.

Complaints determined to be frivolous, malicious, or submitted in bad faith may be dismissed, and the Committee may recommend further action.

Step 2: Review and Response

Upon receipt, the Committee will review the complaint for completeness and relevance.

A redacted copy of the complaint will be provided to the respondent. Redactions will be limited to what is necessary to protect confidentiality and prevent retaliation.

The respondent shall have thirty (30) days to submit a written response, including supporting documentation and witness statements.

The respondent shall be given a fair opportunity to review the substance of the allegations and respond meaningfully.

The Committee may conduct further investigation, including interviews with relevant parties.

Step 3: Investigation and Findings

The Committee will evaluate all submitted materials and any additional information gathered.

The review and investigation process should be completed within thirty (30) to forty-five (45) days of receiving the complaint, when reasonably possible.

The Committee shall issue a written report to the Executive Committee that includes:

- A summary of the allegations
- A summary of the evidence considered

- Findings regarding whether a violation occurred
- The rationale for the determination
- Any recommendations

If no violation is found, the Committee may recommend appropriate steps to restore the respondent's reputation where warranted.

Step 4: Executive Committee Determination

The Executive Committee will review the Ethics Committee's report and determine whether action is required.

The Executive Committee will notify both the complainant and the respondent in writing of its decision within fourteen (14) days of receiving the report.

Step 5: Recordkeeping and Confidentiality

All proceedings shall remain confidential to protect both complainants and respondents.

Confidentiality applies to case details, evidence, and participant identities where appropriate; however, it does not extend to the structure or membership of the Committee.

The Executive Director shall maintain secure and confidential records of all ethics proceedings.

John Parke asked for the following revision to be added under number 4: "If the Executive Committee adopts a decision, saying there has been a violation, it will be reported in executive session to the Board, and the Board will act in accordance under the bylaws."

John Parke moved to accept the committee charter with his revision, and Connie Caudill seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion - Nomination of Ethics Committee chair.

Nick Kohut DVM, nominated Dinah Rojek to chair the Ethics Committee. Laurie Underwood seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Nick Kohut DVM, reminded the Board members of the Midyear Board meeting to be held virtually on August 22, 2026, beginning at 7:00 a.m. PDT.

John Parke made a motion to enter executive session, to discuss office updates at 8:39 p.m. which was seconded by Tami Rougeau. Motion passed.

Connie Caudill made a motion to exit executive session at 9:13 p.m. which was seconded by Tami Rougeau. Motion passed.

John Parke made a motion to adjourn at 9:14 p.m., which was seconded by Tami Rougeau. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by Connie Caudill, Secretary.