

BOD Meeting Agenda 10/12/26

Topic: AERC Board of Directors Meeting

Time: Oct 12, 2026 05:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83049756365>

Meeting ID: 830 4975 6365

One tap mobile

+16694449171,,83049756365# US

Call to order and roll call

Also joining us: Diane Rowley, Protest and Grievance Committee Chair

Housekeeping

Acceptance of Agenda

Approval of BOD meeting minutes of 9/14/26 [### end of document](#)

Excusals from 9/14/26 meeting: Chelsea Arnold for family emergency

Possible excusals from 10/12/26 meeting: Dr. Melissa Ribley (travel); Ashley Wingert (travel); Jan Stevens (travel); Diane Connolly (poor ride camp reception)

Statistical report by Giulia Orth

	2025	2026	Change	% Change
Total Members through October 1**	3,898	3,755	-143	-3.7%
New Members through October 1	486	520	+34	+7.0%
Rider Fees through October 1	\$42,999	\$41,577	-\$1,422	-3.3%
Sanction Fees through October 1	\$17,845	\$17,423	-\$422	-2.4%
Starting Riders through October 1*	8,746	7,270	-1,476	-16.9%

* Pending results from 7 rides

** On 10/5/26 launched Fall Special for renewing members (2026 and 2027 at a discount).

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Competition Committee

1. The Committee discussed the issue of 50-80 mile rides in a Zoom meeting September 22, 2026. The following charts were provided by Giulia from our request. The data shows huge differences across regions regarding the percentages of less than full fields, with as high as 78% in the Midwest, 70% in the Southwest, and 62% in the Northwest. A motion was drafted to award full points to rides with 5 or more entries, but tabled due to concerns from some Board members. We will bring this motion forward at the Convention, where we can have a better discussion on the topic.

Region	2016	2019	2022	2025
Central	13 of 38 (34%)	20 of 36 (56%)	13 of 34 (38%)	15 of 34 (44%)
Midwest	47 of 75 (63%)	47 of 63 (75%)	51 of 68 (75%)	57 of 73 (78%)
Mountain	19 of 51 (37%)	22 of 47 (47%)	20 of 37 (54%)	16 of 34 (47%)
Northeast	12 of 43 (28%)	16 of 47 (34%)	16 of 38 (42%)	15 of 32 (47%)
Northwest	25 of 70 (36%)	19 of 55 (35%)	22 of 50 (44%)	29 of 47 (62%)
Pacific Southwest	0 of 28 (0%)	6 of 32 (19%)	13 of 25 (52%)	14 of 33 (42%)
Southeast	3 of 58 (5%)	14 of 61 (23%)	45 of 79 (57%)	28 of 54 (52%)
Southwest	22 of 39 (56%)	14 of 33 (42%)	18 of 32 (56%)	23 of 33 (70%)
West	5 of 41 (12%)	2 of 37 (5%)	2 of 26 (8%)	6 of 30 (20%)

2. The Committee would like to remind the Board of their motion passed at the Board meeting July 15, 2023. **Motion name:** "Capture and target Intro Riders attending AERC rides." **Motion:** Ride Managers will submit Intro Riders names, addresses and emails at the same time as they submit their ride results. AERC will send a special email to the Intro Riders thanking them for their participation, encouraging them to attend another ride, and informing them of the benefits of joining AERC (educational materials, mentorship, camaraderie, points & awards). Provide Intro Rider info to their respective Regional Directors for further contact.

Unfortunately, this motion was never fully implemented. It is long overdue.

3. The Committee is also looking at the wording "Limited Distance", with a Zoom call held October 7, 2026. Many in our membership, as well as the Committee, feel this wording is somewhat demeaning. Other sports, particularly running, do not have "limiting" descriptions of mileage categories. We are evaluating other names for this distance category, including Middle Distance and Mid-Distance, and will come forward with a motion in the near future.

Respectfully submitted,
Naomi Preston
Co-Chair

Junior/Young Rider Committee

Since August 1, we have acquired a new committee member: Rob Sawyer. He is from Connecticut. We have also lost Emilee and Piper due to college responsibilities.

AERC has a total of 218 juniors, with 72 being new in 2026. We have a total of 112 Young riders, with 17 being new in 2026.

We attended Spanish Peaks ride where we celebrated the juniors, and posted an elaborate Facebook Post to show the young people that we are proud of them. Alanna is putting together an article on some of the kids who attended the ride, which will be published in the October Endurance News.

Connie Caudill is planning another exciting AERC International Young Rider Exchange. This awesome program takes young riders to another country, to participate in an endurance ride. This is not an FEI ride, just a national event. The trip will last about one week and is planned for the summer of 2027. An email went out to the YR list to promote the event and invite applications.

We also put together a Young Rider survey, and it went out to all the Young Riders. We were trying to get a feel for what they think about the current Young Rider division. Twelve young people and 2 moms responded. This was about a 10% response rate. I put reminders on FB and Instagram.

The moms both wanted to keep the YR division as it is. Of the Young Riders, 9 voted in favor of keeping the division as it is. 3 preferred not to keep it. Interestingly enough, it was very similar to the informal survey I conducted several years ago.

Here are the results of the comments:

IN FAVOR OF KEEPING THE YR DIVISION AS IT IS:

We are only young riders for a few years, it is fun to compete against peers.

Not all YRs have access to the same number of rides or miles in the regions. We will have plenty of time to ride as adults later.

It is more fair and a good place for community building.

We like the separate awards. It encourages us to stay in Endurance. There is a better chance for top awards and being able to ride unsponsored.

We don't feel like we are losing our place in the sport when we ride as Young Riders..

We like the opt out approach. (Which I made clear in the information that this was not an option)

PREFER TO DO AWAY WITH YR DIVISION:

Not enough YR's at rides I attend to make much difference.

Confusing.

Extraneous...it would be more simple and straightforward not to have it.

CHANGES:

Move the age down to 18 since that is the age of an adult.

Make entries cheaper (like juniors)

Make more opportunities for YR's to compete, make options for division more flexible at rides while still recognizing it as their own division. More Young Rider programs and focused events.

Two weight divisions for Young Riders.

HOW IS THE YR DIVISION IMPORTANT?

It is like going from Jr. High to college without the transition of High School.

More independence.

It is important for high competing level riders.

At Crater Hill, juniors look forward to being Young Riders.

FROM THE MOMS:

14 year-olds don't want to lose JR status and ride solo. Juniors should still ride as JRs until 16.

More YR clinics.

Respectfully submitted,
Maribel Paulson, JR/YR committee chair.

Ride Managers Committee

The third quarter is typically a quieter period for committee activity, as ride managers are busy organizing and managing rides throughout the summer and early fall. Even so, the committee has continued its efforts to support ride managers and address issues relevant to the AERC community. Conversations in the private Ride Manager discussion group have continued to provide a forum for sharing ideas, experiences, and practical solutions for effective ride management. The committee has also continued to review and provide feedback on motions submitted by other AERC committees, as requested.

Respectfully submitted,
Mollie Krumlaw-Smith, Ride Managers Committee Chair

Welfare of the Horse Committee

The Horse Welfare Committee engaged with members regarding various welfare issues.

Respectfully submitted,
Laurie Underwood, Co-chair Welfare of the Horse Committee

Motion from the Protest and Grievance Committee

Date of Motion: October 12, 2026

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

Proposed Motion:

14.2.4 Invalid Filing. Any protest filed after the applicable deadline or which fails to include the required **completed** complaint form or filing fee shall be rejected by the AERC and shall not be considered on its merits. **The Protest & Grievance Committee may dismiss, without further proceedings, a protest which, on its face, does not present an issue within the scope of the Committee's authority. For a filing fee of \$100 and within 15 days, such a dismissal may be appealed to the AERC Board Executive Committee which may then either approve the dismissal or return the protest to the Committee for full consideration.**

Background, analysis and benefit: The P&G has been increasingly confronted with protests that have little, if anything, to do with AERC or its Rules. Rather than having to go through the entire protest process with possible appeals in order to deny such protests, this proposed Rule would explicitly allow the Committee and Board Executive Committee to quickly, and with minimal labor, dispense with protests that never belonged before the P&G in the first place. The proposed rule is akin to the motion to dismiss for failure to state a cause of action in the legal system. In the case of an erroneous dismissal by the P&G, the abbreviated appeal process to the Board Executive Committee would provide possible corrective action. This motion has the full approval of the Legal Committee.

Benefit and/or Impact to Membership and/or the AERC Organization: This rule would allow for the winnowing out of protests that do not belong before the P&G to be disposed of quickly and efficiently. It would reduce the burden on the P&G and on the Board in the case of an appeal, allowing the P&G to devote its efforts to legitimate protests.

Impact on AERC Office (Workload, budget): Amendment to the Rule book

Implementation plan (Schedule, resources, financial):

Committee and Office Feedback

Supporting approvals Legal Committee

[Discussion about adding suspension dates to Ride Manager Page section of the website](#)

[Discussion of communications from Kathy Backus](#)

September 14, 2026, AERC Board Midyear Meeting Minutes

President Nick Kohut DVM, called the meeting to order at 8:04 p.m.

Board members present were Olin Balch DVM, Bruce Burton, Connie Caudill, Diane Connolly, Marci Cunningham, 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, Jan Stevens, Vance Stine, Laurie Underwood, Ashley Wingert and Lara Worden. Executive Director, Giulia Orth and Protest and Grievance Committee Chair, Diane Rowley, were also present on the call.

Jan Stevens moved to accept the agenda which was seconded by Connie Caudill. The motion passed.

Susan Kasemeyer moved to approve the August 22, 2026, meeting minutes, which was seconded by Vance Stine. The motion passed with one abstention.

Laurie Underwood made a motion which was seconded by Olin Balch DVM to excuse the following members: Maureen Fehrs DVM (travelling); Bridget Helms (travelling); Mollie Krumlaw-Smith (ride management). The motion passed with one abstention.

Absent- Chelsea Arnold.

Giulia Orth presented the statistical report.

	2025	2026	Change	% Change
Total Members through August 31	3,809	3,679	-130	-3.4%
New Members through August 31	446	477	+31	+7%
Rider Fees through August 31	36,188	34,809	-1,379	-3.8%
Sanction Fees through August 31	17,600	17,425	-175	-1.0%
Starting Riders through August 31*	7,604	6,534	-1,070	-14.1%

* Pending results from 7 rides on 7/31/26

Committee Reports that were received from the following committees; Marketing and Veterinary Committees. The committee reports are available to be viewed and located alongside the Board meeting minutes on our website at www.aerc.org.

A motion was made by John Parke which was seconded by Olin Balch DVM to enter executive session at 8:13 p.m. to discuss two pending appeals. The motion passed.

At 8:56 p.m. a motion was made to exit executive session by Connie Caudill which was seconded by Vance Stine. Motion passed.

John Parke made a motion concerning the Roger Ward appeal which was seconded by Susan Kasemeyer to deny the appeal but to increase the penalty to 6 months. Motion passed unanimously.

The Board unanimously voted to deny the Kathy Backus appeal.

Melissa Ribley DVM withdrew the motion regarding Synephrine (which is a prohibited substance) and stated that the Veterinary Committee will take an educational approach and address the topic with articles.

John Parke moved to adjourn at 9:03 p.m. and Susan Kasemeyer seconded. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by Connie Caudill, Secretary