



**AU Board Meeting (Zoom)
Monday, April 29, 2024 (7:00 PM, CST)**

Attendees: Bob McKenna, John Hundrup, Jeff Life, Joyce Stierlin, Steve Lawler, Gary Heindel, Dave Wilson, Butch Shoop, Al Christeleit, CL Gage, Karen Clifton, Mary Kraft

Members Present: Don Lowe, Drew Lesfofski, Ronda Mariana, Ryan Jones, Joanie Christeleit, John Vance, Steve Whitmer, Beverly Gottlieb

President McKenna welcomed board members and guests. Bob noted that members would be given opportunity to ask questions, etc., at the end of the meeting.

Executive Vice President: Al said that the infraction committee is busy and they are reviewing another received from Florida involving drug testing. He said Vance is working on it and will provide a summary later.

Al referred to Paul Kaufmann's Board Action Request asking that the board allow him to seek businesses that would sponsor the AU Youth Race prize by paying for the youth, as well as one guardian, to attend the next annual convention.

Karen said the AU previously paid for a trip and convention registration for the youth race winner, but that the AU still provides trophies, plaques and certificates to the youth race participants.

Al said we should get kids involved. Karen said the AU has consistently received between 55 to 75 entries for the youth race each year.

President McKenna asked Paul if he would be in Denver at the mid-year meetings and, if so, could he bring a more specific plan for the board to review and approve. All agreed there should be age restrictions and to work out details and finalize in Denver.

Vice President: Robbie Whaley was not in attendance.

Treasurer: Butch indicated he had nothing to report. He said the board needs to find another treasurer. He only agreed to be treasurer on a very temporary basis. Butch said he has called but not heard back from a CPA in Oklahoma City that does work for non-profits. He said he had been gone and has not dug in and thought the board would have found a permanent treasurer by this time.

Bob asked if there was anything else to report with regard to the treasury. Al said he had quotes from several CPA's and the offers were all about the same.

President McKenna asked if there was further discussion. Al said he had nothing further.

Drug Test Committee: Robbie Whaley not in attendance.

National Youth: Ronnie Shumaker provided an update prior to the meeting. At time of the meeting, Ronnie will be enroute from Memphis to St. Louis. He has been working with several youth groups. He has been working closely with 4-H leader/AU member, Mike Parrish, as he is getting his youth group up and running. Ronnie said members in the SE Zone have been quite supportive of the youth groups.

Constitution & By-Laws: Steve Lawler noted that the proposed changes to by-laws 2.06, 14.02, 24.03, 24.10, 24.12, 24.13, 24.14, 5.02, 5.06, 5.07 and 5.08 are featured in the newsletter, which will be distributed in May. Members are advised in the newsletter that the board is giving notice and will vote on the amendments.

Steve said it has been quiet since January. He added that committee member, Drew Lesofski, previously submitted proposed changes with regard to consistent language in the By-laws when referencing the AU. Steve said Jim Greelis had identified punctuation/grammar corrections. Steve hopes to have these changes to the board prior to the mid-year meetings.

Competition Standards: Jeff Life noted there have been no issues recently. He fields calls with standard questions but no problems.

Promotion: Al said Ronda and Terry have been working on a website. He said that Big Andy will help with a youth auction to raise a lot of money. He recapped Paul's suggestion of an expense paid trip for the youth race winner and guardian, a trophy and a 5-year membership.

National Office: Karen Clifton thanked Joyce, John and Jeff for their help with eWINSPEED® inquiries, which often result in race rule clarification.

Karen reported membership numbers year-to-date (7114 as of April 25). This is up from last year and is the typical fluctuation we see each year after rosters are due and when between seasons.

Karen said the club secretaries are more fully utilizing their ability to update rosters and submit orders on line. She added that 692 band orders were placed on line, while she manually entered 942 band orders.

Clifton noted that the AU still aligns with Bird Shippers of America (BSA). This relationship is helpful when we face shipping challenges. We received notification recently from BSA indicating the Federal Express agreement with the USPS was going to change. BSA advised that UPS will now take lives for the USPS. There is concern that the routing may not be as convenient and present since Federal Express is larger.

Karen said she is reaching out to BSA and USPS to determine what, if any, change there will be for members when shipping pigeons.

Karen shared with the board that temporary treasurer, Butch Shoop, did visit the office after the January board meetings. She said Butch was provided with the current month bank statements. While at the office, Butch asked Karen to send him copies of monthly bank statements for the last 3 years noting what each expense was for and what each deposit represented.

Karen reported that she shipped the requested information to Butch by the end of the following week. Additionally, Karen said she provided Butch with her passwords to Chase and to the on-line accounting program, Quickbooks, so he could access all financial activity in real time.

Karen added that she provided Butch with the AU's' CPA (that performs monthly bookkeeping duties) contact information and that she includes Butch when mailing monthly statements to the President, Executive Vice Preside and Vice President.

Promotion: Mary Kraft said she is working with 5 clubs that have requested promo information for schools. She said some are doing presentations for 4-H groups so she provides AU literature to help educate and entice potential new members.

Mary has been working with the New Mexico RPC as they coordinate their gala. They were going to have a zoom meeting on pigeon health with Robbie Whaley. Mary sent the group post cards for mailing to AU members within New Mexico.

Mary also shared with the board that the average number of new members each month has been a little over 100 during the first quarter.

NW Zone Report: Jeff Life said there have been several zone meetings, which have been nice and well attended and that members are supportive. Jeff said that his zone is pretty quiet.

Pacific Mountain Report: Joyce said most in her zone are preparing for old birds so staying busy. She said she had no issues to report. She did advise the board that long time member, Steve Sterchi, is very ill and wishes him well.

Southwest Report: CL said he had nothing to report. He said he called the 2024 convention chairman, Lou Gourino, but Lou doesn't call him back.

President McKenna asked the board to help support the convention by encouraging members to send birds.

Plains Report: Gary Heindel said his zone is quiet as well and that the calls he fields pertain to awards.

Lakes Report: Dave Wilson said they are starting old birds and there have been auctions and banquets. He said clubs are getting new members on line. He said his club has 5 new members.

Dave asked about ads for the convention. Karen reminded the board that the AU advertises for the convention host in our quarterly newsletters. Ads also go out each month in the e-Updates. Karen said Mary can start pushing more on Facebook.

Gary said the Midwest Racing Pigeon Association submits ads for the AU newsletters as well.

Joanie said there should be an auction for the convention and that she talked to CL. CL said he has called Lou but that Lou doesn't call him back.

Bob McKenna told the board that the convention host has a lot of information on their website.

Al asked if the AU can post on other Facebook sites. Karen told Al that the AU is currently blocked on several of the sites so we can't post, but if board members that are not blocked want to post, they should.

Awards Update: Gary Heindel reported that he has been working with the programmer, Craig, and Jeff Travers to get champion awards fixed. Gary said he is getting calls from members that submitted applications over a year ago. Gary asked what the cost would be to get it fixed and if he should work with Joyce regarding contracts with the programmer.

Joyce said she is not involved in negotiations or contracts with Craig.

Gary asked if we need another contract with Craig for proper payment to get the awards back on track. Gary said that if he is to remain award committee chair, then he needs a budget and board support.

Joyce noted that the discussion pertains to only the Elite champions. Gary asked if \$500 is enough. Bob called for a vote to approve contracting with Craig to correct awards. Jeff-yes; Joyce-yes; John-yes; Gary-yes; Dave-yes, CL-yes; Al-yes. Unanimous.

Board Action Request Review:

SE-053 Record all non-executive American Racing Pigeon Union (Union) board Zoom meetings for transparency and to ensure accuracy, and to release non-executive board Zoom videos to Union members who request the link. Submitted by Drew Lesofski. John Hundrup/David Wilson – unanimous.

SE-054 Increase voter participation for our AU Latin membership. Ballots and voting instructions to be translated in Spanish. Submitted by Ronnie Shumaker. Dave Wilson/AI Christeleit-unanimous.

SW-047 Disallow a member that belongs to the IF from holding an office on the AU board. Submitted by CL Gage. Gage/Christeleit motion to approve.

Discussion: Dave Wilson said he thinks someone gives the IF our ideas. He said Ronda is working on a website and now the IF is. AI said we should not share ideas and that we should keep our information to ourselves. He said it is a conflict of interest.

John Hundrup said we will lose good AU members and asked if anyone running for office in the 2024 election are IF members. AI said we can have dual members but those that belong to the IF should not be on the board

John said it would require an amendment to the by-laws. He asked who on the board is also an IF member. Toni Wiaderski. Bob McKenna and Ronnie Shumaker are. By-laws advisor, Steve Lawler, agreed it would require an amendment to the by-laws.

Ronda Mariani, candidate for the NE Zone Director, said she is also an IF member but would drop membership.

Jeff Life asked why dual membership is a problem. CL said members in his zone called him and said IF members should not be AU board members so he submitted the BAR. President McKenna called for a vote. Gage-yes; Christeleit-no vote; Heindel-no; Hundrup-no; Life-no; Wilson-no; Stierlin-no.

Dave Wilson discussed election bids reminding the board that Ronnie had sent out bids to the board. All were reputable companies and were close in price (approximately \$4000 plus postage).

Bob asked if Jeff Life was going to run and he said he had changed his mind and was not running. This leaves all candidates uncontested so the board agreed there is no need to employ a company to facilitate the election. All agreed.

Karen said that the May edition of the newsletter is already with the printer. It features the bios of all of the candidates. In the case of the NW Zone Director position (initially two candidates), the article pertaining to the election appearing in the newsletter indicates ballots would be sent to those in the NW Zone. The office will likely receive calls from members asking where their ballots are. Staff will explain there is only one candidate so not contested and no ballots forthcoming.

Steve Whitmer asked about his "23.01" and that his brother, Ron, wants his as well.

Member, Don Lowe, asked if there is a form, per se, that is "23.01." Karen explained there is no such form and that both received the recommendations/action voted on by

the board in the letters explaining the infraction and ultimate vote. Don thanked Karen for the clarification.

Al asked Karen several times for the "23.01." Karen reiterated everything from the files was sent to all of the board members.

Gary Heindel/Dave Wilson motion to adjourn. Unanimous.