

**American Racing Pigeon Union, Inc.**  
**Annual Board Meeting Minutes**  
**Ontario, CA –December 5, 2016**

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Vice President, Jay Holder 8:00 am. (Tom Coletti was delayed in travel.)

Members present: Jay Holder, Karen Clifton, Lee Kohli, Ron Pairan, John Hundrup, Freddie Rivera, Toni Wiaderski, John McSweeney, Al Hassler, Joyce Stierlin, Shannon Demler, Bob McKenna, Alan Porter, Kamal Hindi, Deone Roberts.

Introduction of guest: Richard Ocegüera, who would address the board during non-board member comments.

After the flag salute, the board had a moment of silence out of respect for those who have passed away. Individuals mentioned were Ed Sawicki's wife, Carolyn, (Detroit, MI), Pete Cobas (Cleveland, OH), Jim Keng (Houston, TX), and Tom Jarvis (Mims, FL).

**Public/Non-Board Member Comments**

Richard Ocegüera addressed the board with claims and concerns about there being no convention race committee to determine a variety of aspects about the race. He specifically pointed out a mandatory race with negative outcome had been a problem for many handlers. He further identified Kamal Hindi and Mike Byrd as the race committee and complained about their handling of the race, specifically delegation of a bird.

Jay Holder asked why a bird was delegated not to go. Ocegüera told the board some did not want to fly because the distance was too short and some races were mandatory. Richard said he felt the birds were neglected and that handlers should have been on the race committee.

Jay Holder summarized that the complaint was regarding the lack of a full race committee for the convention race.

Jay Holder pointed out that it is rare that an AU board member would chair a convention. Typically it is a local group that controls the activities within AU parameters. It is up to the group to construct committees that best benefit the race.

## ***Old Business***

### **Approval of Mid-Year Meeting Minutes as Posted**

Motion to approve the posted minutes of the mid-year meeting. Hassler/Wiaderski. Passed.

President's Report is pushed to Tuesday when Tom Coletti is available.

### **Executive Vice President Update (Holder)**

Jay Holder spoke of a lot of generosity from the Gulf Coast Homing Pigeon Club. He discussed the Dixie Southern convention and that it is again being held in Florida this year. He said he believes the Dixie Association is stronger and he encouraged the board to check the Dixie website.

### **Vice President Update (Pairan)**

Ron Pairan shared that he and his club did a variety of promotion activities and cited the Carroll Old Timers Festival bird release and Ohio Flags of Honor release as two examples. Ron said his club has a junior member (12 year old) for the first time in years and was excited about the prospect of younger members in the club.

Ron attended and presented at two zone meetings to share information regarding AU programs and field questions from members. He concluded by telling the board that his area had good young bird and old bird seasons with no cancellations due to bird flu restrictions.

### **President Ex-Officio Update (Rivera)**

Freddie Rivera shared that he has never retrieved as many birds before as he has this past year. He dealt with the problem of an owner neglecting to retrieve his pigeon at an animal shelter. He said it appeared to be a trend to charge for the release of the birds. One group confirmed to Freddie that it is a fund raiser to maintain the shelter. Often, shelters will give up the birds so as not to deal with the process of return. Freddie said that it is wise to retrieve the pigeon, even if it is not your own, and support the businesses that house them.

### **Treasurer Report (McSweeney)**

John McSweeney provided a handout of the budget. It has the same format as when we started publishing the budget. He and the AU office made minor changes in 2017; that's why things are not exactly lined up. In 2016, yearbook advertising was shown as separate. In 2017, the yearbook, less advertising revenue, resulted in net cost. The budget outlines net cost on bands, dues, etc. The band cost is down because of the international exchange rate.

John pointed out that other expenses are down (ordinance, shipping convention display, travel are examples).

Ron Pairan inquired about the historical display whereabouts. Karen Clifton explained it is currently on display at the American Pigeon Museum but that we are not shipping it to conventions any more. The wear and tear on the display would be costly and the shipping has become very expensive over the last several years. We will use banners as opposed to shipping the historical display.

Lee Kohli commented on the \$8000 cut from the annual meeting cost. Karen Clifton explained that we don't spend that much so it was put toward contingencies.

John McSweeney explained that the budget would be reviewed again and approved the next day.

Jay Holder stated that the Board Action Requests would be reviewed on Tuesday because a guest was scheduled to address the board. He reminded the board that the guest will be given time to present, but to refrain from engagement/debate in the interest of time.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Leadership/Retention (Kohli/Hindi/Roberts)**

Lee Kohli shared that he sat down with new millennial members in Indiana and came out with ideas for what we need to explore in 2017 and that he would like to sit down with new members in California to inquire.

Lee said one idea presented was to make it easier to obtain clocking systems. Shannon Demler commented that his club has 5 new members and 4-H kids. In his club, they had a YB auction and raised enough to buy 4 clocks to loan. New members can use them and after 1 year, they would need to purchase the clocks. The club also built 4 YB 4-H lofts and adults use them now.

### **Right to Race (Kohli/Clifton)**

The avian flu did not present problems this year as was anticipated so no updates have been sent out. We continue to monitor for outbreaks.

### **National Youth/School Coordinator (Pairan)**

Still active groups include the Northwest Junior Flyers in Massachusetts, Herb Cartmell's 4-H Sky Pilot groups in Washington and Ronnie Shumaker's school groups in Mississippi. Pairan suggested that board members commit birds or funds

to the activities. Ron Pairan offered to send information to the board, get their intentions or commitment and forward to Ronnie. The consensus was favorable. Holder suggested that Pairan could track board members' support and report at the next meeting.

### **Judge's Panel (Rivera)**

The number of judges remains the same – 18. Freddie said one in Grand Junction, CO did not take place this year as it has in the past because the club split and neither group sponsored a show.

Freddie Rivera went on to say that Tom Fremont is trying to develop a national show but that his combine has turned him down. Freddie will update the board in June 2017.

Rivera spoke with Dennis Aycock about hosting a show at convention. Dennis will be reporting his group's decision to Freddie at the convention.

Rivera checked with Tom Coletti about a show in the Northwest area and Tom indicated he had asked several members in different cities in the zone and there was no interest. Joyce Stierlin commented that in her area, a show would be competing with the Santa Maria Show on the same weekend. Coletti had purchased classification plaques for the 2016 show that was canceled. Hopefully, we will still be able to make use of those.

### **Constitution & By-Laws (Demler)**

Shannon Demler reported that he has not had calls since the young bird season, which brought numerous calls. Shannon said that most callers request information they could have looked up either in their organization by-laws or the AU's by-laws, but they are more comfortable checking with the committee chair.

Demler said that when he receives calls about potential by-laws violations, he refers it to the organization president. He said he does refer to the organization's by-laws, the AU by-laws and race rules (when necessary) to ensure they comply.

One issue regarding infractions that include potential or alleged by-laws violation is that a club or member that is making the complaint typically includes several topics in one infraction.

Ron Pairan suggested sending infractions back for revision and request members that are filing to be specific as to which rules or by-laws are violated. Joyce Stierlin suggested that when you deal with bad sportsmanship, it can encompass several items.

Lee Kohli asked Shannon if the sample bylaws he has reviewed work for a larger organization. Demler responded that yes, is it a basic template that can be modified for any organization.

### **Competition Standards (Hundrup)**

John Hundrup presented a recap of the race rule issues that have been brought to his attention or those on which members needed clarification or a ruling. He received multiple inquiries about shipping limits, releasing non-race birds with AU race birds, flying multiple teams in club only and multiple club races, race schedule changes and requirements to ship club and combine races. John also fielded numerous calls regarding partnerships, clubs releasing prior to sunrise or shortly after, multiple teams from the same loft and voting rights, double banded birds, the National Database still not accepting flyers' results with clubs having 3 or 4 members per the new race rule.

John indicated that the Board Action Request regarding double banded birds, which will be reviewed tomorrow, has been submitted to provide clarification for members.

A Florida club called John and indicated they wanted a junior member's race results thrown out because it takes points away from adults in the club.

John Hundrup also had to make a ruling regarding a Missouri club uploading to the NDB with only 2 members racing.

There were races in Washington with monetary prizes and results from those races were being merged and uploaded to the NDB. Since these are not AU sanctioned races, those results were removed from the NDB.

John also dealt with a member using Benzing Live GPS coordinates instead of hand held WAAS GPS per race rules.

### **Veterans Committee (Hassler/Clifton)**

Al Hassler said he has not received a lot of calls regarding the committee activity. The calls he has received are mainly from members wanting information to make presentations to Veterans groups. Al said there are a few people in his area that release at military functions and that he believes Bill Desmarais is still actively working with Veterans groups. Al said he refers those calls to the AU office to receive information.

Hassler said he did get a call from a member, T. Berokoff, with a different perspective. Her concern is for Veterans who've come home and have problems, and that the birds may be a calming factor for them. She is interested in

rehabilitation of soldiers coming home today. Al said he thought that was a good idea. Ms. Berokoff explained to Al that there is a new Veteran's affairs coordinator in her area.

Karen Clifton shared that what Ms. Berokoff wanted to know is if the AU was working toward this through the AU Veterans Committee. Karen explained to T that initially the committee was established to start doing releases and presentations to military/Veterans groups in a given local area. Then those projects would be compiled in a "how to" booklet or brochure that could be given to pigeon clubs in hopes that they would use this model in their area and ultimately do such releases and presentations at the national growth.

Karen explained that T was not necessarily interested in getting new members to fly, rather honoring our Veterans and helping where we could. She submitted a mission statement for our endorsement. T explained to Karen that each Veterans Intake Office screens Veterans to determine their needs and what tools or programs would best serve them. T recently addressed a coalition of service providers in her area and was well received. Karen told the board that the AU sent literature samples to her to see what they feel would best serve the Veterans in their area.

Ms. Berokoff's club members are committed to the effort. Karen said that once the office completes year end business, she will try the same in Oklahoma City and compare notes with T after the first of the year. It is hoped if we can get two areas (Chattanooga and Oklahoma City) to embrace pigeons as potential assistance for Veterans, that we might be able to do the same in numerous locations across the country.

### **Swearing in of New Officers**

Jay Holder administered the Oath of Office to Al Hassler as Southeast Zone Director, Bob McKenna as Northeast Zone Director, Alan Porter as Plains Zone Director and John Hundrup as Northwest Zone Director. He also addressed appreciation to Toni Wiaderski for his service to the sport and the board.

### **New Business**

#### **National Office Update/Membership Review (Clifton)**

Karen Clifton shared year-end membership totals and progress on the status of by-laws for AU clubs, combines and concourses. Karen explained that many of the clubs that were not in compliance and that were sent letters or email have submitted revised by-laws for their organizations. We now have 468 clubs in compliance and 57 that are not. We still have 11 combines not in compliance and 2 concourses that are not. Karen said follow up efforts will continue.

Karen shared a new flyer from Cornell University from Dr. Jarra Jagne. This flyer offers information about avian veterinarian services Cornell provides. A copy will be distributed in each secretary packet this year. Cornell offers diagnostic testing, health care regimens, etc.

The AU Scholarship yielded 15 applications this year. They were all good and the students have ambitious goals. The applications were reviewed based on need, leadership and service within the community. Results were shared with the board and the three recipients revealed. Each is referenced in the *AU Yearbook*, which was distributed in November.

Karen provided an update on the UTE Fire Lookout Tower program. They will be hosting a one-loft race in 2017. There are no entry fees, but they will appreciate donations. They will send press releases through their Information Department. Details are also featured in the *AU Yearbook*. Karen encouraged board members to send birds to their race. The main thing they are hopeful for is donation of birds for their program. They take pigeons to each of the schools, youth and civic groups where they make fire safety presentations.

Clifton reported that participation in the UNESCO (United Nations) program, which was discussed during the mid-year board meetings is still something we should pursue.

It was determined that the US is not a “state party,” therefore, we are not able to submit information for consideration of recognizing pigeons in their UNESCO program. However, other countries that are state parties include Belgium. A state party may submit information for consideration. We will reach out to our counterpart in Belgium to begin dialog. This will give the pigeon sport much more credibility worldwide. Karen will continue to work on the effort and report again. She also acknowledged AU member, Ray Arquette, for providing the information regarding UNESCO.

The board agreed to meet in Denver in June. It was agreed to travel on June 9, meet on June 10 and 11, and return on the 12<sup>th</sup>.

### **Sport Development (Roberts)**

Deone Roberts provided a handout listing member promotion activities since the last *Update* article, and included activities in California, Canada, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. The activities will appear in the January 2017 Update newsletter. Roberts also shared the list of school/youth projects, past and current.

## **Zone Director Reports**

(NW/Pacific/SW/Plains/Lakes/SE/Mountain/NE)

### **Northwest Zone - Hundrup**

John Hundrup said his zone has been quiet. He reported that Herb Cartmell's Lions Flight for Sight was a recent event in his zone and was a success. Herb presented to district Lions and got good feedback.

John indicated that despite hard work, they have really been unsuccessful getting the state organization on its feet again. Steve Lawler has done a tremendous amount of work to see this through and has decided it is time to let others help.

### **Pacific Zone – Hindi**

Kamal Hindi had nothing new to report.

### **Southwest Zone - McSweeney**

John McSweeney announced that the Texas Center Convention was held in San Antonio. In 2017, it will be in Houston, July 12-16, 2017. McSweeney plans to attend and remains active in the Texas Center.

John shared that a club in Shreveport is trying to reorganize and one of the individuals wanting to get a club going wasn't sure how to initiate activity. John offered advice to assist him.

A club near John had a problem regarding found birds. In one instance, the owner said to kill the bird. It was an ARPU band and the finder reported the situation to the office. The office then contacted John and he made recommendation of a member to assist and retrieve the bird. Within a week, the same situation with another member in the same club occurred. John plans to visit the club to explain proper protocol.

### **Plains Zone - Porter**

Alan Porter said his zone was fairly quiet. His local organizations held a mini convention in their zone. Alan shared that the Green Bay RPC hosted the roving Midwest Convention and it was a good event. Next year, it will be in Minnesota coordinated by the Twin City Concourse.

Alan spent time tracking stray birds. Finders feel passionate about caring for the birds.

Alan said that he attended the Winterfest Auction, which is an annual event, but is not sure it will take place in 2017. It may be held with a few clubs in Kansas.

He assisted Jay Holder with AU awards. He is not sure what percentage of our members are interested. Sometimes you need to see it and read about the awards and uploading to remember that is a service and benefit available to AU members.

He plans to talk to folks and clubs to see what shows can be combined to be larger events. The show aspect doesn't seem to have as much interest.

### **Lakes Zone – Kohli**

Lee Kohli assisted a member in Michigan dealing with zoning issues. The right to fly pigeons is in the state law. Arnold Ludwig, who was President of the Detroit Center at one time, was involved in getting the law passed. He worked for GM and had legislative law experience. A member's neighbor actively petitioned local officials to get them to disallow the member keeping pigeons. That failed as his loft met every health department requirement. When that failed, the neighbor then attempted to get the law changed. The neighbor wanted jurisdiction moved from the state to the local counties. At this time, there is no activity or change and he may still enjoy his birds.

### **Southeast Zone – Hassler**

Al Hassler reported the GHC recently had the Gulf Coast Classic, which was successful with a great turnout.

### **Mountain Zone – Stierlin**

Joyce Stierlin attended the California State Racing Pigeon Organization annual convention and reported it was successful and run by the Bakersfield club. The Bakersfield club will host it again in 2017.

Recently, most of Joyce's time has been spent on WinSpeed© technical support. Stierlin said she has dealt with bootleg copies of the program, which can become corrupt and cause WinSpeed© malfunction. She reported that the merge function is a challenge. There are situations where race secretaries leave or quit and the new secretaries are left to figure out the program with little or no assistance.

Joyce indicated she has also helped some secretaries with uploading results to the NDB. Each computer is different and so Joyce spends time learning from the caller what, specific to that computer, a race secretary needs to do in order that uploading is successful.

Joyce has been asked to assist with eWinspeed© development along with John Hundrup.

### **Northeast Zone – Wiaderski**

Toni Wiaderski shared that he worked like a UPS worker retrieving stray birds. He assisted a youth group just starting up in Pennsylvania.

Toni reported on a situation where a past race secretary wants to come back into a club, but no rule dictates a club must accept a member back. He tried to mediate the situation, however, the club by-laws do not necessitate them taking a member into the club.

### **Race Release Revisions (McSweeney/Hundrup)**

Both John McSweeney and John Hundrup agreed to propose a couple of additions to the AU Release and Race Transportation Guidelines Policy (#AU 330).

One addition pertains to section 330.14 (Transportation) item A. They asked the board to consider adding to that section:

“All crates on the trailer should be dry before the trailer moves to subsequent pick up spots.”

The second item they proposed deals with Item G in the same section. They suggested adding the following:

“Watering and Feeding: The water troughs should be cleaned and dry prior to loading birds on the trailer.”

Motion to accept changes as indicated. Rivera/Hassler. Passed unanimously.

Ron Pairan stated that regarding releasing ½ hour after sunrise, sometimes it’s detrimental to wait too long. Not much is worse on the birds than the heat. So they have released earlier to avoid extreme heat.

Jay Holder responded that it remains a recommendation, not a rule.

Holder shared that the best tip he heard was that from Frank McLaughlin while at a seminar. Frank told the group about Verkin S to clean trailers and lofts. It kills bacteria that reduces bird health problems and it is not corrosive to metals like bleach is.

### **Initial 2017 Budget Review (McSweeney)**

The handout has basically the same information as handed out before. We have had this budget forever. It does not indicate fixed assets. For example, \$66,000 for contract labor is programming for eWinspeed©.

John McSweeney will continue to realign the budget so that revenue and expenses are clear. He indicated the organization was okay financially but there are no new sources of revenue. There were no changes made to the budget or requests for funding of new projects.

Jay Holder reminded the board that discussion for the next day includes consideration of changes to the AU Doping Policy. A handout was provided that was submitted by John Vance that pertains to BAR PAC-060.

Freddie/Hassler to adjourn. Unanimous. Adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

## **Annual Board Meeting Minutes Ontario, CA –December 6, 2016**

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by President Tom Coletti. Members present: Lee Kohli, Karen Clifton, Tom Coletti, Jay Holder, Alan Porter, Shannon Demler, Al Hassler, John McSweeney, Bob McKenna, Toni Wiaderski, Freddie Rivera, John Hundrup, Ron Pairan, Kamal Hindi, Joyce Stierlin, Deone Roberts.

Guest welcomed: John Vance

### **President's Agenda**

Item 7. Rework of alternate AU By-Laws and Constitution.

Shannon Demler reported that he went through the AU sample Constitution and By-laws. The more he studied, the more satisfied he was and believes it's a good foundation for any level or organization within the AU. Shannon said he wondered if the name/title was appropriate (refer to article 6). The board agreed to maintain the sample Constitution and By-laws. Shannon said he will want to remove proxy voting reference and since the board agreed, that will be the official document for publishing.

Joyce Stierlin suggested adding instructions/preamble on how to use the document.

Item 12. Term limits on President Ex-Officio.

Tom Coletti feels it is probably sufficient for the position of Ex-Officio to stay only 2 years with the ability to resign. This provides assistance to the incoming president and offers a smoother transition. Kamal Hindi agrees leaving it at 4 years. Jay Holder agrees with Hindi.

Item 13. Expand eWinspeed© Committee.

President Coletti explained he has asked John Hundrup and Joyce Stierlin to sit in on the eWinspeed© committee. John's task is to beta test. Joyce will assist and review the efforts of our programmer. Tom interjected that once eWinspeed© is up and running, we will keep the eWinspeed© line item in the budget for further development and maintenance. Jay Holder will start looking for a company that may be qualified and interested in further development and/or maintenance.

Tom said that if any item within the eWinspeed budget exceeds the approved budget, the executive committee will need to review and approve prior to incurring the expense. Without permission of the Board of Directors, we cannot go over the

established budget. Joyce Stierlin stated that she, Jay Holder and John Hundrup would work on writing program specifications for Alan King, the eWinspeed© programmer, that evening.

President Coletti said that effort should be the responsibility of the combined eWinspeed committee.

Item 14. Amend AU Convention Agreement to disallow board members from hosting AU conventions, chairing or serving on convention committees.

Coletti suggested that a board member running a convention creates a conflict of interest. Further Tom said he believes that no board member can run a convention without challenges to that board member's position. Tom indicated it is different with the AU running the convention. As an example, when we did not have a convention host, Karen offered the race to a local group of members. The AU will do everything else (coordinate meals, entertainment, registration, tours, etc.). It is different from the director running the convention. Our brand will be on the convention in Arizona as an organization. When an individual director runs a convention, there is a potential conflict of interest.

Coletti requested discussion or agreement on this.

Motion to accept amendment of the convention agreement as stated.  
Stierlin/Pairan. Passed.

Ron Pairan stated that we may be committed to run a majority of conventions when we establish this.

Zone Realignment. Coletti suggests that with completion of Pacific Zone Director term, the Mountain Zone should take over all of California to be the unified Pacific Zone.

Karen was asked to post, per our by-laws, in the January *Update*. The board will vote to approve 30 days after distribution of the newsletter.

Joyce Stierlin stated that Shannon commented on AU bylaws requiring 8 directors. Bylaws amendments may be made but must be posted at least 30 days prior to the board voting just as with moving Utah to the Northwest Zone (above).

#### **Amendment to AU Policy #400 Administration of Prohibited Substances to Racing Pigeons**

John Vance presented to the board. He provided a handout outlining a proposed revision to the existing policy.

1. The AU exercises its authority over every race flown by AU chartered organizations, according to AU rules and which are submitted to the AU database for national awards, or for which an AU diploma or other AU awards are issued by the chartered organization.
2. Should an AU club choose to drug test birds entered in any race over which the AU has authority, that organization must submit a full and complete copy of all drug testing results to the AU national office.
3. Under no circumstance may any AU chartered organization, sanction any AU member, based on the results of a drug test, until the AU has reviewed those results, and the proposed sanctions, and authorizes the organization to enforce those sanctions.
4. All drug testing by AU chartered organizations, on races over which the AU exercises no authority are not covered by this policy. However, should sanctions by that AU organization, as a result of a drug test, effect any AU member's right to participate in future AU races, then that would bring those sanctions under AU review and the organization must follow #2 & #3 above.

Vance suggested that club test results be sent to the AU. The AU policy is that it is voluntary; therefore, no one sends them in. He is requesting standardization. Without test results, sanctioning is not possible. John suggests establishing a database.

Motion to amend AU #400 (Administration of Prohibited Substances To Racing Pigeons) and adopt items 1, 2, 3 and 4 (above) and change the word from "should" to "shall." Rivera/Hassler. Passed unanimously.

Tom Coletti said he will again present previously submitted BAR #PAC-060 (below).

Resolved that the AU Race Rules section 5.00 – Race Schedules 5.0 be appended as follows.

“When reporting the vote on race-related matters to a higher organization, clubs must, along with the results, name the active racing members present and voting, along with the tally of how these members voted.” Example: Eligible active racing members voting on the measure, six: Jose Baca, Bob Trove, Ivana Crowe, Eddie Bly, Samuel Clemens and Mary Vasquez. Two voted for Schedule A, one voted for schedule B and three voted for schedule C.”

Coletti said the AU sets the standards through approved Board Action Requests.

## **2017 AU Convention Update**

Karen Clifton shared that the dates for the 2017 convention will be 11/16 through 11/18. Board members will travel on 11/13. Meetings will be held on 11/14 and 11/15. The convention will officially open on 11/16. We will have shipping on the 16<sup>th</sup> and will provide pizza. We will have a seminar on 11/17 before guests depart for the race lofts.

Another seminar will take place following the general meeting on 11/18. Ron Pairan and Shannon Demler were asked to help with coordinating a small auction to offset expenses. They determined that Europeans & master breeders are too expensive, so we will feature American birds and speakers as a theme. Freddie has 6 donated birds confirmed. Clifton asked who will receive the auction birds. Pairan will organize. The AU auction will take place at the convention following the seminar.

Entertainment for Friday and Saturday evening has been coordinated. Tours have also been confirmed. Details will appear on the AU website in January 2017.

### **Executive Session**

Infractions were reviewed. Freddie/Holder to end Executive Session and accept recommendations of the Infraction Committee. Passed unanimously. All parties will be notified of outcome.

### **WinSpeed©/NDB**

Joyce Stierlin provides technical support. She wrote the procedure for installing on Windows 10, which has been helpful for many members.

### **eWinspeed©**

Jay Holder said we are in initial testing and have a website. John Hundrup, Joyce Stierlin and Jay Holder are administrators and testing. Joyce has a journal keeping records of communications to keep pace with the project work.

Ron Pairan said the board had wanted a junior category in the NDB and asked if that was still going to happen or if we should wait for eWinspeed©.

President Coletti said there is an important list of actions for the NDB (youth category, multiple clubs, etc.), which will be addressed and/or implemented.

## **Board Action Requests**

PAC-060 (presented earlier in these minutes) – submitted by John Vance.

Require organizations to report voting on race-related issues.

Motion to accept. McSweeney/Hassler. Discussion: Pairan said he still envisions it could be established on the local level. Passed: 9 in favor. 1 against.

NW-163 – submitted by Greg Glazier.

AU change the calculations by which National Champion Loft and National Ace Pigeon Awards to more accurately reflect the true results of these awards.

Discussion: Jay Holder said if it is approved, they will wait until eWinspeed© to create new programming. It is an unrealistic coding expectation. The 2<sup>nd</sup> portion illustrates the bird is not a good trapper. He wants to eliminate trapping. That's impossible coding. Tom Coletti said there is no such thing as equal 1sts. AU is not about one loft races. Holder recommends no change. Failed for lack of motion.

NW-164 – submitted by John Hundrup.

To avoid confusion and complication, add to Race Rule 7.09 that no double AU banded pigeons will be entered into AU sanctioned races.

Add to race rule 7.09 to read as follows: No bird may be entered into an AU sanctioned race if it is banded with more than (1) AU or AU recognized band.

Stierlin/McSweeney. Passed. 10 in favor, 1 against. One band must be cut off. To be posted in the January 2017 AU Update.

NW-165 – submitted by John Hundrup.

Add to the rules that for all AU sanctioned races, no birds are to be released until at least thirty (30) minutes after the official sunrise time at the release site.

Hassler/Rivera. Failed. 4 in favor, 7 opposed.

NW-166 – submitted by John Hundrup.

Add to the race rules that organizations may not make it mandatory for flyers to wager on their birds to be able to participate in any AU sanctioned race. Died for lack of motion. The AU doesn't get involved in that participation.

NW-167 – submitted by Greg Glazier.

Change the process of calculation of National Champion Loft and National Ace Pigeon Awards. Died for lack of motion.

### **Speakers' Bureau Update (Hindi)**

Kamal Hindi is removed from the committee. Need to pass on it for now. Leave on agenda.

### Committee Assignments (Coletti)

The 2017 AU auction will be taken care of by Ron Pairan, Shannon Demler, and Bob McKenna.

President Coletti outlined the schedule of presentations for the General Membership Meeting to be held on Saturday morning.

### Good of the Order

Freddie Rivera suggested increasing dues. The board needs to think about it for the Denver meeting.

### Discussion:

Hassler asked what a suggested amount might be.

Rivera suggested we could survey membership informally.

Coletti believes an analysis is needed from committee members such as John McSweeney. John can estimate what need is down the road with expenditures we have now; when do we hit a deficit, then consider a reasonable, justifiable increase. Wiaderski expressed explaining the value of membership and need for an increase during future Northeast Zone Meetings might be a good idea.

Hindi said he agrees with a dues increase.

Coletti reiterated the need to prove the need for an increase.

Kohli said he feels it's a conversation we have to start, even in AU office communiqués. Further, Lee felt that an increase may not be the answer to additional revenue to further and expand programs, but the AU Board needs to determine an answer. Dues have been the same for more than 20 years. No businesses function successfully if new revenue sources are not identified and that it would be a matter of time before the organization can't continue the programs in place, let alone improve. He said we should determine and share details on program costs.

It was proposed that we allot 2 hours for a study session in Denver. No assignments made at this time other than to be thinking about dues increase based on need. Karen to add to the June 2017 agenda.

Deone Roberts is to put a spreadsheet together with what it looks like, e.g. 3% CPI increase.

### Don Chapin – Clocking System Update

Don asked the AU Board to allow him to create a pilot program of online service as the board deems appropriate. Don would like to see up to 30 clocking units distributed and used to test. A Board Action Request was submitted by Don during

the meeting, not through the AU office, and therefore no official action was taken. The board agreed to review Don's Board Action Request at the 2017 mid-year meetings in June.

Meeting adjourned.

## **Minutes of the General Membership Meeting Saturday, December 10, 2016**

The 106<sup>th</sup> annual AU General Membership Meeting was called to order at 8:10 a.m.. After the welcome, flag salute and moment of silence, board members and committee members were introduced.

President Coletti conducted the swearing in of new and re-elected board members.

Hassler/Cartmell to approve 2015 general membership meeting minutes as posted. Unanimous.

President Coletti continued with recognition of membership. He shared that the AU values all members. He made the observation that attendance at the general membership meetings is low. Tom suggested it may be indicative of the way the sport is going. Coletti said that the board and members need to work together to increase greater participation from members. He said either members are apathetic or not informed. He reminded those in attendance that the AU does put out monthly electronic updates and quarterly publications that are full of information to educate members to the services available to them, dates, times, and content of board meetings, race rule changes, etc.

Tom expressed appreciation to those that do attend and participate. Coletti referred to attendee, AU member Jim Jenner, as having been a huge promoter and participant in the sport. Tom thanked Herb Cartmell, also in the audience, for all he has done promoting the sport and especially working with youth groups.

President Coletti then recognized Lee Kohli, who was instrumental, along with Karen Clifton, in getting us through the Avian Flu setback in Ohio and working with state veterinarians. Tom thanked Lee for all he has done and for his continued enthusiasm. Tom said Lee will turn his focus to sport promotion and will be talking with Jim Jenner for some possible advice and ideas.

Tom gave special recognition to Shannon Demler, the AU Bylaws Chairman for doing a tremendous job fielding calls from club members with issues or concerns over club governance.

Likewise, Tom gave special recognition to John Hundrup, the AU National Race Secretary.

Coletti turned the meeting over to the AU Treasurer, John McSweeney. John told members that the AU organization is currently strong and explained that we leave room in the budget for expanding programs, service to members or for moving into

another area. John went on to explain that the annual budget is a guideline or anticipation of how money will be spent. Often we are under budget and don't utilize funds earmarked for certain projects.

Following McSweeney, Deone Roberts, AU Sport Development Manager, reminded attendees to utilize sport promotion personnel more. The AU promotion materials are very well used by some members but she explained she would like to see more members take advantage of what is available to help clubs recruit and retain their members.

Deone also encouraged members to be available to follow up with new participants and in reaching out to individuals that have attended promotion events and expressed an interest in getting started in the sport. Additionally, Deone reminded members to make use of the AU's Help-A-Beginner Program, which is credited with establishing successful racing habits and good member retention. She closed with recognition of California promoters. Deone cited many examples of clubs and individual members that have put on promotion events, coordinated school and youth groups and participated in community outreach.

Dennis Aycock was invited to speak. He provided some background for the upcoming 2017 AU Convention in Phoenix. Dennis explained that attendees will be able to watch the birds come in with the clocking setup.

Dennis shared a bit about the local members that will be handling birds for the race. He said they have youth members coming in to the clubs and the club members are committed to working closely with the kids to provide support. Dennis encouraged attendance for a fun convention.

Karen Clifton announced that the AU would coordinate the convention details while the local handlers will conduct the race. Clifton said that several tours and entertainment are already confirmed.

Clifton introduced Greg Smith, AU Lobbyist, to share information with members.

Smith said it was a great privilege to represent the AU. He reviewed his previous convention addresses. As Greg put it, this past year has been very boring for him in terms of his activity, which is very good as it indicates we have not been confronted with new threats, legislation or outbreaks.

Greg went on to say that in his view, there are layers of history in this organization and in reviewing past presidents' remarks, there is strong engagement with membership regarding important issues that affect the sport. Past issues such as shipping and USDA regulations, have presented opportunities for Greg to meld the

history and the letter of the law to keep the right to fly. More recently, the avian flu was an issue. Greg said the AU has been proactive in addressing all these issues. Smith noted that other efforts have come up, such as the counterfeit leg bands coming in from China and that these have been addressed promptly.

Greg shared that there is an organization that prizes killing banded homing pigeons. Greg explained that once becoming aware several years ago, that the AU immediately requested they remove reference to our organization and website from theirs and they complied.

One member pointed us in the direction of getting recognition through the United Nations. This program, UNESCO, Greg explained has given cultural value to falconry. Greg shared with members that it is our hope to be included in that program, however, the US is not a state party. He said that Karen was continuing to reach out to other federations that are in countries that are state parties. They may submit information on behalf of all pigeon fanciers in hopes that we be recognized as the falconers have been. He went on to say that our work continues in these areas.

Discussion then ensued about repeating the task of submitting application for a commemorative stamp again. Greg, our lobbyist, agreed to work toward that goal.

Greg said that some important things have been done in the past on behalf of the sport and those things continue to be pertinent today and we will continue that work. Greg advised attendees that there are limited things you can do with the letter of the law, but there are many things you can do in the way of public relations and public policy. Greg concluded by telling members present that the AU is ready to deal with these issues and that is an honor for him to be a part of the group.

AU member, Jim Jenner, shared that September 2018 is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Cher Ami (World War I) pigeon and will be useful with congressional statements, connection with veterans, the Pentagon and the Veterans Administration.

John Nelson said that it would be good to revive the commemorative stamp effort with the Cher Ami information. Greg said he could assist with that renewed effort considering his connections in D.C.

Bob Brumagin pointed out that he believes the AU would gain more rural members if we allowed live clocking. Bob also said many times people that keep and care for animals are located in more rural areas due to restrictions in urban areas.

Rivera/Brumagin to adjourn at 9:30 a.m. Unanimous.