**PNER Board of Directors Meeting Convention**

**March 26, 2025**

**6:30 pm Pacific (called to order at 6:50 pm). Meeting ended at 10:15 pm Pacific**

* + *Everyone on BOD is a voting member. Quorum for voting = requires 6 votes*

**BOD Members Present -Role Call - (Quorum Present):** (1) Alex Lewis (President), (2) Melissa Stephenson Laws (Vice President), (3) Katrin Levermann (British Columbia Rep), (4) Tani Bates (Washington Rep), (5) Bianca Chevalier (Oregon Rep), (6) Stevie Delahunt (Oregon Rep), (7) Nance Worman (Idaho Rep), (8) Regina Rose (Ride Manager Rep)

**Non-BOD Members Present:** Mari Smultea (officer), Cindi Sayer (officer), Cassee Terry, Bobbi Walker, Lora Bannon, David Lewis (former OR state rep), Stace Moss, Lisa Cohen, Naomi Preston, Tally, Darlene Merlich, Karen Bumgarner, Lois Fox, Lindsay Fisher, Andrea Hurn, Jamethiel Morse

*Total 20 people in attendance per Zoom list*

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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Next steps as result of today’s meeting:**   1. Bylaw Change (Convention Date) - Finalize: Finalize the approved text of the proposed bylaw change regarding the annual meeting date. 2. Bylaw Change (Convention Date) - Notify Membership: Ensure the finalized proposed bylaw change is sent in writing (via newsletter, email, etc.) to the PNER membership. (Coordinating with Jamie Morse) 3. Bylaw Change (Convention Date) - Announce Vote: Ensure the upcoming membership vote on the bylaw change is announced via appropriate channels. (Coordinating with Marketing Committee) 4. Bylaw Change (Convention Date) - Conduct Vote: Establish and oversee the voting period and process for the membership vote, ensuring it meets bylaw requirements. (Coordinating with necessary Admin/Tech support) 5. Sleeping Giant Poll - Draft & Send: Oversee the drafting and distribution of the membership poll regarding Sleeping Giant points, incorporating input. (Coordinating with Regina Rose & designated person) 6. Elections Committee Recruitment: Actively solicit volunteers to form the Elections Committee. (Coordinating with Marketing Committee) 7. Scholarship Committee Role: Confirm Greta's status, identify the Scholarship Committee position as potentially open, and seek a volunteer to fill the role if needed. 8. Zoom Invite Timing: Discuss the feasibility and process for sending out Zoom meeting invites further in advance with David Lewis. 9. Alex will try to get historical information on attendance in past, especially pre and post covid. 10. Cindi requested at end of each BOD meeting a notice is sent out for next meeting. | | |

***Items Voted on with Passing Quorum vote today:***

1. **VOTE**: Vote to change convention span of dates between first weekend of January through first weekend in March. Put to motion, seconded, PASSED with quorum vote.
2. **VOTE**: Alex- made motion to send out poll to PNER members for input on PNER RIDES RECOGNIZED FOR Points ON MRER WEBSITE seconded. PASSED with quorum.
3. **VOTE**: motion made, seconded, quorum passed vote to approve $700 for Jeff Tyren’s endurance boot camp (education).
4. **VOTE**: motion made, seconded, quorum passed vote to approve $520 for Bobbi Walker’s educational ride clinic at Midnight Rider.

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**l. Call to order–** Announce intent to record meeting, attendance, Roberts Rules of Order Reminder ( A Time Limit will be given to any Members invited/requested to speak at the Meeting to keep on track for BoD Agenda). Alex announced that anyone who is not a BOD member or officer who wants to attend must be invited to a pre-meeting. Alex asked those present who weren’t asked to attend to leave the meeting. David has made this meeting a live cast for all members. Darlene and Karen Baumgarner were pre-approved by state rep to attend today’s meeting.

* **Live stream should be visible/viewable here:** https://www.facebook.com/groups/346312635965306/posts/1680598342536722/

**ll. Approval of the Minutes, Secretary -** Mari Smultea. Last meeting’s minutes passed with a quorum via email prior to this meeting.

**III. Reports:**

1. **President: Alex Lewis:**

**A.** Introduction of New Committees:

PNER Equine and Volunteer Welfare Committee: please reference last page

inserted to the Agenda for full description of the Committee (appended to these notes below). Chair: Lindsay Fischer. Committee Members: Layne Lewis, Lisa Cohen, Tally Wren. Email address: Welfare@PNER.net

B. Bylaw Change for Convention Date:

The current bylaw: Article V II Meetings. Section 1, Annual Meeting: “The annual meeting of the general PNER membership shall be held in January at a time and place designated by the President. The annual meeting may be, for good cause show, postponed for a maximum of thirty (30) days. At this meeting, newly elected Board of Directors members assume their offices.”

* + Recommended Change:

The annual meeting of the general PNER membership shall be held between the first weekend of January and the second weekend of March at a time and place designated by the President. Convention will be planned with consideration for the AERC and EDRA convention dates and not be planned within 2 weeks of the first ride of the season; exceptions to this bylaw is if a Ride Manager has a ride sanctioned after the convention date has been arranged. The annual meeting may be, for good cause shown, postponed for a maximum of thirty (30) days. At this meeting, newly elected Board of Directors assume their offices.

* + Possible Benefits to convention date change:

(1) Increased time between holidays and convention allows for increased

attendance (time and money), (2) Improved weather conditions, (3) 2025 convention attendance had well over 100 attendees in a remote location in February.

* + Discussion:

Cindi: how is this year’s attendance at conference vs. past years? Cassee: in past, it has been told to move it away from Portland every 5-6 years. Usually lose money when move away from Portland. Alex: Alex will ask confirm w Kristen that convention in past has been changed from Portland every 3 years. Regina: in past has been in Tri Cities, other places. Melissa: It takes about a year to plan convention dates and took her about 50 hours to establish a place and date. Alex will try to get historical information on attendance in past, especially pre and post covid. Regina: this year, PNER convention had higher attendance than AERC conference. Stevie: suggest using wording “with consideration of the EDRA and AERC conventions dates” for the bylaw. Regina – doesn’t think there has ever been an endurance PNER ride in March. Alex – would like to open up consideration of holding convention possibly in March extending date range into March. Tani – likes wording of “consideration of” but doesn’t like March for convention bc busy conditioning horses. Lindsay – typically last 2 weeks of March is spring break and people with kids often travel. Lois – has some real concerns about the convention date being extended, makes the handbook come out with information left out. Next step is to send this out to membership and in newsletter reviews between 30-45 days. Lois – need to establish a quorum for the general membership. Produced handbook for 13 years, if convention later in year, winners won’t be mentioned in handbook bc handbook would have to wait to be published until March. Handbook has always come out after convention. BOD meeting notes from convention also come out in the handbook. Tani – members want their handbooks before season starts so they can use it to help them plan their ride season. Cindi – trying to have membership vote online will be different, as they are usually voted on at general meeting at convention. Alex – have a process now electronically where a link can be used to vote. David – suggested we wait on voting on this. Lois – would like to see BOD meeting minutes in the handbook. Tally – suggests making a committee to further discuss this topic. Alex – this issue has been mentioned frequently over the past year, would like to move forward. Alex has to do further research regarding process for Articles of Incorporation if the vote passes. *Vote to change convention span of dates between first weekend January through first weekend in March (instead of to second weekend of March per above vote). Put to motion, seconded, PASSED with quorum vote.*

**C. PNER RIDES RECOGNIZED FOR PTS ON MRER WEBSITE:** Send to Membership to Vote

on RBR (Regional Bordering Rides) to gather data from Members, in a poll. Only looking to

include the Sleeping Giant ride as it is within short distance of the PNER Regional Border and is not on a Sanctioned PNER ride date. Regina talked to ride managers, some were opposed.

<https://mrer.org/sanctioned-out-of-region-rides-2019>. Alex ok with a trial of a ride to see how it goes and how it affects other rides in our region. Alex reached out to an attorney about this. Alex recognizes a lot of ride manager upset with this discussion. DISCUSSION: Melissa: can you clarify if this will open up N CA rides to count towards PNER? Alex: No. Only Sleeping Giant bc MRER has been including PNER ride points for 3 years. Would need to be voted on every year, it would not automatically be counted every year. Melissa: dual reciprocity is good, this would just be a trial to see how it goes and Melissa supports it. Lois: no problem with adding the ride bc it’s so close but her understanding was that this was supposed to be a way to garner more PNER members and this doesn’t make sense. There are 13 MT members in AERC, 7 of which are already PNER members. 31 MT members are MRER members in AERC MT region, 13 in the NW Mt region (7 already in PNER). Bianca: suggested go with original suggestion to query members and gather more data and come up with questions about this for membership and move on with the meeting*. Alex- made motion to send out the poll, seconded. PASSED with quorum.* Review the Mary and Anna Memorial Youth Fund rules regarding potential coverage if the Sleeping Giant ride were recognized for PNER points.

1. **Vice President: Melissa Laws**

**• Convention Update:** PNER had higher attendance then AERC this season! PNER convention broke even, which is unusual when convention held in another area besides Portland. Happy how convention when, we got good paid speakers, awards, activities. In the end, convention costs around $500 overall.

• **New News:** Convention will now have a Committee! We will be updating the Volunteer positions and looking to help fill these roles as we fine tune and plan for next Convention!

* Boot camp brings in around 3 new riders/PNER members each year (Jeff follows the riders’ success). Suggest we award first ride entry free for new members/riders who complete the boot camp in hopes they continue with the sport. Can cap the amount. Open to feedback. “Complete the PNER Sister’s Endurance Boot Camp, and PNER will cover your first endurance ride! Only valid for the same season that you graduate the Boot Camp ($450 - max of 3 riders per season). DISCUSSION: Tally – suggests someone sponsor and follow up on bootcamp newbies and do a mentorship program. Tally asked Alex to join boot camp to promote PNER. Stevie: feels camaraderie and knowing people is important to getting newbies to attend endurance rides based on her experience with bringing in 54 new riders. Cindi – we have $700 set aside for boot camp, and $500 for midnight rider education.

1. **Financial Update/Treasurer Cindi Sayer:** gave financial summary. She sent out financial documents to BOD before today’s meeting (balance sheet, 2025 budget, profit and loss). Issue checks for the approved education grants ($700 to Jeff Tyrann, $520 to Bobbi Walker). Add $1,000 back into the Trails Committee budget line item. Continue the search for a CPA with specific expertise in QuickBooks and 501c3 non-profits. Watch for the invoice related to Bianca Chevalier's corral project and process payment upon receipt.
2. **Old News:** not applicable
3. **Representatives:**
   * **BC**: Katrin: nothing new. Still winter. First ride in June in BC.
   * **ID**: Nance: Had SWIT awards dinner last weekend. She will be ride manager of City of Rocks this year.
   * **MT**: Suzie: (not at meeting)
   * **WA:** Tani: a late sanctioning ride got put on top of another WA ride and she has been communicating with RM who was sanctioned first. She explained that this was not a PNER thing bc PNER does not sanction rides but needs to discuss with the Ride Mgr Rep and AERC. Alex reached out to the other RM Heidi and she was boxed in by dates by USFS.
   * **OR**: Stevie and Bianca; members reaching out to them.
   * **RM**: Regina: 2 rides on same date. 3 RMs want to do rides including 100 miles but no dates available that fit the rules of PNER for distance or timing.
   * **Junior**: Bentley French (Bentley absent, Cassee talking for her)-making junior hats to wear at rides using junior fund.
   * **Young Rider (YR)** (Committee Chair): Emilee Randall– coming up with ideas.

**IV. Committee Reports:**

1. **Finance:** Lisa, Simone, Tally: looking for financial advisor, a CPA. Cindi thinks we should drop tack sale, do not make much money. Regina thinks it is a big draw, some just come for the tack sale. Melissa- happy to drop it, takes a lot of work with low return but everyone loves it. Draft a committee charter for the Finance Committee and propose it at the next Board meeting. Discuss the need for additional Finance Committee members and make a recommendation to the Board.
2. **Young Rider**: Emilee Randall – working on ideas
3. **Junior**: nothing to report
4. **Points:** Marlene Moss – nothing to report
5. **Newsletter**: Jamethiel Morse – 3 newsletters this year w convention write up for March, special edition with BOD meetings for 2024 and Feb 2025, and one with ride flyers. Prepare and send out the three upcoming newsletters (Regular March, Minutes Special Edition, Ride Schedule Special Edition). Coordinate with Laura to obtain the current membership list before sending newsletters.
6. **Handbook**: Alex thanks Bobbi for your years of commitment and hard work for PNER! Alex welcomes Jamethiel (Jame) Morse as Chair, from the Newsletter Committee, as she steps into both roles. Handbook Committee Members: Bianca Chevalier and Vicki Nichols. Jamethiel Morse. Lois is willing to help out. Begin planning for the next PNER Handbook, coordinating content and considering timeline implications from the convention date change. (w/ Lois Fox advising).
7. **Website**: David Lewis, Marlene Moss, Stace Moss. David L: positions available! Proposal of $5k budget to Revamp Website in 2025 was approved in the last Feb 2025 BoD Mtg, we are looking for more members. Stace- nothing has changed, no rides yet so status quo. David: modernization of website—still doing research and will start recruiting next week. Begin recruitment for members to join the Website Committee for the website revamp project. Obtain necessary information from Stace Moss required for website modernization efforts. Continue research on website revamp options (especially non-profit benefits) and report progress at the next Board meeting.
8. **Welfare**: new committee, nothing to report yet.
9. **Awards (Lois Fox, Cassee Terry, Stevie Delahunt):** Lois Fox discussed how she’d like to change awards. She wants to redesign the Veteran Horse award and the Ambassador award. Request feedback via email from the Board on specific proposals for redesigning the Ambassador and Veteran Horse awards. Coordinate award planning and procurement between sponsored awards (Lois) and standard awards (Cassee), including sharing the list of confirmed sponsors. She would like to make awards similar to what AERC does, like Hall of Fame. She’d like an award for someone who has kept a horse going at 50s for a long time for example. SE region has an outrider award. E.g., if you ride 200 miles in your region all other miles outside region get a regional award for all those miles/points. She would like a committee to discuss this and bring ideas to BOD. Wants to push idea of sponsors to sponsor awards. Would like to figure it out this year for changes in 2026. Stevie volunteered to be on award committee along with Cassee; Cassee has already bought some awards for 2025. Alex: clarified that Lois will send BOD summary of changes. Coordinate award planning and procurement between sponsored awards (Lois) and standard awards (Cassee), including sharing the list of confirmed sponsors.
10. **Marketing**: Co-ChairsNaomi Preston and David Lewis (DL reporting; Emilee Randal - Social Media): next action item putting survey together. Calling it an Annual PNER survey not only related to convention and not limited to only members. Primary mission is growing PNER membership. Gather ideas and develop specific details for the proposed new member rebate program. (Coordinating with Alexandra Lewis). Regain administrative access to PNER social media account (Responsible: Emilee Randal). Implement the social media content plan for April-June. (Responsible: Emilee Randal) *(Note: Marketing also supports Elections recruitment & Bylaw vote announcement).* Data Gathering for Non-PNER Members at Rides: Offer a rebate of some kind if a rider is not a current PNER member, goes to a ride and fills out a PNER form at registration and becomes a member prior to attending their next ride. PNER will offer the rebate, Marketing can work on this idea, develop it more. BoD to discuss.
11. **Convention Committee Formation (Melissa Laws, Chair:)** Formally establish the Convention Committee and begin documenting convention planning processes.
12. **Technology -** Stace Moss – nothing to report.
13. **Education –** Cassee Terry – needs 2 BOD votes, 2 PNER grant applications that followed correct process: Jeff Tyrens/Boot camp-requesting $700 from PNER. $500 for Sanoma to talk at Midnight Rider re riding in dark and doing 100s. See BOOTCAMP discussion above under Vice President report. *Vote: motion made, seconded, quorum passed vote to approve $700 for Jeff Tyren’s boot camp. Vote: motion made, seconded, quorum passed vote to approve $520 for Bobbi Walker’s ride clinic at Midnight Rider.*
14. **Elections –** Actively solicit volunteers to form the Elections Committee. (Coordinating with Marketing Committee)
15. **Social Media –** Deb, Emilee: Emilee has come up with concepts for May and June.
16. **Trails –** Tani Bates – Joy Trevee Lowell (RM at Pac Crest), wants to step down from being on Trail Committee but Julie Serres wants to join committee, Alex approved.
17. **Scholarship -** Greta Berner (absent)
18. **Membership -** Lora Bannon – currently 212 PNER members.

**XV. Old Business –**

**XVI. New Business –**

**XVII. Announcements, comments, other business:**

**XVIII. Future meeting dates: All Meetings held at 6:30PM Pacific**

**Next BoD Meetings -** Will be held on the following dates on Wednesdays. *Cindi requested at end of each BOD meeting a notice is sent out for next meeting.*

* + **June 11th, 2025 6:30pm**
  + **Sept 24th, 2025 6:30pm**
  + **Dec 10th, 2025 6:30pm**

**XIX. Adjournment at 10:02 pm.**

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Notes taken by PNER Secretary Mari Smultea on 03-26-2025. Notes emailed to PNER BOD and Committee members for review on 04-05-2025. Approved with revisions by PNER BOD Quorum via email on 14 April. Revised notes finalized and distributed via email to PNER BOD & Committees and Marlene Moss for PNER website and Jamethiel for newsletter on April 30 along with PNER financial pages received from Treasurer Cindi Sayer via email on March 23,2024 consisting of the following 5 attachments: (1) Profit and Loss  period of January 1 - February 28 2025, (2) Balance Sheet as of February 28 2025, (3) Budget vs Actual period of January 1 - December 2025, (4) Convention accountability as of February 28 2025, (5) Blood Machine Accountability as of January 14 2025.

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Description automatically generated with medium confidence(Mari Smultea, PNER Secretary)

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**Handout sent via email from PNER President Alex Lewis along with agenda to BOD and committee members and officers on 26 March 2025 prior to today’s meeting:**

**PNER Equine and Volunteer Welfare Committee**

* The President position within PNER’s Bylaws has numerous roles, among which are described as:
* Article IV: Officers, Section 1. President “...to appoint such committees as may be necessary to properly carry out the purposes for which PNER was organized, including determining the number to serve on the Committees, and to name the Chairman thereof...”
* Section 4. Other Committees. “Upon recommendation of the President, other Committees not having and exercising the authority of the Board of Directors may be designated by a resolution adopted by a majority of the Directors present at any properly called regular or special meeting of the Board of Directors. Except as otherwise provided in such resolution, members of the Committees shall be PNER members in good standing. The President shall appoint the members thereof. Any Committee member may be removed by the President whenever the best interests of PNER shall be served by such a removal.
* Article II: Membership, Section 7-9. References removal of PNER members due to Welfare concerns.

The members of this newly formed PNER Equine & Volunteer Welfare Committee are part of a truly groundbreaking initiative—the first of its kind in PNER history—and I couldn’t think of a better person to help lead the way as Chair; Lindsay Fischer DVM. Joining her in the Committee positions are Layne Lewis, Lisa Cohen, and Tally Wren. Each of these individuals were thoughtfully considered and invited to the PNER Welfare Committee for a multitude of reasons; their incredible leadership history in Endurance, respect in the PNER community, experience on Boards both in the Nonprofit and For Profit sectors, deep knowledge of our sport of endurance, strong advocacy for both equine and volunteer welfare, Ride Management experience, and an understanding of our region. These qualities and experiences make each of these members an invaluable member of this committee.

Our goal is to create a safe, supportive space where riders, managers, volunteers, veterinarians, and participants can bring forward concerns about equine or volunteer welfare. Whether it’s about how a volunteer is treated at a ride or a serious equine welfare issue, this committee will serve as the first point of contact before matters are brought to the PNER Board of Directors. PNER Board of Directors, and all of the PNER Membership listening today, you will find the PNER Equine & Volunteer Welfare Committee Guidelines below for you to review, as well as posted on the PNER Website under “Committees”. Feedback is always welcome. With any and all questions in regards to Welfare, the Welfare Chair (Lindsay Fisher has been appointed) will be your point persons, and will support you as your Committee approaches the Board with your grievance . If there is a need to fill Committee positions, the President will appoint all Committee positions and will be happy to have recommendations. The goal is 3-5 people on the Committee at all times, Including the Chair.

**PNER Equine & Volunteer Welfare Committee Guidelines**

Mission & Purpose:

The PNER Equine & Volunteer Welfare Committee serves as a safe, confidential, and structured first

point of contact for individuals who experience or witness concerns related to equine or volunteer welfare at PNER-affiliated rides. While PNER is not a sanctioning organization, we uphold bylaws that protect against equine abuse and ensure the safety of all participants, including volunteers. This committee provides a regional support system to address concerns and guide them appropriately within PNER's structure. Bylaw: Article II: Membership, Section 7-9 Regards revocation of PNER memberships and includes due to Welfare concerns, etc.

Committee Process & Reporting Guidelines:

* *Safe & Confidential Reporting:* This committee serves as a safe space for riders, volunteers, management, veterinarians, and any individual present at a PNER ride who experiences or witnesses an equine or volunteer welfare concern. Concerns should be submitted via email to Committee Chair (Lindsay Fisher DVM or the acting Chair) at Welfare@PNER.net and will also be delivered to all Welfare Committee Members at that time, and the PNER President. All reports will remain strictly confidential. Communication may occur between the Chair, PNER President, and the reporting individual to gather further information before presenting the matter to the committee.
* *Committee Review Process:* Upon receiving a grievance, the Committee Chair (Lindsay Fisher DVM or the acting Chair) will review the report (maintaining confidentiality), and determine in a combined effort as a Committee whether the grievance falls under equine welfare, volunteer welfare, abuse, or bullying concerns, or if it is a non- concern in these regards, or possibly a misrepresented situation. The committee will have seven (7) days to discuss, assess, and determine whether the issue warrants further action by the PNER Board of Directors (BoD).
* The Committee Chair will then email the report and recommendations to the acting PNER President, including a copy of the grievance, to president@PNER.net for an update on the Committee’s recommendation.
* When the committee determines if the concern is/is not valid or requires further action, in 7 days or less, the Chair will draft a formal recommendation to accompany the original grievance and submit it to the PNER BoD in full confidentiality.

Board of Directors Review & Action

The PNER BoD may call a special meeting if necessary to formally review the committee's findings and recommendation. The BoD will review PNER’s bylaws to determine next steps and will conduct a vote to decide on the validity and necessary actions regarding the grievance.

1. *Scope & Limitations:* PNER is not a sanctioning organization. However, we do enforce bylaws that allow for the suspension or removal of individuals who fail to comply with safety and welfare regulations concerning equines and volunteers.
2. *Article II: Membership, Section 7-9.* References removal of PNER members due to Welfare concerns. This committee does not replace the American Endurance Ride Conference (AERC) or its sanctioning role in U.S. and British Columbia Canada endurance rides, or the Equine Distance Racing Organization (EDRA). AERC and EDRA have their own due process to mitigate Welfare issues, and PNER alongside either Organization can be utilized for this matter. Instead, this Committee provides a regional support system within PNER to uphold our own bylaws and to offer a welcoming, confidential space for concerns. The PNER Equine & Volunteer Welfare Committee exists to protect, support, and maintain integrity within our endurance community, ensuring the safety and well-being of both equines and the people who dedicate their time to the sport of endurance within the PNER Organization.
3. *PNER Bylaws:* https://www.pner.net/bylaws