Pacific Northwest Endurance Rides, Inc. (PNER)

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Date: September 24, 2025
Time: 6:30 PM Pacific Time
Location: Virtual Meeting (via Zoom)

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by President Alexandra Poitevin.

II. Attendance

Board Members Present:

- Alexandra Poitevin, President
- Melissa Laws, Vice President (via phone)
- Tani Bates
- Layne Lewis
- Bianca Chevalier
- Nance Worman
- Suzanne (Susie) Hayes
- Stevie Delahunt
- ~~Karen Pate~~

Board Members Absent:

- Katrin Leaverman

Guests Present: Karen Pate

- Cindi Sayer, Treasurer
- Sue McLain, Mary and Anna Youth Fund
- Lois Fox, Awards Committee
- Bonnie Girod, EDRA President
- Simone Mauhl, Finance Committee
- Jamethiel Morse, Newsletter Editor
- Lora Bannan, Membership
- Cassee Terry, Education

III. Secretary for Meeting

It was noted that a secretary had not been pre-arranged. The board agreed to use the Fathom AI Notetaker to record the meeting, with Alexandra Poitevin to review and finalize the notes.

IV. Approval of Minutes

The approval of the minutes from the previous meeting was deferred as the regular secretary, Mari, was out of town.

V. Treasurer's Report

Cindi Sayer presented the financial update as of September 23, 2025:

- **CD Balance:** $60,000 (Matures November 8, 2025)
- **Money Market Balance:** $26,000
- **Total Cash on Hand:** $79,559.70
- **Membership Revenue YTD:** $9,696.61 (a significant decrease from $13,660 at the same time in 2024, falling short of the budgeted $13,660)
- **Blood Machine Revenue:** The blood machine has generated $2,310 in revenue against $1,850 in expenses, for a net profit of $460.
- **Current Net Revenue:** $218.49
- **Upcoming Expenses:** Approximately $2,500 is anticipated for convention deposits and speaker airfare before February 2026. Cindi noted that once the 2026 membership drive begins, a new influx of revenue is expected.

VI. Open Committee Positions

Alexandra Poitevin announced several open volunteer positions the organization is looking to fill, emphasizing the need for community involvement:

- **Membership Coordinator**
- **Convention Committee Members** (to assist with organization and fundraising)
- **Blood Machine Coordinator** (and volunteers to run it at rides)
- **Marketing Chair & Committee Members:** Alexandra noted that the past marketing team did a "fantastic job," and the board is seeking new leadership to continue that push and support.

VII. New Business & Presentations

A. Mary and Anna Youth Fund Proposal

- **Presentation:** Sue McLain presented on behalf of the fund committee. The current fund balance is approximately $20,100. The committee requested two actions from the PNER board:
  1. Endorsement of their committee's work and fundraising proposal.
  2. A commitment from PNER to donate to its fundraising target of $5,000 in 2026. Sue noted PNER's past donations, which have been significant portions of the fund's total annual fundraising.
- **Discussion:** A lengthy debate ensued regarding the process for approving the donation.

    - Alexandra Poitevin expressed strong support for an immediate donation and for adding a future budget line item, but argued the specific amount should be open-ended and determined annually by the board and financial review committee based on PNER's financial health, citing the nearly $4,000 drop in membership revenue from the previous year.
    - Tani Bates countered that the Board of Directors has the authority to vote on and add a specific budget line item at any board meeting and that the Financial Review Committee's only official duty per the bylaws is to review the books at year-end.
    - Layne Lewis attempted to make a motion to form a PNER committee for the fund to ensure board-level reporting for any budgeted line item. After procedural discussion about Robert's Rules of Order, the motion was withdrawn.
- **Motion:** Tani Bates moved "To recognize the fundraising proposal sent out by the Independent Advisory Committee for the Mary and Anna Youth Fund for a $5,000 donation as an annual expenditure to be reviewed by the BOD every year at convention, dependent on the available funds within the organization."
- **Second:** Layne Lewis seconded the motion.
- **Further Discussion:** Alexandra Poitevin restated her preference for an open-ended amount due to financial uncertainty. Bianca Chevalier stated she was in favor of the $5,000 for the coming year, with an annual review. A procedural question was raised about the number of votes required for a motion to pass, which was clarified as a majority of the quorum present.
- **Vote:** The motion passed.
    - **Yeas (6):** Nance Worman, Suzanne Hayes, Tani Bates, Stevie Delahunt, Bianca Chevalier, Layne Lewis.
    - **Nays (2):** Melissa Laws, Alexandra Poitevin.
    - **Outcome:** PNER is committed to a $5,000 donation for 2026, to be added as a line item and reviewed annually.

B. EDRA Reciprocity Agreement Proposal

- **Presentation:** Bonnie Girod, President of EDRA, presented a proposal to create a reciprocity agreement with AERC, similar to the one between PNER and ERABC. This would allow members to receive lifetime mileage credit in their home organization for rides completed with the other, with no extra paperwork for ride managers.
- **Discussion:** Stevie Delahunt voiced strong support and volunteered to write the letter of support. Bianca Chevalier commented that before the board votes, the general membership's voice should be heard on the matter. Suzanne Hayes asked for clarification on how fees would work. Bonnie explained that riders would still be subject to the host organization's rules, including paying non-member fees if applicable, and that riders would be responsible for submitting their own mileage for credit.
- **Decision:** The board decided to poll the general membership for feedback before providing a formal letter of support. Bonnie will provide the final proposal draft to the board to be included in the membership poll.

C. Finance Committee Membership Structure Proposal

- **Presentation:** Simone Mauhl presented proposals from the Finance Committee to address declining membership and rising costs. She highlighted that the cost of the printed handbook and shipping is currently included in the membership fee, leaving little net revenue per member.
- **Proposal 1: Add PayPal Fee.** A $1.50 flat fee to be added to all membership signups/renewals made via PayPal to cover transaction costs, which amounted to $483 in fees for PNER in 2025.
    - **Discussion:** Nance Worman raised a concern that adding a fee might cause more members to pay in person, potentially overwhelming the membership volunteer. Cindi Sayer acknowledged this but felt the $1.50 fee was small enough not to be a major deterrent.
    - **Motion:** Alexandra Poitevin moved to add a $1.50 PayPal fee to membership transactions.
    - **Second:** Melissa Laws seconded the motion.
    - **Vote:** The motion passed unanimously.
- **Proposal 2: Increase Membership Dues.** A suggestion was made to increase all membership tiers by $5 for the 2026 season.
- **Decision:** The board agreed that further discussion and research were needed. They will hold a dedicated meeting to discuss the membership fee increase and overall membership structure before the 2026 renewal period opens, which will be pushed to November or later to accommodate these changes.

D. Awards Structure Changes Proposal

- **Presentation:** Lois Fox presented an extensive list of proposed changes to the PNER awards structure, noting she had spent countless hours on the proposals.
- **Key Proposals & Discussion Points:**
    - **100 Mile Lifetime Achievement:** Lois stated the current tracking process is too labor-intensive for a volunteer and proposed changing it to a rider-nominated award with milestones at 500 and 1,000 miles.
    - **Horse and Rider Awards:** A significant debate occurred around separating Endurance and Limited Distance (LD) awards. Lois felt strongly that LD riders should be removed from the overall Endurance champion category. Tani Bates argued that rewarding LD riders for speed (via a points system) was not beneficial to horse welfare. Others noted that endurance riders also race for points. The consensus was to create separate champion categories for Endurance (based on points) and LD (based on mileage).
    - **Rookie Award:** Lois highlighted that the current automated lists from the website (managed by Stace) are inaccurate and the distinction between "Rookie" and "Novice" is confusing and problematic, proposing they be combined. She noted this has led to ineligible riders winning in the past.
    - **Horse of the Future Award:** Bianca Chevalier proposed reinstating this award for first-year horses completing 50+ mile rides. Lois noted that in the past, this award

led to members pushing young horses too hard to win.

- **Decision:** Layne Lewis noted that members in the meeting chat were requesting a vote by the general membership on the changes. The board agreed that all proposed changes, including reinstating awards, should be sent to the membership for a vote via a comprehensive poll. Lois will revise the proposal document based on the meeting's feedback.

VIII. Committee & Representative Reports

- **Vice President (Melissa Laws):** The 2026 convention will be held February 20-21 at the Wild Horse Casino in Pendleton, OR. The venue is smoke-free and family-friendly, with a room rate of ~$140/night and horse trailer parking for $50/night. The keynote speaker is Dr. Tricia Dowling. A request was made for all board members to help solicit two donations each for the silent auction and for at least five volunteers for a convention committee.
- **Ride Manager Rep (Layne Lewis):** Is in the process of contacting ride managers to gather best practices on forms, prepayment policies, etc., to improve consistency across PNER rides.
- **Newsletter (Jamethiel Morse):** Presented a detailed proposal to standardize the newsletter with a bi-monthly publishing cadence and defined content for each issue. She also requested a formal review process with a hard deadline to ensure timely publication.
- **Website (Layne Lewis):** The committee (Layne, Marlene, Stace, Darlene) is meeting and will present a plan for website updates to the board by the end of October. It was noted that the complexity of the project is related to the existing e-commerce platform and the way rider points are calculated and displayed, making it a difficult and costly system to overhaul.
- **Elections (Karen Pate/Layne Lewis):** Open positions for 2026 include President, Vice President, 3 Financial Reviewers, Junior Rep, and Young Rider Rep. The committee will revise the proposed election timeline to ensure voting is completed by January 1, 2026, and will send the updated timeline to the board for approval.
- **Membership (Lora Bannan):** Current membership is 258. Lora is seeking a volunteer to train to take over the position while she deals with personal matters, but she will not leave the role vacant.
- **Scholarship:** A discussion was held regarding the scholarship program's lack of applicants and clarity. Lois Fox noted the handbook language is unclear, stating PNER offers "three to six scholarships of up to $1,000," which could imply a total of $6,000. Melissa Laws recalled the intent was a maximum of $3,000 total, which could be divided into smaller increments. It was agreed the program details and handbook language need urgent clarification.

IX. Topics Tabled for Future Discussion

Several items were discussed that require further review or did not result in a final decision. These will be addressed in future meetings or communications:

- **Membership Dues Increase:** The Finance Committee's proposal to raise all membership fees by $5 will be a primary topic for a dedicated future meeting.
- **Recruitment of Non-Members:** The idea of using marketing or other funds to specifically target and recruit non-members who participate in PNER rides was raised but not formally decided upon.
- **Junior State/Province Award Placings:** A discussion was held on whether to reduce the number of placings for this award from three to one. No consensus was reached, and this will be part of the larger awards proposal sent to the membership.
- **Sandy Bar Award Structure:** A suggestion to create separate Endurance and LD categories for this award was discussed, but the challenge of riders who compete in both distances was noted. This will also be included in the membership poll for feedback.

X. Action Items

- **Awards Proposal Revision:** Lois Fox to revise the awards proposal based on meeting feedback and send the updated version to Alexandra Poitevin within two weeks.
- **Awards Membership Poll:** Alexandra Poitevin to create and send a poll to the board for review before sending it to the general membership for a vote on the proposed awards changes.
- **EDRA Proposal Draft:** Bonnie Girod to provide the final draft of the reciprocity agreement proposal to the PNER board for use in the membership poll.
- **Election Timeline:** Karen Pate and Layne Lewis to create an updated election timeline and send a draft to the board for approval.
- **Website Plan:** The Website Committee to present their plan for website updates to the board via email by the end of October.
- **Convention Donations:** All board members to solicit two donations each for the convention silent auction.
- **Membership Coordinator Search:** The board will actively assist in the search for a new membership coordinator to help or replace Laura Bannan.
- **Youth Fund Membership Conversion:** Alexandra Poitevin to email Sue McLain to collaborate on ideas for converting Mary and Anna Youth Fund participants into PNER members.
- **Rescue Horse Award:** Alexandra Poitevin to contact Jeff regarding his rescue horse award proposal to get clarification on definitions and criteria.
- **Scholarship Application:** Alexandra Poitevin to send the scholarship application form to Bianca Chevalier for an interested member.
- **Scholarship Clarification:** The board needs to review the scholarship information in the handbook and draft clarifications on award amounts and distribution.
- **Membership File Update:** Lora Bannan to add a "date processed" column to the membership Excel file to help with novice/rookie eligibility tracking.

XI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:46 PM by Alexandra Poitevin.

XII. Next Meeting

The next scheduled board meeting is December 10, 2025.

Minutes compiled by David Lewis from Fathom AI.

On 5 November 2025, PNER Secretary Mari Smultea emailed out the 24 September 2025 draft meeting notes transcribed using Fathom AI by David Lewis from a voice recording of the meeting. At Mari's request, the PDF of these notes was emailed to Mari on 31 October by Layne Lewis, as Mari was not at the actual meeting. Layne had also emailed the PDF of the notes to the BOD on September 25, 2025. (Mari did not receive them at that time). Mari received approval via email of the draft minutes by a BOD quorum (Tani, Bianca, Melissa, Katrin, Layne, Nance) by 10 November 2025 which included one correction, at which time Mari emailed out the final notes to the BOD and to Marlene Moss for the PNER website and to Jamethiel Morse for the PNER newsletter incorporating the one correction (moving Karen Pate from the Board Member list to the Guest list).

Mari Smultea, PNER Secretary
10 November 2025