



**American Racing Pigeon Union, Inc.**  
**Annual Board Meeting Minutes**  
**Ogden, Utah**  
**October 21, 2019**

President Hundrup called the meeting to order 8:00 am. Attending: Jeff Life, Gary Heindel, Terry Finnerty, Joyce Stierlin, Shannon Demler, Bud Williams, John McSweeney, John Hundrup, Karen Clifton, Toni Wiaderski, Bob McKenna, Tom Coletti, Deone Roberts.

There were no guests present. After the flag salute and moment of silence, the meeting commenced with a motion to approve the minutes of the June mid-year board meetings as posted on line.

**MOTION** to approve the minutes of the 2019 mid-year meeting minutes as posted on the AU website. Stierlin/Williams. Approved.

**Officer Reports**

**President's Report**

President Hundrup took a few minutes to share information about an email sent out by Al Hassler to the board members prior to the meeting. It was stated in the email that Karen Clifton breached confidence of the Executive Meeting regarding the subject of an individual's membership. Hundrup explained Al's email contained incorrect information. Hundrup shared the history on the background of the membership issue to correct the misinformation. Additionally, the email sent by Hassler stated that the yearbook did not have his name listed in the directory. This was not intentional, but a computer error which can and does occur in publication.

The floor was opened for questions and comments.

Moving on to the President's report, Hundrup praised all of the board members and office staff for what they do. John added that all efforts to make the sport better are appreciated. He said there is tremendous load on Jeff Life and Joyce Stierlin from members needing support, but that issues appear to be handled to the members' satisfaction.

John said that Tom Coletti successfully completed contract work with Craig (National Database programmer) on the office database. Craig is on maintenance work now.

**Executive Vice President/Treasurer Report**

In his report, Executive Vice President and Treasurer, John McSweeney, said the current AU accountant is doing a great job. The AU auditor found the previous accountant to be not as attentive to detail. McSweeney said that the current accountant is correcting and accounting for all items in accordance with finance and accounting practices. McSweeney, provided a printed report reflecting the cash basis accounting of the organization.

## **Vice President's Report**

Vice President, Bob McKenna, shared that there is one infraction that will be reviewed this week during executive session. Also, since the last meeting, Bob said he has qualified two registered champion birds. McKenna is finding issues on national awards in the National Database. He and Joyce Stierlin are working with the programmer to correct these issues. Bob said Craig is still working on a prioritized list of tasks and still has time to address the awards issue.

Bob said that for champion loft, he believes races should be restricted to one per day rather than several.

Northwest Zone Director, Jeff Life, commented that there will never be total equality in racing due to the wind. He said that someone will always have the disadvantage and he does not agree to limit to one per day.

Coletti suggested a Board Action Request (BAR) to have specific language to address.

Bob went on to talk about antenna location and dimensions. He said the rule does not state one, or multiple pads. McKenna asked if the verbiage should be amended. John Hundrup requested a BAR on that as well.

Lakes Zone Director, Terry Finnerty, said he would like the rule to state the antenna must be inside the loft.

Life said he will need to see what other rules are affected.

Northeast Zone Director, Toni Wiaderski, said he is against requiring it inside the loft and explained why he felt that way. He said his birds moved because of mating activity and other birds came. He said others may have the same situation and that would be restrictive.

Coletti shared that the rule originally stated it must be placed partially inside the loft and that it does not state must be placed "wholly inside" yet.

McSweeney said prefers placement to be outside the loft.

Finnerty said even with countermarks, the bird had to be wholly in to remove the countermark. That is why he stated "inside."

McKenna continued with the issue of the use of AU diplomas for non-AU club races or non-AU members. It was agreed that only AU members should receive AU diplomas for recognition in AU club races. McKenna will get with Karen Clifton on the matter.

McKenna got a call as referred by Clifton regarding an historical presentation to honor Cher Ami and GI Joe, Reckless (horse) and a dog that served in Afghanistan. McKenna made arrangements to bring the gentleman that was one of GI Joe's post-military handlers to the planned ceremony. He will accept medals in the privately arranged event in November. The AU will receive the awards and then give them to the Smithsonian. Congressmen and dignitaries will be in attendance.

## **Past President**

Coletti said there was no activity to report.

## **Committee Reports**

### **President's Agenda**

Under President's Agenda, President Hundrup reported that director manual updates have been going out as changes or edits are made. He shared we have been accomplishing items on the list and the number of BAR's received is down. He also shared that EWINSPEED® is basically complete and that continuing on his agenda, the AU is proceeding with a live clocking solution.

Continuing with pending items from the President Ex-Officio's agenda, Hundrup brought up the topic of mini zone conventions.

Bud Williams, SW Zone Director, said he is planning a zone meeting in January 2021, and that he would like to host a mini convention at the same time. Williams said the event is planned for January 10-12, 2021, as a mid-winter meeting.

Coletti suggested the AU should mail out a folder of information about the event.

Williams said that a good time for a mini convention is the end of October, or March, as there is no racing.

Regarding another item on Coletti's President's Agenda was that he would like to see a section of the office to display memorabilia that Jim Greelis (past Historian) collected for the AU. His idea was to have a dedicated space in the office to serve as a museum. Coletti said that we could devote approximately 1000 square feet and that no curator would be needed because there is staff present. McSweeney offered that we have funds set up for capital improvements. No further discussion or action was taken.

### **Leadership/Retenion**

Committee chair, Terry Finnerty, said he believes encouraging members to take leadership roles in clubs is of utmost urgency. Terry said if we focus on race secretaries to disseminate information, we may have more success. They are the ones on the computer and can receive the digital information. Terry said the committee discussed how to create interest in the computer age. He said he believes "live" clocking may be an attraction that will help. Finnerty said it comes down to money and that clocks need to be affordable. He went on to say that banger clocks are not the ones people want. Terry said he is working on an informational video and instructional piece. The instructional video was played and it demonstrates how to get started with EWINSPEED®. The next video will be one to excite and encourage others to get involved in racing. The videos will be for use on social media and advertising. Terry repeated that the convenience of live clocking would be an attraction.

Terry suggested the AU might try to raise funds and buy some clocks for beginners in hopes of retaining members.

Coletti said the he believes the AU should spend money to hire a professional firm to conduct a professional survey to find out what the membership wants.

Plains Zone Director, Gary Heindel, said members basically want the AU out of the way so they can fly their pigeons. He said race secretaries are the lifeline between the club and members, since they are doing the work. Gary suggested communication should be through the race secretary as Terry suggested.

Bud Williams said we're not reaching out to membership where they are and that many members in his area just show up to ship and most don't read English so a survey is not beneficial. Bud stated he didn't see the need to spend extra money on hiring a firm to conduct a survey for us.

John McSweeney said his club has been held together by the women. They attend functions, cook for different events and keep attendance up at special events.

Jeff Life noted members don't respond to surveys because of apathy. Jeff said he believes we should communicate directly with race secretaries instead of spending money to hire a professional firm to conduct a survey.

Coletti said people don't read when they open the mail and suggested mailing a notice to advise members that we would next be mailing a survey. Specifically, Tom recommended the AU spend additional money to hire a professional firm. The firm would mail a letter indicating a survey would be mailed next and advise members on various methods by which they may respond.

Terry Finnerty said we could accomplish same by communicating with race secretaries via Constant Contact, which doesn't cost nearly as much.

Toni Wiaderski indicated he would like to see information prepared for younger children between the ages of 14 and 18 years old. This would allow us to see what would attract more youth members.

**MOTION** to create a five question survey for race secretaries for fall, winter and spring and look for a professional firm to provide a quote and report at mid-year meeting. Terry Finnerty. No second. Died.

Coletti said a company needs to come in and listen to the board to determine the picture.

**National Youth/School Coordinator**, Bud Williams, is still wanting the cell phone application that looks inviting to youth, for youth only, to draw them in. He went on to suggest that only club awards would be available to the youth that participate.

Finnerty said he was aware that there was a class in local school curriculum that offers class credit for these types of activities. He will check on that and will report to the board.

**MOTION** to accept the idea and concept to develop a pilot program so youth can use iPhones, iPads and computers in a race. Coletti/Wiaderski. Approved.

### **Right to Race Committee**

Karen Clifton shared that there have been new cases of virulent Newcastle Disease detected in southern California, which causes the restriction to stay in place. Karen noted that movement restrictions have been in place for more than a year. Karen shared that she has been in communication with the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) and the

California State Veterinarian's office. They seemed somewhat hopeful because through surveillance they were able to determine these new cases were isolated, however, they would be continuing with surveillance and quarantines. Clifton said she is also attempting to reach the USDA in Washington, D.C. and will continue posting updates on the website and advising the board.

### **Judges' Panel/Speakers' Bureau**

Tom Coletti stated that there were no requests for speakers. He has asked the office to update the Speaker Bureau list of speakers and said it is important that a list of accurate topics be maintained by our office on each speaker. Coletti believes speakers should be better vetted to insure they are pro AU and their topics are appropriate and meet the spirit of providing good information about pigeons to the membership.

Tom reported there was one request for an AU judge in Vancouver, WA.

Coletti noted the application for a judge/show is not being used.

Karen pointed out that the office has updated the Speakers' Bureau list. Specifically, she sent letters out to the existing speakers in June 2019. Those speakers that did not respond were removed from the list in the yearbook and the website.

Additionally, Karen pointed out that the topics speakers address, have been listed on the website and in the yearbook for ten years. Coletti said he was unaware.

Karen reminded the board that when Freddie was the chair of the Judges' Panel, he had the office produce an AU Show agreement similar to the AU convention agreement at the time. There have not been any groups that wanted to host an AU Show, therefore, the form has not been used. Further, Karen added that since the inception of the AU Judges' Panel, there have been few requests for AU judges but no requests to host an AU show.

Karen asked Tom since he is current chair of the committee if he wants the application removed from the website since it is not used. He agreed. Karen will have it removed.

Coletti continued his report stating there are no issues reported with illegal drugs being used in AU races. He did explain the AU drug policy 400 to one club in Ohio. Tom said a money race prompted the club to inquire about the AU's drug policy. Coletti shared that the drug testing committee serves informationally now.

Terry Finnerty asked why we don't create a rule and get rid of the committee. Coletti said not everyone has a drug policy and that he has worked in an advisory capacity.

### **Constitution & By-Laws**

Shannon Demler, committee chairman, said there was not much activity in recent months. He continued with a convention update. Shannon said the non-sanctioned Evolution Race will be held on Wednesday. The convention host committee will be boxing the youth race and will send the liberator to the release point on Wednesday night for Thursday release.

Shannon said they will box the AU race birds Thursday night and that race will be held on Friday. He said that on Friday, they will have speakers in the morning and the race in the afternoon. They will use Benzing Live, but some guys don't have cell service. Shannon went on

to say that these will not be official results; it will be offered to members that wish to view from the hotel. Shannon said there will be seminars held on Saturday in the morning after the AU general membership meeting, followed by the auction and award banquet. The host has arranged to have a comedian and battling pianos for entertainment.

Shannon went on to explain that they are also hosting a one-loft race (Plymouth Peak Race) on Sunday for those who will still be there and wish to attend. The local convention host will have a hospitality room for members. They also plan to rent a van or two from Wednesday through Sunday to take people where they want to go, such as races. Shannon said the ladies' tour is a walking tour and lunch. He said that registration begins on Wednesday.

### **Competition Standards**

Committee Chairman, Jeff Life, reported that most calls he has received pertain to problems that have occurred with the implementation of EWINSPEED®, such as counterfeit bands. Jeff said that EWINSPEED® has detected and denied a number of counterfeit bands. He said in one example, a club president distributed counterfeit bands and that members were unaware they were not purchased through the AU.

### **National Office & Director Updates**

#### **National Office**

Karen Clifton provided a National Office update. Year-to-date membership totals are down slightly. Karen and Joyce Stierlin, Pacific Mountain Zone Director, both discussed the virus outbreak and restriction on moving birds in parts of Southern California that has likely impacted membership.

Karen distributed charts reflecting membership totals by zone and a list of clubs that have not renewed. She asked the zone directors to review and let her know if they are aware of clubs that have disbanded or if there is some assistance the AU might offer to help them get back up and running.

Clifton continued with a post office update regarding the increase in postage rates as a result of the USPS using dimension and weight. She said that she and an attorney in Greg Smith's office have been communicating. It is the attorney's opinion that getting the mailability requirements changed would be the most likely way to get relief on the cost of shipping for our members. Karen said they are now looking for statistics to support that the pigeons could be en route a bit longer and be safe and comfortable. That information will be presented to the USPS.

Karen distributed the revised draft of the convention agreement. She reminded the board that in June they wanted the agreement to have no reference to a race of any kind as the AU no longer requires an AU race or AU National Youth race to be held in conjunction with the convention. If the convention host wants to host a race, they may, however, it will not be an AU sanctioned race.

Coletti suggested a few edits that are still needed on page 2, item 1 and on page 3. Clifton will speak with Greg Smith about the edits.

Conversation regarding the mid-year board meetings ensued. The board agreed that meeting in Salt Lake City is more affordable and that board members should plan to travel on June 15, meet on June 16 and 17, and return on June 18.

## **Sport Promotion**

Deone Roberts, Sport Development Manager, gave an update on sport promotion activities. She said that members in several states continue to carry out promotion activities and events to improve sport awareness. Deone said the areas that are actively promoting are seeing growth and retention.

Roberts said that we continue to receive email requests for handouts because it is fast and convenient. Clubs and individual members use AU brochures for promotion events. She went on to say that we do still mail out handouts via USPS because many members are not familiar with computers, downloading and printing the materials. Deone said those members that are familiar with computers are also able to personalize the AU handouts for their events, which is fantastic.

Deone reported the recent promotion events will be listed in the *AU Update* newsletter. She said members in the following states have recently conducted promotion activities: Arkansas, California, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Texas.

Roberts continued by sharing that the youth essay contest is discontinued for lack of interest over the past three years. The final contest winner is Genevieve Magli, from Alabama. She will receive an electronic clocking system from Ed Minvielle & Benzing. In the future, the generous gift will be given to the youth race winner if the local convention hosts hold a race for AU junior members.

Terry Finnerty interjected that he is working with someone on several video productions: EWINSPEED® instructions and promotion videos. He added that the promotion videos be made to encourage youth to get involved.

Deone concluded by saying that the AU has continued with a few print ads; however, the best dollar value seems to be with social media options.

## **Zone Director Reports (NW/Pacific-Mountain/SW/Plains/Lakes/SE/NE)**

### **Northwest Zone**

Jeff Life reported the Northwest zone has been quiet. Jeff reported that there have been two AU Zone meetings conducted since the mid-year meeting. He said both were well attended and he enjoyed meeting members within his zone.

### **Pacific Mountain Zone**

Zone Director, Joyce Stierlin, said she just returned from the California State Racing Pigeon Organization (CSRPO) convention the prior week. Joyce explained that the CSRPO event was in a different format this year. She went on to report that it was hosted by the Perrys in Hilmar, California. They offered 25 of their own birds to be used as replacements. The replacements were allocated through a raffle and this brought out many more people to the convention.

Joyce said that her zone has been fairly quiet with the exception of the quarantines restricting members in Southern California from flying. She said most of her efforts pertain to EWINSPEED®.

### **Southwest Zone**

Bud Williams, Southwest Zone Director, said he attended a zone meeting in Arkansas earlier in the year. He reported that the group seemed to feel disconnected from the AU. He said he felt it was beneficial and meaningful that he attended the meeting.

Bud said he also attended the Texas Center summer meeting. He indicated that the Texas Center members voted to implement Mypigeon program from Benzing, based on regional results. Benzing loaned the systems to the Texas Center for one year for free. Bud went on to say that if the number of members using the program is low, keeping the system was not an option. He said that it didn't appear enough members used it.

Bud closed by saying that he has made several attempts to visit with people that have previously had a grudge or complaint about the AU and that those people don't bring forward any new information. Bud said a lot of the complaining has subsided.

### **Plains Zone**

The Plains Zone Director, Gary Heindel, indicated that the Midwest Racing Pigeon Association coordinates their annual convention race the same as the AU. Gary asked if the Midwest should change their procedure as the AU has in terms of not requiring, sanctioning or having involvement in the race.

Tom Coletti told Gary that all the revised AU Convention agreement does is eliminate liability for the race. Shannon Demler, AU By-Laws Chairman, disagreed with Coletti and said if you are putting on the convention race, you are liable. Demler agreed that in order to not have liability the Midwest might consider revising their convention agreement to mimic the AU's new agreement.

Gary said he wants to make sure they are following by-laws and voting in any changes is being done in accordance with their by-laws.

### **Lakes Zone**

Terry Finnerty said there is not much happening in the Lakes Zone. He recently visited members in Columbus at their recent auction. Terry said he also visited the Dayton and Findley areas to help get everybody up on EWINSPEED®. Terry reported that he enjoyed attending the Midwest event and meeting members from his zone that also attended the convention

### **Southeast Zone**

Hassler not present.

### **Northeast Zone**

Northeast Zone Director, Toni Wiaderski, had no report and said there have been no concerns or problems in the Northeast Zone.

### **WinSpeed©/EWINSPEED®/NDB/Admin Database Report**

Committee member, Joyce Stierlin, reported the following activity has occurred since the mid-year meetings, which were held in June 2018. She has received 15 help calls per month, 131 organizations are uploading to the National Database (NDB), 300 users per day and there have been 9,000 accesses per month.

Joyce reported that EWINSPEED® went into production in mid-April and that the number of help calls received between April and July 2019, have averaged to be about 60.

Stierlin added that effective August 1, 2019, only uploads to the NDB via EWINSPEED® have been allowed. With more members using the program, the number of help calls she has received between August and October 2019 has risen to 200 per month.

Joyce said there are now 282 organizations uploading to the NDB (1776 uploads per month), and there are now 165,000 accesses per month. Joyce indicated members are taking advantage of the fact that they can view reports now without having to wait on the Race Secretaries. Those reports include weekly race report (full option, all clockings), Champion Bird/ Champion Loft, Master Loft, Condensed Race Report (1 line per bird like PC based WinSpeed©), Single Flyer Report and the Average Speed Report.

Tom Coletti said he no longer wanted to be on the committee. All agreed it was not necessary to remain on the committee.

### **Review of New Board Action Requests**

#### **PAC/MTN-055**

Modify and restate AU Race Rule 10.06 to allow multiple, independent clubs and combines, racing in the same direction and hauled by the same carrier, to be released together with separate, independent, race reports.

Southwest Zone Director, Bud Williams, suggested just adding verbiage to Race Rule 10 rather than amending the 10.06.

President Hundrup reminded the board that Race Rule 7.23 also plays into this.

**MOTION** to approve with provision that the rule is 10.08 in addition to the rules already in place and to specify that the decision to release is made by the same person. Discussion: Shannon Demler suggested changing the rule to allow multiple clubs to release at the same time. **MOTION-** Stierlin/Williams. 2 in favor; 7 opposed. Failed.

#### **NE-037**

Change Race Rule 16.06 to read “Only one antenna per entrance to be installed where the bird will normally enter the loft. If placed on the outside entrance, the longest dimension of the antenna shall be touching the outer wall of the entry.” Discussion: Demler prefers to say touching the outside or be on the outside. The dimension of the opening compared to the pad is not spelled out in the rules. Bud Williams said the verbiage should be “no wider than the entrance.” **MOTION WITHDRAWN.**

#### **NW-187**

To allow those clubs that choose to allow their members the convenience of remote knockoff the ability to do so, in order that they do not have to return to the club to close the race as long as they have a clocking system that has the ability to do so that sends their secure race results to their club race secretary. System must have been approved by the board after all security concerns have been satisfied. This includes security code (chip bands), start time and stop time with clock deviation, and GPS clock location verification.

No club shall make it mandatory to have live clocking and will still have to have a regular three (3) member present knockoff for those who do not use the live knockoff feature if available. The Race Secretary shall still be responsible for printing an arrival sheet for each member and race and to make it available (for 90 days) upon request to the AU National Race Committee.

**MOTION**-Williams/McSweeney. 1 opposed. 7 in favor. Passed. Progressed to licensing fee discussion.

**Licensing fee discussion:**

The discussion of requiring vendors to submit a licensing fee to access EWINSPEED® for live clocking ensued. President Hundrup stated that he prefers not to ask vendors for licensing fees because members have already paid for this. The majority of the board members agree this is an opportunity to generate a small amount of revenue outside of bands and dues.

Northwest Zone Director, Jeff Life, said that if results are being transmitted to Race Secretaries, then to EWINSPEED®, vendors should not be charged. He said he didn't think Unikon would go for a license fee.

Shannon Demler and Terry Finnerty both agreed this is an opportunity to generate a small amount of revenue that members would not pay. Shannon asked the board to consider how funds could be raised with use of live clocking if there was no license fee.

Joyce Stierlin said she thought because the clock companies will ultimately desire to directly input into EWINSPEED®, that a fee needed to be established.

Coletti suggested a per loft charge of \$25; licensing a vendor (\$5000; \$10,000; \$15,000). He suggested asking for a request for proposal (RFP) to let them present what they would give us.

Finnerty said he is paying for use already. He added that we should be concerned what we should do for our members.

Bud Williams proposed tabling the vote that was taken to approve use of live clocking and communicate with vendors. He suggested that once the AU and vendors have reached an agreement(s), then we should release information to members.

**MOTION** for live vendor clocking and go out for Request For Proposal (RFP) with standards and criteria that vendors have to meet. Then a committee will review, as quickly as possible, to resolve the issue to move it forward. Finnerty/Stierlin (with the caveat of clarification on tabling the BAR NW-187).

**MOTION** to rescind NW-187 (just approved) because further discussion with vendors is needed. Coletti/Finnerty. 4 in favor, 3 opposed. Passed.

**MOTION** to have RFP to explore fees to negotiate with vendors for live clocking. Finnerty/McSweeney. 1 opposed, 7 in favor. Passed.

The board then discussed what specifically should be considered when talking with the vendors. It was agreed that President Hundrup and Coletti meet with vendors during the convention time and bring results of those conversations back to the board so that a final decision be made and a vote may be taken.

This affects action on Board Action Requests numbers PLAINS-048 and PAC/MTN-055.

Bud Williams commented that the prices the clock manufacturers are charging is too high to pass on to the customer. Coletti countered that the manufacturers make money off our customers and we should in turn make money from the manufacturers. He said we would recoup money from software pirates and clock manufacturers that seed members with test products. Licensing allows the AU to have equal opportunity to benefit financially from the AU's work and property. Tom said that in effect, it is reimbursing members' dues spent on the work. Tom said to Coletti's knowledge, Benzing is the only aptly secure application.

The meeting continued with Terry Finnerty presenting a video demonstrated getting started with EWINSPEED®. Terry and one of his club members developed the video and will make slight modifications with input from Joyce and the national office. Terry presented a bill for the purchase of software that was needed to create the video for reimbursement.

The office was directed to pay Terry's club for the software and pay the gentleman that produced the video \$100 per hour.

**MOTION** to adjourn. Mcsweeney/Williams. Approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 5 p.m.

**American Racing Pigeon Union, Inc.**  
**Annual Board Meeting**  
**Ogden, Utah**  
**October 22, 2019**

President Hundrup called the meeting to order at 8 a.m. Attending: Jeff Life, Gary Heindel, Terry Finnerty, Joyce Stierlin, Bud Williams, John McSweeney, John Hundrup, Karen Clifton, Toni Wiaderski, Bob McKenna, Tom Coletti, Deone Roberts

The board went immediately into executive session for infraction and final budget review. Upon concluding executive session, the board voted to approve Infraction Committee recommendation and the proposed 2020 budget.

President Hundrup outlined the agenda for the general membership meeting, which will be held on Saturday, October 26, as follows:

Welcome/Flag Salute/Moment of Silence/Convention Appreciation (Clifton)  
Introduction of Board Members (Clifton)  
Motion/Approval of 2018 Annual General Membership Meeting Minutes (Hundrup)  
President's Report (Hundrup)  
Committee updates:  
EWINSPEED®/NDB (Stierlin/Hundrup)  
Treasurer's Report (McSweeney)  
Promotion Update (Roberts)  
Other  
Introduction of AU Lobbyist-Greg Smith (Clifton)  
Lobbyist Overview  
Q/A  
Adjourn

**Topigeon Home Evaluation** was presented by Don Chapin and two company representatives. They talked about home evaluation being different from live clocking. It would allow the member to knock off his or her clock at home as opposed to the clubhouse. Don distributed his talking points to share features of the system.

**Taurus Live Clocking** was presented by Scott Horn. Scott provided a handout illustrating a remote strike off that sends clocking data to the internet directly and to the Race Secretary. Race Secretary then sends the release code back to flyer.

**Benzing Live Clocking** was presented by Michael Gantner, President of Gantner Pigeon Systems. He noted several points of interest available to live clocking users. He said it has been in use worldwide since 2012. He said that data was transmitted in real time and that there is no alteration after the birds' arrival.

President Hundrup thanked all for making their presentations and advised that the board would review in Executive Session, vote on action and that vendors would be advised of outcome.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN.** Williams/Wiaderski. Unanimous.

**American Racing Pigeon Union, Inc.**  
**Board Meeting**  
**Ogden, UT– October 23, 2019**

Present: John Hundrup, John McSweeney, Bob McKenna, Jeff Life, Joyce Stierlin, Bud Williams, Gary Heindel, Terry Finnerty, Toni Wiaderski, Karen Clifton, Tom Coletti

The board reconvened and went into executive session to discuss clocking. After concluding the executive session, the board agreed to revisit Board Action Request #NW-187. **MOTION.** Life/Finnerty to approve vendor partnerships and two of the systems presented, as well BAR #NW-187

**MOTION TO ADJOURN.** Wiaderski/Williams. Unanimous.

**American Racing Pigeon Union, Inc.**  
**General Membership Meeting**  
**Ogden, UT– October 26, 2019**

AU Board members and staff present: John Hundrup, John McSweeney, Bob Mckenna, Karen Clifton, Deone Roberts, Jeff Life, Joyce Stierlin, Bud Williams, Gary Heindel, Terry Finnerty, Toni Wiaderski, Tom Coletti

Karen Clifton called the meeting to order 9:00 a.m. After the welcome, flag salute and moment of silence, Clifton expressed the board's appreciation to the Utah members hosting the convention. Clifton then went on to introduce the board members and staff.

President John Hundrup stepped up to the podium to entertain a motion for approval of 2018 Annual General Membership Meeting Minutes. **MOTION** was made to approve the minutes as posted to the AU website. Houghton/Cartmell. Approved.

President Hundrup then thanked all the board members for their time they donate to meetings lasting two and ½ days this time. He expressed appreciation for their work. Hundrup also thanked the office staff for their work as well. John stated that despite any complaints members might have, the office staff simply follows the directives of the board.

John said that one of the people who is most deserving of our gratitude is Joyce Stierlin, the Pacific Mountain Zone Director, for taking on the National Database and EWINSPEED®. She is up all hours of the night and day to take calls and address questions and comments from members.

President Hundrup noted that with our programmer's efforts combined with Joyce's input and assistance, EWINSPEED® is up and running and overall is running very well.

Hundrup continued with his report stating that one of the most important things to come out of the board meetings held earlier this week was the approval of live clocking. He told membership that two systems are approved at this time (Topigeon and Benzing Live). John added that this will make it easier for members in remote areas to participate.

Stierlin then addressed the members providing an update on EWINSPEED®. In Stierlin's report last year, she shared that there were about 15 help calls a month, 300 members used the NDB a day resulting in 9000 accesses in a month.

She noted that those numbers quadrupled in April once EWINSPEED® went "live." Joyce said that there are now approximately 200 help calls a month, 282 organizations are uploading approximately 1800 uploads per month, resulting in 165,000 accesses per month. Joyce added that the AU actually had to upgrade the server to handle the volume.

Stierlin added that previously club members had to wait on the Race Secretary to produce reports and that now those reports are instantaneous upon race uploads. She said popular reports were the weekly, weekly report on a bird, master loft, champion bird, single flyer report, and average speed report

Stierlin told the membership that she is available pretty much all the time. She addresses questions and issues in the order they are received.

Next, AU Executive Vice President and Treasurer, John McSweeney, updated membership on the organization accounting. The status of the AU financial condition is very strong, however, he said the AU is not overloaded with cash. John mentioned that a club that disbanded gave the AU money to dispense for scholarships and ordinance assistance and that the office has complied with those allocations and provided the donor accounting for funds used to date.

McSweeney added that at least seven people have asked for ordinance assistance this past fiscal year and that four have received financial assistance.

Deone Roberts, AU Sport Development Manager, reported on promotion activities. She said the biggest gain for advertising money spent is for local activity rather than national advertising in a magazine and so on.

She encouraged members to call on the AU for promotional materials for activities. She said there are a variety of ways for members to receive handouts to use for their promotion efforts: downloads from the cloud, email or simply sending the paper flyers to members.

Deone added that a favorable youth group to work with is 4-H because they seem more receptive to the idea of pigeon projects.

Roberts explained that the AU has been using social media as a tool to advertise, promote and gain new members. She said it less expensive and she uses it to publicize club listings and boost promotion events. Deone has been sharing posts from club Facebook pages on the AU Facebook page. She encouraged members to let us know about their promotion and club activity so that we may post those events on the AU website.

One member from the Grand Junction Club that was in attendance interjected that their club has gained five new members from Facebook activity and three promotion displays. He encouraged members to get their clubs to do the same.

Deone also mentioned that the office is flexible in creating handouts for members. She asked members to call the office and tell her about promotion activity so she might assist with advertising and creating tailored promotion material for those specific events.

Deone shared that we have over 600 new members this calendar year, so it pays to get out and share the hobby. Another member in attendance, Mike Netzky, added that flexibility is key in dealing with groups such as kids and 4-H and their parents.

AU member, Jim Hazek, mentioned recognition that Tommy DeRosa (former AU member), one of GI Joe's handlers, will be receiving at a Medal of Bravery ceremony in November, in Washington D.C. He said that having something like the GI Joe printed postcards available is good. Roberts mentioned that the AU provides those in addition to a variety of brochures for use at different events.

Karen Clifton then introduced Greg Smith, AU lobbyist. Greg took the podium and commented that this was his 17<sup>th</sup> consecutive AU convention.

Greg shared with members that one group he monitors frequently on behalf of AU members is PETA. He noted that they now are trying to get people to refer to pigeons as “sky Puppies” to stimulate emotion in people in hopes that others will join in their campaign to restrict pigeon raising.

Smith said it is good for pigeon fanciers to keep in mind that there are groups with a fundamentally and radically different view of the relationship of man to animal and they are a threat to the sport. He said we should remind people that the AU sport involves comradery and wholesome family activity and that should be used to counter their campaigns.

Greg said he was pleased to hear Mr. Hazek bring up GI Joe and the upcoming ceremony in Washington, D.C. The Medal of Bravery is a new award (for animals) established by Animals in War & Peace. Smith said this award is equivalent to the Dickin Medal given by Great Britain. The ceremony will honor a number of living animals, but there are six deceased animal heroes that will be honored, and of those two are pigeons: GI Joe and Cher Ami. The ceremony will take place on November 14, and Greg will attend.

He shared that the historian and curator of the Smithsonian attended the 2018 AU convention and provided information about GI Joe’s heroic efforts with the membership at the awards banquet.

Smith mentioned that one thing the historian talked about was that the pigeons on display at the Smithsonian are in bad shape and need restoration and supporting that effort is one potential legacy of the AU membership.

Greg said he wanted to touch on two things that he has been working on currently: monitoring the virulent Newcastle Disease (vND) situation in California and the increase in shipping with the USPS.

In reference to the vND, he noted that it is a new strain that has mutated and so there is no recent testing of the new strain to prove or disprove pigeons can catch it. As new strains develop, Greg said that the state agriculture departments are sensitive to protecting the multi-million dollar poultry industry.

Greg said the membership, in the impacted areas, has been activating responsibly by suspending races and movement until this issue is resolved and there are no additional positive cases detected. He also shared with members in attendance that the members in Southern California have been shut down for over a year and that this same group has had to endure this in the past.

Smith said that the flyers in Southern California that are complying with these restrictions are to be commended. He commiserated with them noting that unlike other fanciers across the country, they have not been able to enjoy their hobby. It is hopeful that the last positives detected in September will be the last so that this group can get back to enjoying their birds.

Greg said that when he was originally retained by the AU, it was post 9/11 and shipping through the United States Postal Service (USPS) was being challenged. He said the AU worked with Bird Shippers of America and the USPS. He added that ultimately the USPS determined birds should ship via Priority Express mail.

To deal with this latest increase in shipping with the USPS (due to them using dimension and weight to determine shipping costs instead of simply weight), Greg has done extensive research on postal service law. He said getting the rate changed is a Herculean task but said the USPS has frequently changed the mailability requirements. The USPS continues to do what they deem necessary to ensure safe shipping.

Currently the mailability requirements for shipping live birds is that they must ship via Priority Express. Greg and Karen have been reaching out to avian veterinarians to determine if there is existing research to support that the birds could survive comfortably and humanely if en route for an extra day or two. If that is determined, then the AU would petition the USPS to change the mailability requirements to allow shipping of live birds via Priority not Priority Express. This would reduce the cost of shipping.

Greg said another way to contain costs is to enter into shipping agreements with multiple parties to get a reduced rate. If you have a small shipment, it would not be worth it. That effort would be coordinated by individuals with the USPS directly.

In closing, Greg suggested that members should take advantage of the positive things happening, such as the Medal of Bravery ceremony. He encouraged members to share these things with others not involved in the sport to garner a support base outside of the industry. Greg ended his presentation thanking the AU board and membership for the opportunity to work for and with them.

The floor was opened to question/answer and for the good of the order.

There was a question about cutting down the shipping boxes to create a box within the lower dimensions to keep shipping costs down. He asked Smith if using a container like that when shipping with the USPS was allowable. Smith said the box may be accepted by some postal clerks, however, it does not meet the standards set up by USPS.

Another question posed is about the AU working with IF. Smith pointed out that the AU continues to invite IF participation in events in Washington, D.C. where there is prominent exposure for the entire pigeon industry.

There was a question as to when a new certified shipping box with the lower dimensions for shipments of one or two birds will be available. Smith said Clifton may be more familiar with the process of the USPS approval and suspects boxes already exist from manufacturers that can be used. Karen said there is a box manufacturer (Boxes for Birds) that already has USPS approved containers for one or two bird shipments. Additionally, Horizon was already working with the USPS on the approval process for their reconfigured boxes.

AU member, Larry Bell, mentioned that Sooner Box boxes are also already USPS approved. Larry said that using the smaller boxes may prevent the cost of shipping from doubling or even tripling.

Clifton requested final questions/concerns.

John Vance requested to speak and pointed out some items for the board to consider: (1) use of live clocking for advertising; (2) explanation of financial breakdown of legal expenses, pointing out the varied amounts from 2014 – 2018, averaging 13,800/year; (3) the cost of expelling 2

members, claiming a cost of \$50,000; (4) request to allow Steve Whitmer an opportunity to defend himself on the original charges with medical information paperwork provided.

Smith addressed the budget issue regarding legal expenses and explained the breakdown by year. He reminded Vance that there are other services his firm and other law firms provide for the AU. Therefore, not all legal expenses in any given year are specific to any one need.

**MOTION** to adjourn. McSweeney/Finnerty. Approved.