

**American Racing Pigeon Union, Inc.**  
**Mid-Year Board Meeting Minutes**  
**Salt Lake City, June 22, 2021**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

Members present: Bud Williams, Jeff Life, Gary Heindel, Karen Clifton, John Hundrup, Joyce Stierlin, Toni Wiaderski, Toni Wiaderski, Frank Meder, Ronnie Shumaker, Bob McKenna, Shannon Demler, Terry Finnerty, Deone Roberts

Welcome/Introduction of Guests/Flag Salute/Moment of Silence (Hundrup)

Public/non-Board Member Comments

Guest: Doug Burnett (one time AU Person of the Year) introduced himself and explain he got started with pigeons as a boy in Massachusetts and has continued participating in the sport throughout.

Larry Mitchell (Western Flyers/UT) joined the meeting and introduced himself as well.

**Officer Reports**

Approval of 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes as Posted (Hundrup) – Stierlin/Life to approve.  
Approved unanimously.

**President's Report (Hundrup)**

President John Hundrup opened thanking the board members for the contributions they make and volunteering their time. He noted the programmer, Craig, has also done a tremendous job with guidance and input from Joyce. Craig has been working on the junior app and indicated Joyce would discuss the project later in the meetings.

John then asked Plains Zone Director, Gary Heindel, to come to the head of the table to be formally sworn in as Plains Zone Director for a term.

President Hundrup said he is eager to share updates on the project that our programmer is working on for the national office. He indicated that the AU would run more efficiently once the data entry and ordering process is automated. John said an update would be shared later in the meetings.

**Executive Vice President Update (McKenna)**

Bob McKenna commented about counterfeit bands and that it appears to be a growing problem. Bob stated he would be proposing a new rule which will be covered during the review of Board Action Requests.

Mckenna also talked about the possibility of a manufacturer in the US producing bands similar to the iCOM bands (those bands with a pocket for a clock chip insert). Bob has been discussing this with a fellow flyer and said he will advise the board when he has more information.

At this time, the board discussed the shortage of stock leg bands in 2021. Bob explained that the IF received a large portion of their 2021 bands very late and so a good number of IF members joined the AU in order to get 2021 leg bands early in the year. Karen Clifton added that many members could not gather and race birds in 2020 due to Covid and so forgot to order for personal or club bands for 2021. A lot of these members called to order stock bands in January and February. Karen explained we did place and receive a second order and those sold very quickly.

Shannon Demler, By-laws Chair, said that his club had extra bands. He suggested members looking for bands be referred to clubs around them to determine if they have bands that are not used.

With regard to promotion, Bob McKenna said he has been working with Cam Datanagan in Hawaii. Cam recently attended and filmed a pigeon show in Hawaii. Bob said Cam posted the information on YouTube and that it is receiving notice. He praised Cam for his dedication to promotion.

#### **Vice President Update (Stierlin)**

Vice President, Joyce Stierlin, reported that she has continued her work with the programmer working on EWINSPEED® and recently the junior app. Joyce said She would be reporting on that and sharing progress later in the meetings.

#### **Committee Reports**

##### **Review of President's Agenda – (Hundrup)**

Most agenda items have been successfully completed. John said that one of the on-going projects on the agenda is the continuation and enhancement of EWINSPEED® There is more adjustment planned for EWINSPEED® and the contract with the programmer will need to be reviewed periodically.

President Hundrup's agenda also includes having the office data entry functions and order processing automated. This will save the AU and AU secretaries and clubs money and time. It will be a very efficient process. John will provide an update later in the meetings.

##### **Leadership/Retention/Promotion (Roberts/Finnerty/Life)**

Finnerty reported on the process of the committee work. Terry said he believed cost for kids and beginners was high and would discourage people from getting involved in racing, which is why the auction was coordinated late in 2020. Use of funds will be assisting beginners with electronic clocks, small lofts and social media advertising.

The committee has been working with the programmer to create a junior clocking system for cellphones. Joyce Stierlin indicated it will be beta tested soon and has some members set to

assist. Bud Williams asked why he was not a tester and Joyce asked if he would like to be added to the list of those assisting with beta testing.

Terry explained that he received systems that cost \$50 for juniors from Don Chapin. These are for testing. The chip is used on the leg but receives only 3-5 pigeons at this time. Terry said there are have 2 systems: countermarks with kids or cellphone application. Joyce said she needs a test file when Don sends it to Terry.

Finnerty said TopPigeon and Benzing are sending 5 new units each and used units for new adult beginner members. The only thing required for the new flyer to purchase is the laser pad.

Hundrup asked if the clocks are in our possession. Finnerty said they were not yet. Bud Williams suggested sending them directly to users to reduce cost. Finnerty said we still need to determine who gets them and for how long. Terry suggested that the club that the new member belongs to tracks the serial number and the member signs an agreement confirming quality of care for the clock while in their possession.

Terry said the 2020 auction brought in \$13,287 and that we received cash donations of \$2,000. With the 10 new electronic clocks being donated at a value of \$10,000, this totals \$25,297 proceeds from the auction activities.

Finnerty continued by sharing that in the Fall, we will have another auction on iPigeon and he will get the birds and coordinate the project. He said he will need a standard letter from the AU urging continuous support and to notify to watch the auction on that site.

Continuing Finnerty's report, he said he spent \$850 for the demo loft. He created it to screw together simply for each tear down/set up. Every area of the country requires slight adaptations such as wire fronts for warmer climates. He suggests a 4x7 structure that can be hauled on a trailer, blocked up into place and an easy tear down.

Finnerty said he was still trying to work on promotion video for use on social media.

Terry asked to be reimbursed for the \$850 for the loft he built. Motion made to reimburse Finnerty for the cost of the beginner loft created at the approximate cost of \$850 to be used to help new members get started. Stierlin/Wiaderski. Approved.

With regard to website revision suggestions, Plains Zone Director, Gary Heindel, said that including regional links for the entire country on the AU website would be helpful. Bud Williams said there should not be any negative comment that could alarm beginners, presented on the front page. Shannon Demler suggested posting a link "member services" for member information. The board agreed that basically breaking the website into 2 sources of information would serve public and members. Heindel said if this is in the budget now, we need to proceed. Joyce Stierlin suggested that the search box on the main page be placed at a higher point on the website so to be more easily seen.

The board agreed that a committee should be appointed to work on reformatting the website. Board members were asked to view the site and send a list of likes and dislikes and what new information they would like to see on the AU website. Karen Clifton will chair the committee. She asked for board input by August 1. The committee will be comprised of Joyce Stierlin, Shannon Demler, Terry Finnerty and Jeff Life. September 1 is the deadline to roll it out. The webmaster can create a mock up after payment. \$6000 is budgeted. This was presented as a motion. Stierlin/Finnerty. Approved.

Further discussion regarding the site yielded these items: front page categories, member services, race results.

Finnerty said we need to emphasize that if the race secretaries will upload, they will have a visual of the bird's success in the NDB. Clubs need to know this.

#### **National Youth/School Coordinator – (Williams)**

Williams said he is still waiting on ability to beta test the cellphone application for clocking for junior members that our programmer is working on. Stierlin has a list of beta testers she can send information to in order to proceed with testing. Williams said he needs to be added as a tester and that we need to determine where to obtain counter marks for when the app is made available to junior members.

Williams expressed unhappiness with the committee and resigned from the committee.

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

Karen updated the board on the status of the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) and potential regulations. The USDA is in the process of compiling all input from stakeholders (bird enthusiasts) and has until early 2022 to divulge which groups will be regulated, which will be exempt and what criteria will be used to regulate bird owners. Clifton reported that our lobbyist, Greg Smith, continues to monitor the process and will provide updates as soon as received. Greg lobbied on our behalf and submitted comments to the federal register on behalf of all pigeon fanciers..

Karen also reported that there is a mysterious avian illness in the northeast region of the country prompting vets to encourage removal of wild bird feeders and ensuring lofts, chicken coops, etc., are maintained so as not to allow wild birds from entering those structures. The illness produces eye problems, blindness, and neurological problems. So far it has not been reported in pigeons, rather wild birds. Karen said she is monitoring state veterinarian sites to determine if members will be asked to not gather for shipping, etc. Former board member, Tommy Erskine, first brought this to our attention and has been very helpful monitoring and sharing information with the office.

Clifton also mentioned the legislation in New York, which was proposed to disallow shipping of birds into our out of the state. AU lobbyist, Greg Smith, has been monitoring this situation as well and we have received messages from various officials indicating they will not support the legislation, which is to our benefit.

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

Shannon Demler reported that it has been quiet. Though Demler gets lots of calls, often people don't leave messages, so he is not aware if he misses members' issues.

Shannon said that a member in Utah, Ken Christopher, presented an issue with an A and B race release ½ hour apart. The birds were boxed on different sides of the trailer. He said that one club has different habits than the other and that one bird was mistakenly put in the wrong race and was disqualified.

### **Competition Standards (Life)**

National Race Secretary, Jeff Life has commented that it is easier for members to call him than to read the rules when a question arises. He said most callers just need clarification.

### **Drug Test Committee (Hundrup)**

John Hundrup reported that there have been no calls regarding use or testing with the exception of inquiring about Penicillin G.

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

#### **National Office (Clifton)**

Clifton reported an increase in membership, She said that we have had a good number of members that left for various reasons return to the AU. Karen also said that we have chartered several new clubs this year as members are coming back to the AU.

Karen said only a few members have called with ordinance issues and most are usually the result of neighbors feuding. However, on some occasions the city or county officials enforcing ordinances try to group pigeons with poultry and fowl and we attempt to work with members to help them educate these officials.

Clifton reported that there were 13 scholarship applications received for 2021/2022 and that two did not comply with instructions. She said three were selected and all will be notified after the meeting. The recipients will also be recognized in the 2021 Yearbook to be distributed in November.

Clifton handed the May financial statements to board members. Payroll and insurance are down. Revenue is up and attributed to band sales and an increase in membership.

Hundrup asked the board if any of them would assist with an auction at the convention for the youth scholarship auction. Demler and Shumaker will check to see if the convention host will allot a small amount of time for the AU to hold a quick auction of a few birds. Proceeds will go to the scholarship fund.

With regard to the annual board meetings prior to the 2021 convention to be held in Tampa, it was decided the board members would fly in on Monday, November 1. Board meetings will begin at 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, November 2, and Wednesday, November 3.

Terry Finnerty brought up discussion regarding the AU yearbook. He said the AU may save money by publishing a smaller version of the yearbook in the Digest magazine. Finnerty suggested eliminating a lot of the information in the book. Other board members commented that we should not slight AU members that don't subscribe to the pigeon magazine.

Discussion reverted to review of the May financial statements that were distributed earlier in the meeting. Bud Williams asked why total expenditure for EWINSPEED® and eWinSpeed© would appear in the fixed asset category. Hundrup explained that those items are fixed assets and the totals shown are cumulative.

#### Sport Development (Roberts)

Roberts gave examples of several activities by members in various formats that included press, in person events and social media successes. Those activities will be reported in the upcoming Update newsletter and are also shared in the electronic newsletter sporadically as examples of what can be done for promotion success.

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

##### **Northwest Zone (Life)**

Jeff Life said the Northwest Zone is pretty quiet. He said members are getting back on track after COVID19. Jeff said he will also be attending three zone meetings in his zone, which will give him an opportunity to meet members and provide updates on AU programs and benefits.

##### **Pacific Zone (Meder)**

Frank Meder has had requests from members for assistance in improving the clubs in the Pacific Mountain Zone. Frank said that there are many clubs are not doing anything to grow and gain positive attention. He indicated he will share ideas about events that have been successful for his club.

##### **Southwest Zone (Williams)**

Bud Williams said overall the Southwest Zone is quiet. He said that the Denton club always has issues. He mentioned that one club in his zone wants to host a zone meeting, but there is mixed response among club members. He has reached out to clubs to share his availability should one of the clubs would like to host a zone meeting.

The Texas Center summer meeting is in Tulsa again this year. Bud said he thinks the AU should have a presence. He also reported that all shows were canceled last year because of COVID19. Williams added that there is an increase in new members in his zone. He said many of the incoming members have been AU members in the past. Bud also said that clubs in Houston have grown. Williams believes translation of printed materials is still needed.

The office will have the race rules that appear in the yearbook translated for Spanish speaking members. Karen Clifton reminded the board that we do have a translating feature on the AU website as well.

### **Plains Zone (Heindel)**

Gary Heindel said the Plains Zone is quiet overall. He said that at the club level, combining shipping for large and small clubs can be difficult.

### **Lakes Zone (Finnerty)**

Terry Finnerty reported that the Lakes Zone is preparing for the 2022 convention. He said the convention committee and local members have had good discussions and planning sessions. They are creating a flyer to distribute to encourage members to attend.

Terry said his club has picked up 8 new members. He also mentioned that one recent event that took place during the old bird season has been a success as local clubs are merging with Buckeye Combine so all could utilize one trailer.

Finnerty also said that the convention committee is hosting a fall auction to raise money for the convention.

### **Southeast Zone (Shumaker)**

In the Southeast Zone, Ronnie Shumaker reported there were shipping issues in Puerto Rico. He said that was resolved after working with the AU office. Ronnie commented that language can be an issue.

Ronnie said he has a friend who speaks Spanish and that he could seek his help to help members understand taking on new functions, such as forming a new concourse.

Shumaker noted there is a large Hispanic influx and they love the birds, so Ronnie is doing what he can to encourage participation.

### **Northeast Zone (Wiaderski)**

Toni Wiaderski reported that members have started working together and scheduling races, etc., has been easier.

### **Convention Updates (McKenna)**

AU Executive Vice President, Bob McKenna, reported that there is a club in the Northeast that is thinking about hosting the 2023 convention and would try to encourage them and will report back to the board.

Karen Clifton also reported that she had received a call from a club in California that also expressed an interest in hosting the convention and a race.

Terry Finnerty said the organization hosting should be bonded. President Hundrup said we don't require bonding now because there is no financial connection. The contract is only for hosting the convention and has nothing to do with the race.

Finnerty said he believes we should impose a background check on those coordinating the race.

### **Awards Committee (McKenna)**

Bob McKenna said all past awards have been printed and are with John Hundrup for signature. Bob reported that he worked with the programmer, Craig, to correct a coding error and so awards are now being prepared to be sent and that Karen is in process of having the website updated to feature the award winners.

### **Types Presentation (Tim Perry)**

Tim was not able to attend. Presentation is tabled.

### **EWINSPEED©/NDB/Office Programming Update (Stierlin/Hundrup/Clifton)**

Joyce Stierlin provided a list of those organizations that are utilizing EWINSPEED®. She said that the issues that remain are GPS, merging and a learning curve for members using the new program/system. Joyce has had members tell her that the tutorials on the website have been helpful.

Miscellaneous comments regarding programming and the NDB from directors are below: John Hundrup spoke regarding the issue of band letters for alien bands and said we cannot use FMC for Mexican bands because Benzing requires using MX. John Suggests standardizing to MX to simplify process and reduce confusion. That would change the rule.

Ronnie Shumaker said there are some used Unikon clocks in his area and asked if they could be used for new members.

Jeff Life said that often refurbishing and keeping up with upgrades is not favorable.

Bud Williams said the “search bird” in the national database does not work. He noted that you can’t put in all 4 fields; it does not work but if you fill in one field, it works. He said there are no instructions stating that on the web page.

With regard to automating the member data entry/update and processing of band and diploma orders, President Hundrup explained that Craig will create ability to email secretaries their club rosters and the various forms typically found within the secretary packets. The club secretary will complete updating members and submit to the office. At that time, member cards would be generated. John said that payment would be made by credit card and the office would be prompted to send receipt. If the secretary chooses to send a check or money order, member updates and issuing member cards would be delayed until payment is received.

Clifton asked board members if they feel members use or want the member decals that are sent out each year. Bud Williams said he thinks members look forward to receiving them. Joyce Stierlin suggested we could possibly send to only new members or upon request.

Clifton said it will be up to the secretary to print the card or not. Craig will program so that annual secretary packet documents may be sent digitally and allow for the secretaries to update and add members to the database.



John Hundrup said the cost to automate these functions is \$2500 to start the programming; \$2500 to proceed and \$5000 on completion.

Regarding the member decals, Shannon Demler suggested we could mail them with the bands when they are shipped to the club secretaries or individuals that order bands.

Finnerty said we could accept IF young birds in old birds. Any existing AU member, it would automatically accept alien bands. They just need to contact us.

After discussion, it was decided to maintain the policy regarding alien bands now in place.

Shumaker said we need to clarify that the registration is one time per bird.

Hundrup will contact Craig to begin work.

Motion to accept the proposal to automate the data entry, band and diploma order processing and registration of bands. McKenna/Stierlin. Approved.

Clifton said she will advise members in the August *Update* and eUpdate.

Life said there are differing GPS readings within a concourse. Stierlin stated it must be the concourse race header: members using cell phone vs pin drop. We need to advise the members. Clifton suggested an article from Race Rules Chair for the Update.

Motion to adjourn for the day. Finnerty/Stierlin. Approved.

**American Racing Pigeon Union, Inc.  
Mid-Year Board Meeting Minutes  
Salt Lake City – June 23, 2021**

**AGENDA**

Board members present: Terry Finnerty, Deone Roberts, Bud Williams, Jeff Life, Gary Heindel, Karen Clifton, John Hundrup, Joyce Stierlin, Toni Wiaderski, Frank Meder, Ronnie Shumaker, Bob McKenna, Shannon Demler.

Guest present: Doug Burnett

Welcome/Introduction of Guests/Non-Board

Review of New Board Action Requests

NW-190

Amend language in AU By-Laws (5.03) so as to allow felons to run for office on the AU Board of Directors. Submitted by John Vance (Jeff Life NW Zone).

Discussion:

John Hundrup noted we've never changed bylaws or rules to fit one person's needs. The AU has always attempted to ensure the majority are being well served, as opposed to one member or one club.

By-Laws Chairman, Shannon Demler agreed saying section 5.03 was put in the By-Laws for a reason and should probably remain. He added that even if a record is expunged, poor judgment was exhibited and that is not desired in leadership.

NW Zone Director, Jeff Life said a person is not bad because they made a mistake.

Motion to accept made by Jeff Life. No second. Died for lack of second.

PLAINS-050

Amend AU By-laws to require a member to exhaust all means of requesting resolution, such as use of Board Action Request, prior to filing complaints. Members' funds are being used for a few members that cause conflict. To better serve members and be efficient with revenue, the Board Action Processed should be utilized prior. Recommended change below:

"The members of the Union may require a referendum vote on any proposed amendment provided that they first exhaust the Board Action Request process hereto by the filing with the AU Executive Director of a petition, stating the proposed amendment and signed by not less than five percent (5.0%) of the current AU members in good standing and with voting rights."  
Submitted by Don Lowe (Plains Zone, Gary Heindel)

Shannon Demler said zone directors can often settle an issue themselves. He added that the by-laws state issues for resolution should be referred to the club president, the whole club and then if an issue can't be resolved, a complaint may be filed with the AU. Shannon noted we just need to do better enforcement. Is he saying he wants to amend the AU constitution? It was agreed that is how the BAR was submitted.

Demler said he would be against that. He is attempting removal of 5% requirement and that Article 7 does not require BAR.

Lakes Zone Director, Terry Finnerty, suggested the zone director should speak with individual to work to mediate conflicts and said to him, it seems tis is attempting to avoid the process.

Died for lack of motion

SW-046

Approve an Open Race from Little Rock, AR, to be flown on 5/1/21. The Texas Open was established a couple of years ago, however, due to Covid did not take place. This is to encourage multi-state/club participation. Submitted by Erica Reed (SW Zone, Bud Williams).

Board vote was taken via email in April 2021, and passed unanimously.

Discussion:

Vice President, Joyce Stierlin, said we need published criteria regarding open races.

NW Zone Director and National Race Secretary, Jeff Life, noted there is no wording in the race rules to cover this.

Bud Williams, SW Zone Director, said he advised the group what to do some time ago. He understood to create a concourse with by-laws so it can be entered in NDB. Group response was no, it will be listed as an open.

Joyce Stierlin again stated that written criteria is needed.

Terry Finnerty said they did gain 2 more clubs because it was easy to merge them in results

President Hundrup said he will work on outlining criteria for open races for the NDB.

NE-039

Place any individual/loft caught using counterfeit bands on suspension for two years. It is becoming increasingly more prevalent and members cheat. It also makes it impossible to track lost birds. Submitted by Bob McKenna. Bob also pointed out that the existing rule reads as follows:

7.08 Only birds with unaltered seamless racing pigeon size bands, with size approved by the AU, may be entered in an AU recognized race. (See Rule 7.09) 15 A. Any member that is found to be using AU bands for the new year prior to Jan. 1st shall lose the privilege of purchasing specialty or vanity AU bands for a period of three (3) years. (06/15) B. If counterfeit bands are used, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, from suspension to expulsion. (06/19)

Motion to add the same information to the race rule to make 2 year suspension mandatory.

Finnerty/Wiaderski. Approved

NW-191

Ken Cristopher submitted an appeal to the board to allow a bird in a concourse race that was he believes was incorrectly disqualified. Submitted by Ken Christopher (NW Zone, Jeff Life).

The board discussed that the Race Secretary has determined that the decision that was made is final. Shannon Demler said he feels the race committee has the right to disqualify the bird. He asked is there a process to reverse the decision?

Bud Williams said we should state in writing more explicitly why the request is declined.

John Hundrup said he will prepare a letter.

Various comments were made:



1 – Gulfcoast Homing Club is using the old WinSpeed© program for local awards and there are distance, birdage and lofts issues.

2 - Quantity of birds is an issue.

3 - Ronnie said that members asked about the final count of ballots in the last election. He noted that number had not been shared.

Karen said that since candidates are typically running unopposed, the AU does not pay thousands of dollars to have ballots tabulated by a CPA as is done when positions are contested. Clifton to report numbers from SE Zone election to Ronnie. Karen indicated that only approximately 300 members in the entire SE Zone returned ballots. It was agreed that it has not been intentional to hide information, rather, because members typically don't run or vote, it was thought that members don't concern themselves with that information. Additionally, paying for an audit of ballots makes no sense if the positions are uncontested. It was also agreed that the number of ballots will be reported in future elections where candidates are contested.

Motion to adjourn. Stierlin/Heindel. Approved unanimously.