

**American Racing Pigeon Union, Inc.**  
**Mid-Year Board Meeting**  
**Denver, CO – July 20, 2013**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

The board meeting convened at 8:45 a.m and opened with flag salute and moment of silence. There were no guests present. Board members present were Freddie Rivera, Karen Clifton, Bill Mitiu, John McSweeney, Mike Tobin, Toni Wiaderski, Al Hassler, Steve Lawler, Jim Greelis, Ron Pairan, Alan Porter, Tom Coletti, Bill Barger, Deone Roberts. No visitors attended.

Minutes from 2012 annual meetings approved by directors via email in November 2012.

President's Opening Remarks/Committee Appointments – Rivera

Tom Coletti is retiring from the offices of By-Laws & Constitution Advisor and as the Competition Standards Committee Chairman. Rivera thanked him for his years of service. Tom will continue as the Northwest Zone Director. President Rivera offered the appointment of Fred Werner to fill the position of By-Laws & Constitution Advisor and John Hundrup as the Competition Standards Chairman. Coletti/Lawler. Passed.

Rivera sent a letter to all board members regarding confidentiality of board business while in Executive Session. There will be no allowance for variance from the directive to keep board discussion, while in Executive Session, confidential. The consequence for not adhering to the directive will be dismissal from the board.

Executive Vice President – Mitiu

Preparation for convention in Florida is going well. Handlers are doing well; ladies should have some very enjoyable trips and attendees will enjoy the hotel. All is going well. With the convention race, the classic race, the youth race and any replacement entries, they have received over 8000 birds.

Vice President – Holder

Holder was not able to attend because of illness. In Jay's absence, Coletti to provide information pertaining to the progress on the e-WinSpeed and integration into the NDB later in the meeting.

President Ex-Officio – Lawler

He has been working with the Western Open, putting together an organization with Eastern Organization, Eastern Washington, and Idaho, and revived a Federation. They released four races together, releasing in Carson City (won by a different group, which was good to spread around awards), and releasing in Winnamucka (a good race).

Treasurer – McSweeney

Issues with Windows 8 has delayed his work. He is still working with Karen to get financial statements simplified for easy reading. Both McSweeney and Clifton will review and make recommendations on revising accounting procedures in November.

**Committee Reports**

Judiciary Committee – Mitiu

The committee did not meet, so there was nothing to report. Mitiu to report in November 2013.

Leadership/Retention – Lawler

Lawler reviewed that the board is trimmed, we have a national youth program, we have a school

coordinator, a judiciary committee working to maintain the right to fly (which is a primary goal), and now we need to be proactive to move forward.

#### National Youth/School Coordinator – Pairan

Pairan reviewed things tried in his region:

- He emailed contacts in Ohio offering local fanciers as speakers. He has been working on contact to do presentations. He received no response.
- In a previous board meeting, he suggested a youth button on the NDB. Unfortunately, only one person submitted results in the combine.
- His club emulated Tim Tessier's procedures: giving birds away and loaning lofts. With this, participants are likely to build their own loft. Eventually 1/3 of the parents join the club. With this in mind, Ron's group placed one loft and the sheriff instructed that it be removed because the covenants did not allow it. Legally, they could still have the loft, but the two young girls will not be taking action.
- A couple of potential members had life circumstance changes, which eliminated them flying.

Lawler was told that Tessier's program is the most successful and comprehensive.

#### Historian – Greelis

He contacted Tim Dubian who builds pigeon World War II equipment replicas. He will need measurements from an actual carrier, which Greelis will provide to him.

Elwin Anderson's family has boxes of more items to donate. Greelis will pick those items up and go through them for historically significant items for Oklahoma City.

He had a great trip to Louisiana and has interview clips of Ed Minvielle for editing and posting on the AU site.

The Midwest Convention is in October in Omaha. Omaha is also submitting to host the 2014 AU convention.

#### Judge's Panel – Barger

Barger indicated there is very little activity and few requests for judges. All judge positions have been filled in the west. There are a few openings in central and east.

Rivera shared that he did a show and two seminars, one with Los Lobos. He found the club to be a good example of doing a lot of work and spending a lot of money to put on an event, but feel the AU is not willing to help, therefore, why would they use the program? Rivera receives the complaints. After bearing the cost, members don't want to do it anymore. Rivera's question to the board is how to help them.

Lawler offered that maybe an incentive program with additional funding would assist. The AU doesn't have resources to assist all clubs when they hold seminars, auctions and other events, however, a dedicated amount could possibly be allocated each year.

#### Constitution & By-Laws - Coletti

He is leaving this position and will be replaced by Fred Werner. He is forced to cut back because of other interests and feels the AU would benefit from fresh infusion of ideas.

During this past reporting period, he noticed some of the organizations above the club level starting to implode. As in most organizations, just a few members are doing the work and the rest are happy to sit back and let them. This produces a more autocratic entity; then the complaints come in.

Most cases involved not informing the membership of changes, nor allowing a vote. In one case some of the founding members are shut out of the decision making process by one lone wolf that ran, he thought everything. It was OK as long as they were part of the upper echelon. Tom starts getting complaints when they are not. Generally the truth comes out on the real operation of the organization as he talks with members.

The only recourse is to ask them to bring their issue up to the membership and see if the interests of the few can be overcome. These organizations have been operating for years this way with no challenges for the membership or the AU.

Tom believes the reason the AU hasn't intervened is there isn't any real set rules for organizations higher than a club to operate from. The AU has tried to offer Chartered Organization status to many groups operating as Combines, Courses and Federations. Few if any have applied.

The process is simple, provide a standard AU approved By-Laws and Constitution's for each club and higher organization and the organization is chartered. The problem is these organizations don't want to give up their independence and be under the influence of the AU.

Tom explained that the AU Race rules cover them very clearly. Our Constitution and By-Laws advise them under the AU umbrella. (24.10)

So the only solutions are to either force them to adopt our standard Constitution and By-Laws, (**Forced Chartered Organization**), and get approval through a vote of the membership for all amendments, policies and procedures, or let them run with what they have until a protest is filed.

Discussion ensued regarding not allowing unchartered organizations to upload to the National Database. The board agreed that all organizations uploading at a certain level (combine, concourse, federation, etc.) needs to be chartered at that level. Organizations will be notified by periodically via electronic e-Update and the quarterly newsletters that they have until December 31, 2014 to charter. The fee will be waived until that time. After that, the fee will apply. Coletti/Hassler. Passed unanimously.

On an issue the Board handled in La Mirada, the participants had "buyer's remorse". They discovered that they couldn't operate very well without the expelled race secretary's help since most were happy to let him run the club. Now they have to lead.

This issue brought up a flaw in present policy. The AU no longer publishes Board disciplinary actions. Few people know when a member has received disciplinary action taken against them. Our Constitution and By-Laws still say to publish those actions for the benefit of our membership. (24.12) Tom believes we should post disciplinary actions. Our Constitution and By-Laws also state that a committee shall be appointed to "monitor" an expulsion. (24.03) and (24.13)

Tom encouraged the Board to allow the new Constitution and By-Laws Advisor to review and clean up any inconsistencies. The Constitution and By-Laws Advisor is a serious position and is counted on by the Board to monitor our actions just like we insist the organizations we govern monitor and follow their Constitution and By-laws, as well as our Race Rules.

This position deserves full time monitoring without any other assigned jobs. There is no provision to bring a person back in that has been expelled from the AU.

Coletti suggested a committee of three to monitor suspension, probations and expulsions and suggested it be the zone director in the same zone as the person that had action taken against him or her. The committee will also have two other individual members. He also suggested publication of expulsion, suspension and probation in accordance with bylaws.

#### Competition Standards/Discussion of Legitimate Organizations Combine, Concourse - Coletti

During this reporting period, there were substantial phone calls on race issues. One nice aspect of the calls was the membership was calling to confirm rules not reporting violations. It was nice to be of help to the members rather than dictating to them. He did report that there are still the complaints and provided a list of those complaints.

There were no new BARs submitted. Coletti's opinion is that the race rules are in good shape. He has been refining the rules in cooperation with the board since 2004, and believes they can remain for a while. Rulings have been made consistent with the AU rules. Those that did not agree were advised to write a BAR.

It takes many hours each week to keep up with the questions, make rulings and submitting BARs.

#### Veterans Committee – Hassler

Other than information Greelis already covered, he has not done anything. He will contact Desmarais for materials and information.

#### National Office – Clifton

The Omaha RPA has submitted a proposal to host the 2014 convention. Per AU By-Laws, the proposal is to be reviewed to ensure basic criteria is met (hotel large enough to accommodate, guest activities will be coordinated, awards banquet, general membership meeting, etc.). The club also requested variance on the race format. Barger/Lawler to table to Sunday. Passed unanimously. Jim Greelis to talk to the club and advise the AU will no longer request rooms for the President, Executive Director or NLA President. Additionally, the AU no longer requests a percentage from net earnings and therefore, no change in the format between handler and breeder.

Clifton was asked to communicate with Cornell University to determine if they would study cell phone interference. She reported she did have conversation and they are very specific as to what they would research though they did want to work together. Dr. Kazmierczak contacted the AU to ask if we would like to be able to offer members good avian veterinarian services at very reasonable rates. He indicated Cornell would like to expand to make services available to more fanciers.

Karen spoke with Dr. Jagne, in the Cornell Veterinary Support Services. They will offer services (posting, diagnostics, health regimen, etc.) to members. AU members may take advantage of this and receive very specialized service for a good rate. This would encourage a working relationship between the AU and Cornell.

Barger/Pairan to contribute \$2000 annually to be reviewed after a two year period. Passed unanimously.

Clifton shared two applications from individuals, Mike Ludolph and Zeb Talach, who would like to be considered for the AU Speakers' Bureau. The Board discussed that the program is used

so infrequently and it has been a few years since current speakers were asked about remaining on the bureau. Clifton was directed to send letters to current speakers asking them to indicate if they would like to remain or be removed from the panel. Once that input is received, the Board will review the status of the program and determine if it is appropriate to add speakers. This will be discussed in November 2013.

Coletti/McSweeney. Motion to reevaluate the Speakers' Bureau. AU to contact them to have them reapply. Passed unanimously.

Barger/McSweeney. Motion to table two applications until review of Speakers' Bureau in November. Passed unanimously.

The board agreed that all parties involved in an infraction be given a copy of the original complaint. Complainant should not be copied on recommendation. It creates confusion and is interpreted as a decision, which in fact it is not. The board agreed that the recommendation will be mailed to the office for distribution to the board prior to the subsequent board meeting, at which time, a vote will be taken. Following the board meeting and per our By-Laws, the AU Secretary will notify all parties, in writing, within 30 days from board meeting.

Clifton also asked for clarification on minimum club membership requirements in our Union Dues and Classes Policy (210). Race rules state that a club must have a minimum of five members paying through the club to remain active. The AU Board voted to allow a club to keep an active charter, even if the club falls behind minimum requirements or has no activity (due to health, career change, life change of members) for two years. If the club does not meet the minimum requirements the third year, the charter becomes inactive. The club name and band letters would be available to another club that does meet the requirements.

Barger/Coletti. Motion to allow a two year grace period for clubs that do not have a minimum of five that pay dues through that club. After that time, clubs would need to recharter. Notification to members is to be posted in the AU yearbook, and will take effect in 2014. Passed unanimously.

Karen reported that the FCI would like all member federations to utilize a band that bears the letters "FCI" and pay a small portion for bands to the FCI. It is impossible for the AU to change band orders placed for 2014 as the order had to be submitted at the end of March.

Mitiu/Barger. Motion to reject FCI proposal that AU purchase FCI bands and contribute 1 euro cent for each band to FCI. The AU will continue to pay FCI dues. Passed unanimously.

The Paterson Club worked to assist Hurricane Sandy victims by working in local shelters and assisting where most needed. The AU tried to help them generate funds by posting in our quarterly newsletters and e-Updates. \$245 was generated and donated to Eva's Kitchen in Paterson. Another request to assist with a fundraiser was received by the AU. It appeared to be a successful effort but we have received no further details.

Report was given regarding condition of office after the May tornadoes and continued flooding. A sink hole is on office property. The City has been notified but due to backlog because of the storm, they have not been out to inspect and determine course of action. The board agreed to have Karen follow up with the City and check on other available properties.

The board agreed to travel on Sunday, November 17, to meet for annual board meetings, which will be held on Monday, November 18, and Tuesday, November 19. If additional meeting time is needed, board members will convene during the convention.

Karen discussed demographics of newer members. They are younger and tend to be more technically advanced. The office will be working on a presentation that can be posted on YouTube and on the AU website. Steve Lawler will assist and confirm content and accuracy. It is hoped that a newer member who may not be getting help from club members could access that info and get the assistance needed to get started and enjoy participation.

#### Sport Development – Roberts

Because a list of member activities will be published in the Update newsletter, Roberts provided a brief overview of the list, adding that the average number of new members coming into the AU each month remains around the 100, however, our year-to-date total is slightly lower than same time last year.

#### Northwest Zone – Coletti

Other than responding to race rule and by-laws inquiries, Tom has had little activity in the Northwest Zone. He is preparing to attend an annual zone meeting in Oregon later in July.

#### Pacific Zone – Barger

All is quiet.

#### Southwest Zone – McSweeney

John indicated that the usual calls regarding birds and getting into and winding up the old bird season, his zone has been quiet as well.

#### Plains Zone – Porter

There were conflicts in Chicago and Nebraska. The Nebraska conflict was turned over to the Infractions Committee and will be discussed in Executive Session.

Dave McKenzie has been contacting Alan to request reinstatement after having been expelled. This will also be discussed in Executive Session.

Another conflict in Minnesota allegedly involves incorrect uploading to the database, GPS coordinates, etc. No formal infraction has been received as of this time.

A situation in Kansas was reported where a member allegedly has been cheating. No formal infraction has been filed.

Alan discussed his concern for the sport with members bickering and finding ways to conflict with one another rather than support and assist one another. He also feels because of that all members should be thankful for and appreciative of those individuals that truly act selflessly.

#### Lakes Zone – Pairan

Ron also shared some of the conflicts among club members that he has tried to assist with but indicated the first half of the year had been fairly quiet in his zone.

He and Deone conducted a zone meeting in Indianapolis in conjunction with a club auction. He said the meeting was well attended and appeared successful.

Ron reported that he participated again in the 4-H Day in Lancaster in March. He then contacted the coordinator at the Ohio State Extension Office to find out if he could send a communication through the state office that would reach all advisors in the state. She allowed him to submit an article to include with their on-line distribution. He also sent communication to fanciers in the state to let them know in the event they were called on for pigeon presentations or to assist with local 4-H groups. To date, he has had no response from any of the advisors.

Ron's club participated in Memorial Day festivities with bird releases. The event was well attended, featured speakers, a military flyover, skydivers and the bird release.

#### Southeast Zone – Hassler

He handled several lost bird calls, held a zone meeting in South Carolina, a zone meeting with Freddie in Puerto Rico, and dealt with zoning issues in Atlanta and Orlando.

#### Mountain Zone – Hoggan

Brad was not able to attend.

#### Northeast Zone – Wiaderski

Toni has been active personally conducting several presentations at senior centers and high schools. He has also fielded member complaint calls. His club will be holding an auction on August 17.

#### WinSpeed©/NDB/Programming - Tobin/Holder

Old (desktop) WinSpeed© runs on all Windows operating systems; installs fine on Windows versions 95 through XP; however, installation on Windows Vista (2006) through Windows 8 (current) can be difficult. Tobin estimates a lifespan of current WinSpeed© to be approximately two more years. There will be a point when WinSpeed© won't install and/or run on a new operating system. The current plan is to NOT create a new desktop WinSpeed© and move directly to a web-based WinSpeed©.

New (internet) WinSpeed© is the same language as the NDB; it is easier to maintain and update; it will allow real time clocking; and data transfer to the NDB should be easier.

Transition Period – Mike indicated the organization can use both WinSpeed© versions at the same time. The link between them would be backup/restore compatible between both versions. Improvements are needed in NDB: computing awards during NDB upload takes too long; computer code from 2003 has security flaws; and computer code needs to be better organized and documented.

Miscellaneous Discussion – Lawler presented member comments about WinSpeed© and PETA. McSweeney suggested Minvielle be given time at the annual board meeting to present his clocking process and have Elizabeth Brandes demonstrate the internet WinSpeed©. Both will be put on the meeting agenda.

#### Awards – Holder

Holder was not able to attend. Coletti provided a brief overview of the e-WinSpeed©. The power point presentation provided several samples/screens of the internet based program highlighting some of the drop down menus and features. Elizabeth is expected to have a program ready for testing by November, if not before.

#### Infraction Committee/Executive Session

Barger/Coletti to approve action and adjourn (5:00 p.m.). Unanimous.

### **July 21, 2013**

The board meeting convened at 8:00 a.m. There were no guests present. Board members present were Freddie Rivera, Karen Clifton, Bill Mitiu, John McSweeney, Mike Tobin, Toni Wiaderski, Al Hassler, Steve Lawler, Jim Greelis, Ron Pairan, Alan Porter, Tom Coletti, Bill Barger, Deone Roberts.

Visitor Tim Brandon attended later in the day.

### Review of New Board Action Requests

PAC-056 Require the top 1% of birds (entered (paid + rotation) in the AU Convention Race be auctioned off after the race, in order to standardize the convention race franchise from year to year. Policy AU 300 be amended to include: The top 1% of birds entered (paid+rotation) in the AU Convention Race, shall be auctioned off after the race, either before the end of the convention or by on-line auction within a reasonable time. Died for lack of motion.

SE-034 Terminate and/or expel George Benitez. Discussed in Executive Session.

SE-035 Unit Ten be allowed to release A & B race 15 minutes apart for the 2013 young bird series to see if this change will work to avoid problems related to heat and humidity.

Discussion: No special needs consideration. Florida does have hotter, more humid weather, but agreement that it is not a special case. Mitiu/Lawler. Failed.

SE-037 Allow exemption to race rule 10.06 regarding releases because of heat in Florida. Died for lack of second.

Discussion: It's still up to race secretary/committee to interpret on case by case basis (definition of mass releases). PROs old birds go up at the same time and you figure out which race they are in later. CONs they understand they can't release an A race with a B race, but then they claim we said they could release together. Claim of drag in race. Pairan in favor as long as national race secretary continues interpretation. McSweeney – combine releasing birds with combined clubs, but one club not in the race – if it was not approved by people, then it was not allowed. It causes confusion. In complaint, he trapped in "other club" bird as proof of the drag.

MOTION to keep up to discretion of national race secretary. Pairan/McSweeney. Passed.

SE-036 Rule of Conduct 14.01 (22) and By-Law 19.09 to be amended to include a mandatory minimum penalty of 3 years' probation or 1 year suspension for those who refuse to cooperate with or give false information to the Infractions Committee. Mitiu/Coletti. Passed.

SW-039 Allow absentee voting and add in the race rules. Brian Johnson. Motion by McSweeney pointed out difference "absentee" vs. "proxy" ballot. Died for lack of second.

NW-143 Add a field in WinSpeed© to record solar conditions (K-Factor) same as Weather, Wind, Temp to the Edit Race and reports section. Coletti/Lawler. Include in e-WinSpeed©. Passed unanimously.

### 2013 Convention Update – Mitiu

The race committee is working double time; they are double checking entry sheets to confirm accuracy. Planning is going well. They have a great auction lined up: big names from Europe. They have good ladies trips planned. They will ship Wednesday and race Friday. Both evening meals will be at the club. Saturday they will have seminars, an auction, entertainment: oldies band, hypnotist, and dance troupe. The speakers will provide auction birds.

The Frank Greenhall Memorial Race has 9 participants. They will have the race Wednesday or Thursday with a distance of 250 miles.

### 2014 Convention – Greelis

Omaha agreed to the counter proposal AU submitted. Barger/Wiaderski to accept Omaha's bid and, effective immediately, (including Florida convention host) under the new convention terms

with no fees to the AU or the required rooms for the AU President, Director, or NLA President. Passed unanimously.

### Review of "3 Areas of Focus"

1)

- Increase Awareness/General & Member  
The office currently utilizes e-Updates for more frequent communication.
- CDs in secretary packets  
The office will include randomly selected AU CD in each packet.
- Promote AU at conventions with seminars and displays, resume practice of printing booklet with award results to hand out at convention, hopefully promoting use of NDB. This is ongoing. The office will have booklets prepared following young bird season.
- Survey to members. There are too few subscribers to the e-Update; few read the quarterly Update; the secretary packet sometimes is not shared. The conclusion is to include the brief survey in the membership cards to determine what is important to members, how we might better assist from the office and encourage them to familiarize with existing AU programs and services.

### General Public:

- Advertise the sport in general (data/facts, no disease).  
The office will continue to identify new advertising opportunities within budget confines.
- Continue to circulate *Pigeons & Avian Related Disease (AU Research Update)* previously published. This can also occur through YouTube seminars that the office will create with Lawler's assistance.
- Engage public participation.  
Releases are incredible. Solicit participation for special Olympics/parades utilizing standard approach letter/flyer that the office created. Ducky race vs. pigeon race, Lions Club, Kiwanis project to raise money are some examples. Cartmell and Lawler will review/update the Tri Fold flyer, which is a handier format to keep on hand in the vehicle. Jim Dank has also expressed an interest in a version of a flyer to be used at religious events (funerals, weddings, etc.). Each zone director will receive the Race Horse brochures for use.
- Celebrity spokesperson  
George Foreman was mentioned.

2) National Database/Awards

- Modernize award process; real-time clocking; e-WinSpeed©; Automated awards – no paper submission. Holder and committee are working on it.
- Automated award certificates. The office has nearly completed, with minor adjustment.

3) Other Member Services

- Exhibit with history DVDs (interactive terminal).  
A terminal or kiosk is not something to be taken to different locations. Possibly use with laptop. Better for World of Wings?
- YouTube seminars (WinSpeed, Running A Club)

- Office will work with board member with particular voice quality.
- Ordinance  
Mitiu will chair committee and report in July 2014
- Arbitration  
McSweeney, Coletti & Pairan have past experience. January newsletter will feature that alternative after it has gone through bylaws process and combine process.
- Phone app. Possibly Holder will be able to coordinate.
- Create special release protocol. The recommended release guidelines were created years ago and found at pigeon.org. They have been advertised in various publications. Can be used in future e-Updates.
- Pamphlet with Tessier/Shumaker on school/youth project. Already in place.

#### Pending Board Items

The AU has been notified of a conflict in a club. The board agreed the AU will only get involved through the infraction process and will advise the individual that was his option if he wanted to involve the AU in spite of Coletti's efforts to resolve the issue locally.

Barger/Pairan to not change the rules with regard to organizations. Passed with 3 against. Discussion was that in order to upload in the category you want (club, combine, concourse, federation), you become compliant with requirements for that category by submitting appropriate charter application and by-laws.

Barger/McSweeney to notify organizations that AU requires them to be chartered in order to upload to the NDB. If they choose not to follow chartering procedures for the desired level, the organization will no longer be allowed to upload to NDB by the beginning of 2015. Passed. Notice to go in e-Updates and newsletters.

#### Member Presentation - Tim Brandon

Tim is a member of the Orange County Flyers and is representing the club. They seek board action in three areas: adopt new language for release points, airlines and use of GPS, and weather conditions from release point through destination.

Tim presented information and specific examples illustrating how release points have changed. In some cases, changes have been quite dramatic over the last five or six years.

He would like the AU to consider stronger release guidelines to further illustrate optimum care is provided. Tim agreed to assist as needed.

The board determined a Board Action Request will be required and would be reviewed and acted on in November 2013. Coletti will assist him in crafting one.

#### Infractions Review - Executive Session

Board reviewed recommendations by the Infraction Committee Chair. Barger/Wiaderski to exit Executive Session and approve. Unanimous.

Adjourn – 12:00 noon.