**PNER Board of Directors Meeting**

**January 16, 2024 virtual via Free Conference Call**

1. **Call to order**

* 1/16/2024 at 6:39 pm Pacific by President Kristin Grace
* Voting members present: Kristin Grace, Bianca Chevalier, Katrin Leverman, Suzanne Hayes, Cassee Steed Terry, David Lewis, (quorum established), Regina Rose
* Non-voting members present: Alex Lewis, Melissa Stephenson, Kristy Butler, Stace & Marlene Moss, Lisa Cohen, Lorna Christopherson, Lora Banon, Jamethiel Morse, Bobbi Walker, Cindi Sayer

1. **Approval of minutes**

* Minutes for the 10/17/23 meeting had been sent out previously to BoD via email & were approved on 10/31/23 by quorum.

1. **Reports**

* **Treasurer – Cindi**
  + Treasurer reports had been sent out via email to BoD prior to the meeting (attached)
  + PNER has ~ $81,000.00 altogether throughout their accounts
    - David Lewis had questions about the money market account & the actual amount of interest it is bringing in so there was a discussion and he will go to the Financial Committee meeting at convention & discuss it at that time with them.
* **President –** **Kristin**
* I have Alex Lewis here with me and because she will be the new PNER President, I am going to have her follow along and help guide her on what our BoD meetings are like.
  + Kristin had Alex do a mock call to order and roll call for practice
* **Vice President – Cassee**
* Bobbi Walker is requesting meeting minutes asap so she can get them in the handbook
* Convention
  + There has been a lot of discussion about why we do it the time of year that we do & the answer is because of the bylaws
  + We are going to lose money on convention due to the venue so we might want to start thinking outside of the box for different convention ideas for in the future
  + I have that we are at about 44 people registered as of now for convention. It takes 90+ to break even. The weather is going to affect our numbers this year.
    - Kristin; It has to be a bylaws change in order to be able to have convention at a different time of year so we may just have to re-imagine what convention looks like in the future. Bylaws changes should not be taken lightly & should only be done once a year, preferably at convention so they can go in the handbook and those are the bylaws you operate on all year.
      * There was a lot of discussion about bylaws changes and what that should look like. It was brought up that they may need a bylaws committee to gather proposed changes & bring them before the membership for discussion and to decide which ones (if any) would go before the BoD to be put in for a vote.
* **Representatives**
* **BC – Katrin** 
  + We will only be having 4 rides up here this year
* **ID – Layne or Nance**
  + No report
* **MT – Suzie**
  + We have a new 2-day ride in Montana this year
  + There was a discussion about Suzie’s proposal that she had submitted to the BoD via email (see old business)
    - After discussion, it was decided they would take it to convention for discussion there & to get more feedback
* **OR – Bianca & David**
  + **Bianca;** nothing new to report
  + **David;** Nothing new to report
* **WA** – **Tani & Donna**
  + No report
* **RM** – **Regina**
  + No general RM items to report, but she will not be putting on Tough Sucker this year & she has handed off all her other rides to other RMs

1. **Committee Reports**
2. **Technology – Stace;** Nothing new to report.
3. **Awards – Jessica Huber;** Jessica had sent an email report out to Cassee prior to the meeting and Cassee stated that there was noting new to report.
4. **Education – Cassee;** Nothing new for education.
5. **Juniors/Young Riders – Laura/Bentley;** No report
6. **Elections – Cassee;** Kristy Butler ran the election this year via Election Runner. Everything is going good & results will be in by tomorrow.
7. **Social Media –** No report. Kristin stated that she would not be on Social Media anymore either.
8. **Trails – Tani;** No report
9. **Scholarship – Deb/Greta;** Cassee said she had gotten an email from them stating they needed help
10. **Marketing – David;** Concerned about the BoD getting continued feed-back from the membership and how that could be handled; polls?
11. **Membership – Lora;** There are 130 renewed memberships as of now.
12. **Old Business**
    * **12/6/23** Suzie’s proposal was submitted to the BoD via email: *I have been approached several times by Jeff Stuart, ride manager for the Antelope Island Ride near Salt Lake City, UT (Mountain Region). He has asked me to confer with the PNER board to see if they might be interested in making a by-law change to have some out of region, but very close to regional lines, rides count for PNER points. There is a precedent for this type of by law change in that the MRER (Mountain Region Endurance Riders) has been doing this for 10+ years and it works out really well for the ride managers in those areas, which frequently are in fairly isolated areas that don’t have the draw of riders that other areas might. If that change were to happen in PNER, right how I think it would only affect 2 rides, Antelope Island and a new ride in Montana (Sleeping Giant near Helena), but could possibly impact others in the future. I feel that the fact that PNER is now accepting memberships from out of region members and the membership is no longer “exclusive” to within regional boundaries lends it’s way to this change also*

*I hope everyone will have an open mind about this proposal and give it some thoughtful consideration and dialog. Below is an example of what the new by-law might look like:*

*Rides in the states bordering the Northwest region may also be considered part of the region and eligible for PNER points and awards if the ride does not conflict with an existing Northwest Region ride and is within 100 miles of the AERC defined Northwest Region border.*

* + **12/13/23** David Lewis submitted a member poll results report regarding PNER convention: *Dear Board Members and Convention Organizers, I hope this letter finds you well. As we approach our much-anticipated annual awards and banquet convention in January, I have received feedback from several of our members regarding their concerns and expectations for the event. I am writing to share these concerns with you and request your attention to these matters.*

*I apologize for not having organized the results from the Boise 2023 convention survey, I think it would have been good to have that prepared prior to our previous board meeting, but I was unable to do so. Having received so much feedback over the last couple of weeks prompted me to go back and review some of the survey feedback and combine it with the feedback I've received recently. I've organized the feedback into the following key points.*

*I do not necessarily agree or disagree with everything that is presented here, but as a Rider rep, I feel that it's important to represent the membership and share this feedback with all of you so that we can discuss it and hopefully address some of these concerns.*

*1. Pricing and Flexibility:*

*Our members have expressed concern regarding the new pricing structure for the convention. The requirement of $90 for attending both days, including the awards banquet, is perceived as steep and somewhat alienating. There's a general consensus for more flexibility in pricing, allowing members to choose and pay for specific events they wish to attend.*

*Members expressed confusion at what to do if they wanted to only attend the awards banquet. This could also cause confusion for our membership secretary, as they would need to know who is attending the banquet and who is not but since the prices are bundled together, it's difficult to know.*

*I agree that we should charge for speakers as we did prior to 2020, and I believe that the value offered with the $40 option for the Friday speakers + banquet is probably sufficient for the banquet, but it may not be clear or obvious to the members to choose this option if the desire is only to attend the banquet dinner. Members have also become accustomed to the free speakers from the previous 3 years, so it seems to be a shock to them to have to pay for speakers again, especially if the speaker lineup is not as strong as it has been in the past.*

*In the past, as I recall, we had a separate price for the banquet and the convention, and then a bundled option for both.*

*Survey rating for overall convention satisfaction: (From Boise 2023) 4.23*

*2. Speaker Lineup:*

*The absence of sufficient speakers, lack of novel topics, and the lack of a keynote speaker have been major points of significant dissatisfaction and frustration in the majority of feedback I've received, from nearly ever member who I've heard from. Members are looking for an engaging line-up of speakers and diverse topics, and some big-shot speakers. The quality and quantity of speakers significantly influence the decision of many members to attend and some members expressed a lack of desire to attend simply due to an insufficient speaker line-up or the lack of a keynote speaker. This aspect of the convention is crucial, as it serves as a significant draw for attendance.*

*In the feedback from the survey, many attendees were dissatisfied with the speaker lineup and topic list, and many of the respondents who did not attend cited the lack of speakers and topics as a reason for not attending.*

*Survey rating for speakers, presentations, and panels at the Boise 2023 convention: 4.11*

*3. Value Proposition:*

*There is a concern about the perceived value offered at the convention, especially when weighed against the costs. Members are seeking a more compelling reason to attend, which could be addressed by improving the variety and quality of speakers and activities. This was also one of the common factors in the survey results from those who attended as well as the 60 respondants who did not attend, many didn't attend due to lack of perceived value and lack of sufficient speakers and topics at the Boise convention.*

*4. Casino Night and Meal Arrangements:*

*The Casino night was a highlight last year and there's a strong desire to see it return. Additionally, members hope for better Friday-night meal arrangements to avoid the inconvenience experienced last year. In the survey results, the Casino night experienced the highest rating of everything that attendees rated with 35 responses and a rating of 4.66, it was also a highlight in the majority of the comments from the survey.*

*5. Quality of Awards:*

*The quality of awards presented at the last convention was a significant point of dissatisfaction, earning it the second lowest mark from the survey on the rating table of 3.94. Specifically, attendees noted that many awards were very cheaply made. Improving the quality of these awards is crucial in honoring the hard work and achievements of our riders.*

*6. Venue and Financial Considerations:*

*While the loss incurred in Boise was anticipated, feedback from members expressed that reducing the value of this years convention to make up for the loss in Boise may result in further loss due to a reduced desire to attend the convention. The number one reason for attendees to avoid the PNER convention came down to costs, rising costs of hotel rooms and other expenses are a concern, and there's a call to offset some of these costs, especially for the awardees.*

*7. Vendor Participation:*

*The decrease in brick-and-mortar vendors and the relocation of events like the saddle fit session have raised concerns about diminishing vendor interest and foot traffic, which are vital for a dynamic convention atmosphere. Some felt that the off-site saddle fitting would cause a problem with the vendors, and that the vendors should be in the same location as the convention.*

*In the 2023 Boise Convention Survey, the vendor showcase received the third lowest rating at 3.95*

*8. 2023 Convention Survey Rating Results*

*Casino Night: 4.66*

*Saturday Awards Banquet: 4.24*

*Overall Conference: 4.23*

*Speakers, Presentations, and Panels: 4.11*

*Vendor Showcase: 3.95*

*Awards: 3.94*

*Raffle and Silent Auction: 3.82*

*Boise 2023 Convention Sentiment Analysis:*

*I ran a sentiment analysis program on the survey results from Boise 2023, and this was the summarized results:*

*Analysis of Survey Responses Attendees' Feedback (Auto-generated)*

*What Attendees Liked Most About the Convention:*

*Casino night*

*Seeing friends*

*Meeting more people in the endurance community*

*Helpful venue staff*

*Learning opportunities*

*Layout of the convention floor*

*What Attendees Liked Least About the Convention:*

*Limited speakers and presentations*

*Confusion on tickets for ride entries/raffle table*

*Lack of variety in professional presentations*

*Banquet and breakfast buffet issues*

*Poor quality of awards*

*Location due to travel distance*

*Suggestions for Future Conventions:*

*Increase attendance and number of presentations*

*More advertising and outreach*

*Specific speaker requests*

*Better food and beverage arrangements*

*More inclusive awards*

*More fun events like casino night*

*Better organization and clarity in activities*

*Non-Attendees' Feedback*

*Reasons for Not Attending: The primary reasons for not attending were: - Distance or weather concerns - Personal reasons (health, work, etc.) - Financial constraints - Schedule conflicts - Lack of interest in activities or speakers*

*Insights and Recommendations*

*For Attendees: The convention should focus on diversifying and increasing the number of speakers and presentations, as this was a common point of interest. Improving logistical aspects like ticketing and food arrangements could also enhance the experience.*

*For Non-Attendees: Addressing the barriers of distance and cost could encourage more participation. This might include choosing more accessible locations or offering virtual participation options. Increasing awareness and excitement about the activities and speakers beforehand could also draw more interest.*

*General: Incorporating more engaging and fun events like casino night, along with better advertising and outreach, could appeal to a broader audience. Considering feedback on awards and food services could also improve the overall experience.*

*Hopefully, this feedback is helpful in planning the upcoming convention. I'm hoping we can discuss this further to enhance the experience for our members.*

* + **12/20/23;** Layne Lewis stepped down from her BoD postion as ID rep. Nance Worman volunteered to fill in for her for her remaining year.
  + **1/10/24;** Election started via Election Runner for PNER finance committee & Pres/VP.
  + **1/14/24;** Debbie Porter submitted a report to the BoD; *Hello, it's Debbie Porter at PNER. I am retiring from work this year, and will be letting go of the PNER newsletter duties after the February issue. I am looking for someone to take over the newsletter, if you know someone who might be interested. I would be willing to show how I have put the newsletter together.*

*But the reason I am contacting you is to see if someone would be interested in picking up the PNER Scholarship duties.*

*It is my understanding that in the past, PNER had a robust Scholarship Committee, which used the old-school application and essay system, which I believe is outdated in scope and technology.*

*Greta Berner and I have consulted several times about this, and many of the ideas below are hers. However, as she is a full time college student and I am retiring, neither of us has time to devote to fully developing the ideas.*

*The Scholarship has been in flux for the past few years, in my opinion due to lack of a strong promotional campaign, very low student interest and turnout and a small monetary award with a highly structured and time-consuming application.*

*I also believe that the timing of the award(s) should more closely track with college admissions application timelines. Adding options for a social media campaign targeting young PNER riders, multiple recipients and awards for options other than college are unique and interesting ideas.*

*All of these ideas, of course, would need to be approved by the PNER Board of Directors.*

*Perhaps you know a member that might be interested? Email is great - fillyfoal2020@gmail.com and my phone number is (503)341-1464. Please feel free to share.*

1. **New Business**

* None other than what was discussed during the meeting mentioned.

1. **Announcements, comments, other business**
   * Nothing to report
2. **Future Meeting dates**

* Sunday morning at convention
  + There are budgets that will need to be set at that meeting.

1. **Adjournment**

* Meeting adjourned at 8:09pm Pacific

Respectfully, Kristy Butler