

DRAFT OCT 5, 2015
THE AMERICAN DRIVING SOCIETY, INC.
MEMBERSHIP MEETING
September 25, 2015 – Lodi, California

President Arnold called The American Driving Society, Inc. Annual Membership Meeting to order at 5:05pm, and welcomed all ADS members in attendance.

Secretary's Report

Secretary Davis reported that there were 45 ADS members, at this 5:10pm time, present at the meeting. Further, she reported that there were 82 proxy votes. The total number then was 127, meeting the 100 members required quorum to conduct business.

Approval of the Minutes from September 27, 2014

Francine Arrington moved approval of the minutes from the Annual Membership Meeting, September 27, 2014, in Acadia, Maine. The President asked if there were any corrections. Hearing none, he declared the minutes approved.

President's Report – Mike Arnold

President Mike Arnold commented upon these points:

- *Support of disabled drivers dispensation procedures
- *He has appointed an Historical Special Committee, with the official historian being Craig Kellogg.
- *The ADS will continue to focus upon Driving Derbies as a means to encourage equestrians into the sport of driving, eventually becoming ADS members.
- *He will personally head up the ADS project of a new website and member management system. It will have these steps: design; implementation of a management package; Omnibus project with redesign; and implementation of new website, starting with “front face”

Treasurer – A Report from the Finance Committee – Bill Lawson

The treasurer reported from a report submitted prior to the meeting.

At a recent meeting the Finance Committee met to review financial results through August 2015. In attendance were Bill Lawson, Chair, Clark Simpson, member, John Freiburger, guest, and Dan Rosenthal, guest.

The agenda was to review financial results through August 2015 and to consider recommendations to address our ongoing financial problems.

Our financial results for eight months ending August 2015 are atypical to say the least for multiple reasons. The original budget process of reviewing revenue and expense brought us to the projection that 2015 would face a deficit in excess of \$60,000 without significant changes. This became the starting point for 2015.

Three things stand out following the budget debate at the Las Vegas meeting. The development committee, after a year of excellent endowment growth in 2014, was charged by a motion with the task of including direct support for operations in their 2015 effort. Secondly with years of declining

membership the chair was directed to appoint a special committee to review and hopefully make recommendations for improvement. The appointments were made some time after the meeting. And last a special committee separate from the Development Committee was subsequently appointed to address fund raising. Also at the meeting we received the resignation of our Executive Director.

Almost exclusively due to the reductions in employee cost that followed and helped by cost savings implemented in the production of the Whip, we are on the path to finish 2015 in the black. While it is helpful to break a long string of operational losses, in truth our budget continues to harbor the same systemic problems we have had for years and in some areas continues to trend worse. The following areas were discussed.

Fundraising:

We have nearly reached the nine months mark and fund raising efforts have for all practical purposes collapsed. There appears to be mixed signals as to who should be running with this mission and a general lack of leadership to keep it on track. It is the opinion of the Finance Committee that we need to reestablish governance over this process and make the best use we can with the time remaining in 2015. We are missing a huge opportunity to reverse at least some of the damage caused by years of operational losses and to continue Endowment growth.

Membership:

This problem may be continuing the trend downward. Despite what was considered to be a very conservative estimate of membership revenues it was noted that we are presently about 3% below budget. We believe that the appointment of the committee was a very positive step, and this is admittedly an issue with no quick fixes. Unfortunately we understand that the committee has suffered a resignation. We do not see visible actions taking place. Action needs to be taken to update the Board of progress.

Staffing:

It was noted at our February meeting that while the executive director's resignation has had a very significant positive effect on our bottom line we cannot simply sit back and rate overall as a good thing. This happening brings many issues with it that are clearly not good. This includes increased pressures on our remaining employees in general, and while the day to day business of the ADS continues, things like the new website and webinar development and other projects have gone to the back burner. Our concern is that these issues need to be reviewed and priorities set as we analyze the goals going forward. The Board needs to be updated on what is working well and what needs attention. We need to be ahead of the curve on this.

ADS Vision:

The ADS has historically operated with a committee structure, each taking responsibility for a particular function such as Licensed Officials, Development or Recreation. ADS Vision as use here refers to the "Big Picture" approach to determine both our short term and long term goals as seen by the entire leadership. The thought here is to lay out a unified approach with priorities that the Board as a whole can get behind resulting in better use of our people, finances and other resources.

It is the opinion of the Finance Committee, that while this does not address all areas of concern, progress in these four areas will greatly strengthen the ADS as we move forward.

Standing Committee Reports

COMBINED DRIVING COMMITTEE – ADS 2016 North American Championships Venue Award Report – Chair Marc Johnson

Last week, the Combined Driving Committee discussed the bids for the 2016 North American Championships. Although expecting more interest from the event organizers, appropriate bids were submitted. After the initial review, all the qualified organizers were asked to resubmit their bids with corrections or additional information. Unfortunately, one was outside of the designated championship season, as described in the criteria.

Notes of the Executive meeting, where the criteria was in question, were briefly discussed. The criteria was written for specific reasons by a team, upon request of the Executive Committee. Questioning the criteria, after it has been approved and put into place is absurd, particularly questioning the championship season. The criteria has the opportunity to change for 2017, taking comments from the membership and Directors in consideration. It is the committee's hope that the championship program will grow in interest among the organizers.

The recommended venue for the 2016 North American Preliminary Championship is Longview by the Lake CDE. Located in Kansas City, this venue is in the middle of the country. The Longview Horse Park sits on 575 acres of land, owned by the county, hosting many equestrian events each year.

The 2016 North American Intermediate Championships recommendation goes to Katydid CDE. This venue proved itself an excellent choice for the inaugural Intermediate Championship last year. Their dedication to excellence should be an example to all ADS Combined Driving Events and be popular among the Intermediate competitors.

Upon final review by the Executive Committee, it is recommended that the venues be approved quickly, so that all parties involved may start putting marketing and sponsorship in place. The opportunity to build this program correctly is here. The Combined Driving and Events Standards Committees are committed to making this a shining star for the ADS.

RECREATION COMMITTEE REPORT – committee member Heidi Ferguson

Goals:

1. Continue the work started on the ADS Trail Guide into phase 2 which is getting the information on the web in a searchable database.
2. Explore the possibility of offering liability insurance with an ADS membership.
3. Develop organizer guides for putting together lower key competitions that are more recreational in nature.

Rationale for Committee: The purpose and rationale is based upon the recreational driver being the beginning and broader base of our membership involvement. Further purpose is to develop safety rules and guidelines to assist members in their recreational driving endeavors.

Specific Responsibilities

- Report to the ADS Board of Directors and activities and issues of concern to the broader organization
- Keep aware and connected with other equine activities, events and organizations so as to promote safe and enjoyable recreational driving
- Work with other committees to coordinate activities with their events and purposes
- Report any major issues of concern to the officers and board

Relationship with other Committees

-Certain committees such as rules, promotion, etc. will have direct input from our committee.

Others of only tangential concern will have less input such as Combined Driving. The relationship

should be to enhance the ADS's overall usefulness to our members and the driving community at

large. Also, a general awareness of other committee activities should be maintained so as to

not

overlap activities or duplicate efforts.

-Communication with other committee chairs via Internet and meeting will enhance this flow of information

-Regional directors involved in the Recreational Driving committees efforts is crucial to the recreational driving committee's success

PROPOSED:

From an outsider's point-of-view, little has been done over recent years to achieve the above stated goals. In many instances, people are unaware that a 2013 revised ADS Recreational Driving Handbook exists and, as recently a several weeks ago, did not know where to find it. I would like to see the Trail Guide database updated and verified, as I have noted within my own region there are venues listed that do not, in actuality, support carriages on trails. As a result, I initiated a member input list of carriage approved venues on my ADS Mid Atlantic Region Facebook page. An informal request for recreational driving feedback on this page resulted in several area drivers stating their concern over verified suitable areas to drive within the region, as well as other constructive thoughts and ideas. I would like to see this Trail Guide updated, verified and implemented ASAP with current and trusted information.

Additionally, I would like to see each region hosting its own weekend of recreational driving as the Mid Atlantic is currently doing with MARD (Mid Atlantic Recreational Drive). If a Regional Director cannot take responsibility for this activity their job should include finding and appointing someone with the time and initiative to do so.

Recreational drivers are the backbone of the ADS, yet their needs and interests are represented by what, in my opinion, is a disproportional/inadequate amount. Let's change this, by being more pro-active within the RD committee for the benefit of current and future members.

Remember, most new members recruited will very likely be *recreational* drivers. Let's recognize this fact and enhance ADS's appeal to this group.

GOVERNANCE & BYLAWS – Chair Elaine Kendig

Our committee has been basically dormant due to our attention being diverted to current business subjects that needed immediate attention.

We should soon be back on topic. The Bylaws need an overall review to correct typos and similar inaccuracies. Changes in New York Non-Profit Corporate Law must be reviewed to determine if and how those changes may affect our bylaws.

A quick review of the Policies and Procedures Manual indicates that the manual needs a complete review, newer policies and procedures need to be inserted, policies and procedures must be written to confirm to the bylaws. There are also some new policies and procedures that need to be developed and presented for adoption that will bring us into compliance with the current New York Non-Profit Corporate Law.

DRIVEN DRESSAGE COMMITTEE – report submitted in absentia by Chair Tracey Morgan

Articles on Driven Dressage topics have been published regularly in The Whip. I have written several articles and Hardy Zantke has continued his prolific written contributions on Driven Dressage as well as other topics. These articles have been the main forum for reaching the ADS membership with new information and current thoughts about Driven Dressage.

The DDC looks forward to working with LOC and Education in preparation for the 2016 Super Clinic. Dressage training for ADS CD and Dressage judges has been an important portion of the agenda at previous Super Clinics and we would recommend that it be in 2016 as well. Creation of test questions and answers for the Dressage portion of the LOC written exam will also be a focus of the DDC in the next six months.

No new Rule Change Proposals were submitted by the DDC in the current cycle. There were not any member submitted Rule Change Proposals to the Dressage portion of the ADS Rulebook.

The current members of the DDC are: Dana Bright, Nancy Tomlinson, Boots Wright, Hardy Zantke, Linda Yutzy and myself, Tracey Morgan.

New Business

Jay Hubert moved that the ADS policy restricting ADS recognized events on the last weekend in September be terminated. There was a second.

As a part of the discussion, it was explained that the policy restricting events on that particular weekend was approved by the Board of Directors to insure that the ADS could schedule Member Meetings. At the time, there were no recognized events scheduled on that particular weekend, and so the reason for selecting that date. After full discussion, there was an amendment offered.

Jody Cutler moved to amend the motion that the policy restricting recognition be terminated except for events within 300 miles.

After discussion, a vote was taken. *The amendment failed.*

A vote was then conducted on the main motion. *The motion failed.*

Adjournment

With no further business, the President adjourned the meeting at 6:30pm.

Submitted by Ann Davis, Secretary ADS Board of Directors