

PACIFIC NORTHWEST ENDURANCE RIDES

2026 General Assembly Meeting Minutes

A 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Organization

Date	Saturday, February 21, 2026
Location	PNER Annual Convention
Called to Order	12:13 PM
Adjourned	1:08 PM
Presiding Officer	Melissa (Outgoing Vice President)
Quorum	Quorum of General Membership present
Minutes Prepared By	David Lewis, PNER Secretary

I. Call to Order and Approval of Previous Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 12:13 PM by outgoing Vice President Melissa. A quorum of the general membership was confirmed present.

Previous meeting minutes, which had been approved by the board via email, were acknowledged.

II. Outgoing Vice President's Remarks

Melissa, departing the board after two years of service, addressed the membership. She noted the organization missed celebrating its 50th anniversary milestone last year. She thanked all attendees for their commitment, the board and committee members for their tireless volunteer work, ride managers, veterinarians, and raffle and silent auction donors.

Melissa highlighted the following accomplishments during her term:

- **Balanced Budget:** Significant progress toward a balanced budget, crediting Treasurer Cindi Sayer for her dedication to improved financial transparency.
- **Convention Educational Experience:** Improved educational programming at the annual convention, with world-class speakers including Dr. Klinghouse (2025) and Dr. Downing (2026), resulting in growing attendance.
- **New Website:** The board unanimously approved funding for a brand-new PNER website. Layne Lewis and the committee have been working tirelessly to bring this vision to life.
- **Awards Program Overhaul:** Lois Fox has overhauled the outdated awards program, with 30% of the membership participating in an awards survey.

III. New Website Demonstration

Layne Lewis presented a demonstration of the initial design of the new PNER website. The updated site will feature a modern look, faster performance, easier management, and will incorporate member photos in place of stock images. The committee continues to work with the design team to bring the site to completion.

IV. Treasurer's Report

Cindi Sayer, Treasurer, presented the year-end financial summary:

- **Income:** Came in approximately \$1,300 under budget.
- **Expenses:** Were well below what was budgeted.
- **Net Income:** Approximately \$6,000.

Cindi emphasized the need to continue being strategic with expenditures moving forward and commended the outgoing administration for their fiscal management.

Note: *Convention financial results were not yet available at the time of the meeting and would be finalized in the following weeks.*

V. Finance Committee Report

Lisa Cohen, representing the Finance Committee (along with members Simone and Tally Bren, who was unable to attend), addressed the membership.

Lisa paused to thank Melissa for her exceptional work in making the convention interesting, accessible, and educational, and for her service as Vice President.

Lisa reminded the membership that PNER's mission under its 501(c)(3) status is largely educational, making convention a critical component of fulfilling the organization's mission.

Key concerns raised:

- **Membership Decline:** Membership is down, with the organization at just over half of where it normally is at this time of year.
- **Strategic Priorities:** The organization needs to think strategically about sustainability, which may mean some pet projects need to take a hit.
- **Donations:** Donations helped significantly to get convention over the top financially last year, but these are not guaranteed going forward.

Lisa urged the membership to think about organizational survival and to prioritize moving the entire organization forward.

VI. Introduction of New President and Vice President

Melissa introduced the incoming President, Darlene, and Vice President, Siri Olson. Both are long-distance riders who have participated in the organization for decades.

- **Darlene** has been a ride manager for over 30 years, previously served as Vice President for PNER, and helped establish and maintain the Mary and Anna Fund.
- **Siri Olson** has significant experience with money management and will help PNER in this area.

Incoming President's Remarks

Darlene thanked Melissa for the overwhelming amount of work she has done and praised her for making everything a success. She also thanked the election committee for conducting the election efficiently and in accordance with the bylaws. The early completion of the election gave Darlene and Siri time to assemble their cabinet.

Key goals for the new administration:

- Get membership back up to historical numbers.
- Continue to increase convention attendance with quality educational offerings.

Darlene noted that Cindi Sayer has been asked to stay on as Treasurer, and Suzy Hayes has been asked to chair the Sponsorship Committee.

VII. Committee Updates

A. Awards Committee — Lois Fox, Chair

- Expressed appreciation for the strong turnout on the awards revisions survey, which yielded a wide variety of responses.
- Solicited additional sponsors, not to save PNER money but to maintain the integrity of the awards.
- Goal to encourage new riders by making awards accessible, though identifying eligible newcomers remains challenging.

B. Trails Committee — Tani, Chair

- In 2025, no one applied for a trails grant and no money was spent. Encouraged members to apply; funding is available and the application is on the PNER website.
- Shared a suggestion from a local organization: using wash rack mats on wooden bridges for safer riding.
- **New Trail Award:** A new award for people who work on trails. Participants track and submit their volunteer hours on an honor system.

Shane Russell, Vice President of EDRA and ride manager of the Big Sky ride in Montana, asked about eligibility for the trails grant. Tani explained the application process.

C. Scholarship Committee — Greta

- The scholarship budget has been tripled.
- Scholarships are now available for riders of all ages (not just youth), as long as the funds are directed toward a reputable higher-education institution.

- Greta will be passing the chair position to Suzy Hayes. Lois, Nora, Mary Krause, and others will remain on the committee to continue refining the guidelines.

D. Education Committee – Siri Olson (reporting on behalf of Cassee)

- No formal report at this time.
- The committee is working on defining its purpose and goals.
- Focus is on providing solid educational experiences, not only at convention but also during the ride season.
- Seeking feedback from members on what educational offerings they would like to see.

E. Marketing Committee (merged with Social Media Committee)

Darlene announced that the Marketing and Social Media committees are being merged, with Social Media placed under Marketing, as social media is effectively marketing for the organization.

Naomi Preston had chaired the committee but stepped away for personal reasons. Tiffany Paulin has been named the new Marketing Committee Chair.

Darlene read a prepared statement from Tiffany Paulin:

The PNER Marketing Committee is actively evaluating every aspect of the marketing program for 2026 with a clear goal to increase membership and raise awareness. A special thank you to Ja'feel Mors for joining and her outstanding work with the newsletter. The committee will review the full PNER brand, work closely with the President and Vice President on meaningful improvements, support ride managers with stronger tools and resources, and target new member outreach through all channels to bring fresh energy to the organization.

F. Tech & Website Committee (merged)

The Tech and Website committees have been merged as they comprise the same members. Stace declined to give a formal update but reported that everything is in good shape. The committee is very active and working to bring the website and technology infrastructure up to date.

G. Membership – Regina Rose, Membership Secretary

Regina Rose has stepped in as the new Membership Secretary and has been actively collecting membership data. Members who have not received their membership card were asked to contact Regina.

H. Ride Manager Representative – Layne Lewis

Layne Lewis is serving as the Ride Manager Representative this year. She is working with both AERC and EDRA to ensure rules are consistent across sanctioning bodies, particularly regarding cancellation policies and other ride management matters.

I. Junior Representatives

Bentley, the outgoing Junior Representative, was not present (in another room). Two new Junior Representatives were introduced; both are parents of highly active junior riders and have agreed

to work together in the role. Darlene and Siri emphasized their strong commitment to supporting junior riders in the organization.

J. Elections Committee

The Elections Committee was recognized for conducting an efficient election in accordance with the bylaws. The committee will be looking for state representatives by the end of the year. Members interested in running or nominating others were encouraged to come forward.

VIII. Affiliated Organization Updates

A. AERC (American Endurance Ride Conference)

AERC Board Member Regina Rose shared the following updates:

- **New 100-Mile Ride Incentive:** Any new 100-mile ride started this year will receive \$500 from AERC.
- **Points System Change:** AERC will now award full points for up to 5 senior riders at the 100-mile distance (previously required 10 riders). PNER has also adopted this rule.
- **Virtual Convention:** AERC Virtual Convention scheduled tentatively for March 27–28, featuring a large list of speakers at \$80/day. Includes Jotform training and trail marking training for ride managers.
- **New Rider Book:** A drawing was held for a new rider book written by Sanoma Blakely.

B. EDRA (Equine Distance Riding Association)

Shane Russell, EDRA Vice President, provided an update:

- Bonnie is the current President of EDRA.
- EDRA has a new direction focused on welcoming beginners and riders at all stages.
- Strong passion for the youth program; EDRA believes juniors are the future of endurance.
- Focus on inclusivity: encouraging riders to participate with whatever horse they have.
- EDRA is moving forward with a reciprocity agreement with AERC, to be submitted within the coming months.
- Highlighted the Big Sky ride in Montana as a welcoming event with free food, participation awards for intro riders, and a family-friendly atmosphere.

IX. General Forum

Q: When will the PNER Handbook be available?

A: Jaime, the Handbook Editor, reported that the handbook goes to the printer next week and should arrive by mid-March.

Cindi noted that PNER already has the ride schedule listed on the website for members wanting to plan their season.

X. Housekeeping Announcements

- Silent auction bidding open throughout the day.
- Raffle tickets available: \$1 raffle items to be drawn after the meeting; \$5 raffle items continue through the evening.
- Ride-donated raffle rides available for purchase.
- Vendor load-out between 2:00 PM and 4:00 PM on the loading dock.
- Tack sale items must be picked up before 3:00 PM; unclaimed items will be donated.
- Dr. Downing speaking from 2:00–4:00 PM.
- Additional afternoon session on horse trailer camping and comfort.
- Banquet: Doors at 5:30 PM, bar in hallway, dinner at 6:00 PM, followed by awards celebration, music, dancing, and karaoke.

XI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:08 PM.



David Lewis, Secretary

Pacific Northwest Endurance Rides (PNER)

02/22/2026

Date Approved