ALBERTA EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION

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Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 6, 2025, 6:30 – 8:00 pm, Zoom

Vision
United by our passion for equines, we foster an inclusive community where everyone thrives together.

Mission
AEF supports Alberta's equine community through programs, education, and resources that promote horse welfare, sustainability, and meaningful connections among members.

Five - year goal
By 2030, AEF will strengthen its financial foundation by growing revenue streams, increasing membership value, and establishing reserves to support future programs and community initiatives.

1. Call to Order

President Jason Edworthy called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. He asked Anne to read the AEF Land Acknowledgement aloud. Following that, Jason asked the Board to declare any conflicts of interest with regards to any of the agenda items listed. None were heard.
In Attendance: Jason Edworthy (President), Sandy Bell (Past President), Ally Penic (Secretary), Kate Wood (Director), Louise Caplan (Director), Jennifer Dimopoulos (Director), Pat Buffalo (Director), Anne Stone (Director), Sonia Dantu (Executive Director, non-voting), and Flo Scherpenisse (Recording Secretary, non-voting)
Absent with Regrets: Lindsay Seidel-Wassenaar (President Elect) and Claire Goddard (Director)

2. Agenda – Motion to approve – **November 6, 2025**

Sonia requested that agenda item 8e) be changed to: "EC/PTSO Briefing Document.
MOTION: Louise moved to approve the November 6, 2025 meeting agenda with the noted change.
Jennifer 2nd. In favor (6); Against (0); Abstain (0). Unanimous. Carried.

3. Minutes – Motion to approve – **September 21, 2025**

Jason identified a correction for agenda item 5d, where voting on the change to 2026 AEF Membership fees , showed an incorrect tally. It should state: *In favor (3); Against (4); Abstain (0). Motion defeated*."
MOTION: Jennifer moved to approve the September 21, 2025 meeting minutes as amended.
Kate 2nd. In favor (6); Against (0); Abstain (0). Unanimous. Carried.

2026 Budget Motion Ratification - September 29, 2025, Electronic Motion for ratification.
Motion: Kate Wood moved to approve the 2026 AEF Budget as presented.
Ally 2nd. In favor (9); Against (1); Abstain (0). Carried.

RATIFICATION MOTION: Louise moved to ratify the September 29, 2025, electronic motion.
Jennifer 2nd. In favor (6); Against (0); Abstain (0). Unanimous. Carried.

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4. President's Report
    a. Director Resignation

Regretfully, Jason advised the board with regard to the resignation of Treasurer, Brooke Hartwick, and Director, Cailin Kopetski. Additionally, he highlighted the following points in the President's Report:

- Much work has been done with the Finance Committee about the 2026 draft budget. The plan has been reviewed by the Finance Committee and overall, endorsement was received.
- **Nominations Committee:** Jennifer has agreed to chair the Nominations Committee along with Sandy's help.
- **President Elect:** Lindsay had inquired about the position of president elect and the mentoring process involved. Virtual and in-person meetings have taken place to address her interest.
- **Equestrian Canada (EC):** To date, there have been numerous meetings and other communications about the recent rule changes imposed by EC which are anticipated to have detrimental effects on provincial competition programs and officials.
- **Auditor:** An introductory meeting took place with the auditor (Michael Ihekuna, CPA, MBA). Overall, the consensus expressed by several board members was that the meeting was very positive. Favorable comments were noted about his knowledge, expertise with non-profits and approach. Due to the upcoming audit, AEF needed to change a few board meeting dates to accommodate the anticipated work and timelines.

MOTION: Pat moved to accept the President's Report as verbally presented.
Anne 2nd. In favor (6); Against (0); Abstain (0). Unanimous. Carried.

5. Treasurer's Report
    a. September 30, 2025, Financial Statements

In light of the Treasurer resignation, , Sonia highlighted
the following points in the October 29, 2025 Comparative Income Statement and the Balance Sheet:

Comparative Income statement:

- The document only reflects income and expenses to October 29, 2025 in order to get financials to the board for the meeting. Thus, there are still two days in October to post financials for. Despite this, revenues remain strong in the areas of membership, coaching, and competition programs.
- Moreover, expenses remain consistent with projections, where surplus is expected to remain aligned with forecasts once adjustments are finalized. At this time, year-end surplus currently projected at approximately $127,000, reflecting efficient event delivery and cost management.

Variance Noted on Balance Sheet:

- The deferred revenue balance currently exceeds total current assets by roughly $83,000. This appeared to be a timing issue, likely related to deferred fund transfers that have not yet been completed.
- In preparation for this board meeting, despite efforts to ensure all revenue and expenses were captured as close to month-end as possible, reconciliation has not been fully completed.

Recommendations for the Board:

- The variance and timing have been noted and described in the meeting minutes.
- The board was advised not to approve the financials at this meeting, but instead, advised to revisit these documents after October 31, 2025 and when the fund transfers have been confirmed. The board agreed with these recommendations.

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6. Operations Report

Sonia provided a high-level presentation of her written report focusing on the following areas with regard to the Operations Report:

- **Core Grant Funding**: AEF has received the final installment of $40,850 from the Government of Alberta's Association Development Program (core funding).
- **Membership Growth**: Membership has increased to approximately 12,220. This increment represents approximately 95% of planned revenue for 2025. This also reflects a gain of over 2,000 members since June 2025.
- **System Modernization**: The final transition to the unified HorseReg database is ongoing. Membership renewals emails are to be sent out starting November 15, 2025.
- **Programs & Funding**: To date, AEF has distributed $3,996 in club/individual support, $4,500 in Trail Support grants, and $3,590 in scholarships and bursaries. AEF continues to gratefully receive notes of thanks, social media posts and pictures from Members. Of note, there were also many applications submitted for the Marlene Waldner Youth Bursary.
- **Communications & Engagement**: The new AEF website was launched in July 2025. Since then, 87,500 newsletters have been sent (50%+ open rate).
- **Events & Representation**: AEF had a strong presence at the Spruce Meadows Masters, Horse Expo, and the National Coaching Symposium.
- **Coaching & Athlete Development**: To date, there are 575 active certified coaches in Alberta. In terms of the renewed Coaching Program, it has been designed with a flexible certification approach which will allow coaches to complete their certification at their own pace either through in-person or video evaluations. At the same time, AEF continues to be actively advance and align its Safe Sport framework with the Government of Alberta's Independent Third-Party Mechanism.
- **Staff & Operations**: Red Thread Connections completed operational planning with the staff after the BOD strategic planning session. As such, Sonia has been working on a staffing restructure for the past several months from seven to six core roles which would also allow for part-time or contract work. All the staff had significant input to the restructuring which means it's a full team effort into the future. The intent is to enhance flexibility, cross training, sustainability and help augment the financials with an anticipated timeline for implementation in 2026.

MOTION: Jennifer moved to accept the Operations Report as previously circulated.
Anne 2nd. In favor (6); Against (0); Abstain (0). Unanimous. Approved.

7. Business Arising

   a. Committees/Task Forces – TOR Reviews

Kate advised that committees and task forces have not been approached about TOR reviews yet. The rationale provided was that she felt the priority has to be on the work of the Finance Committee. As such, this agenda item was to be tabled for a future board meeting.

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b. Equine Emergency Funding

Sandy advised that as of October 28, 2025, there was slightly over $30,000 in the Equine Emergency Fund. Donations were received in 2025 but no applications for funding support were received. The reason for this remained unknown. Moving forward in 2026, the task force may consider a proactive approach with regard to disbursement of funds vs. a reactive approach such as when an emergency or disaster occurs.

8. New Business

a. Elections of Executive Committee

i. President Elect:

At present, Lindsay has been travelling out of the country. However, Jason read aloud a letter expressing her keen interest in the position of President Elect.

MOTION: Jennifer moved that Lindsay be nominated as President Elect. Kate seconded the nomination.
Thrice, Jason inquired about any other nominees for the position of President Elect.
Hearing none, Jason declared that Lindsay has been voted in by acclamation for the position of President Elect.

ii. Treasurer

Jason noted that Sandy has been assisting the Finance Committee in the absence of a Treasurer. Additionally, Anne, MBA, and an active member in the business community has volunteered to join the Finance Committee.
Jason opened the floor to nominations for the position of Treasurer.

MOTION: Kate moved to nominate Ally as Treasurer. Ally accepted the nomination.
Jennifer seconded the nomination.
Again, on three occasions, Jason inquired about any other nominees for the position of Treasurer.
Hearing none, Jason declared that Ally has been voted in by acclamation for the position of Treasurer.

b. ABSSCM IPT Motion

Sonia provided background information regarding the anticipated Alberta Safe Sport Complaint Mechanism – Independent Third Party (ABSSCM ITP) motion and the Alberta Universal Code of Conduct (ABUCC) Adoption Motion.

Background Context:

The Alberta Sport Leadership Association (ASLA) Safe Sport Strategy establishes standardized policy frameworks across all PSOs. This includes a Code of Conduct, Safe Sport, Dispute Resolution, and Screening/Background Check Policies. In doing so, this ensures consistency, confidence, and legal enforceability in sport safety compliance. In short, this entity will be handling all Safe Sport complaints.

Summary:

- Of note, the Alberta Sport Leadership Association (ASLA) subcommittee met on November 3, 2025 and endorsed the Alberta Safe Sport Complaint Mechanism – ITP (ABSSCM) documents for approval. The ASLA Board will be meeting on November 10, 2025 to review and approve these documents.
- Further to that, it is anticipated that the ABSSCM Adoption Package will be distributed to all Alberta Provincial Sport Organizations (PSOs) during the week of November 10–14, 2025. In doing so, 30 PSOs are expected to onboard in December 2025. This would include AEF.
- The Independent Third party (ITP) program launch for PSOs has been tentatively set for January 12–16, 2026.
- Sonia noted that in the meantime, the Board's participation on these policies may be required by electronic

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motions between meetings. AEF will also need to update our own Safe Sport Policies to align with these provincial policies; mainly to indicate the ITP. To date, Sonia and Gavin continue to actively attend all meetings and participate in this process with all 83 PTSOs on this matter.

c. ABUCC Adoption Motion: Alberta to develop its own Universal Code of Conduct (UCC).
See above.

d. Committee Reports
i. Recreation Task Force

Louise provided a brief but comprehensive update on the Recreation Task Force's recent activities:

- **Trail Manager Application:** A response and feedback on AEF's application remains pending to date but it is expected to be favorable and the anticipated timeline for this will be sometime in November 2025.
- **Ghost Public Land Use Zone (PLUZ):** A proposal has been made to create a new equestrian-friendly trailhead.
- **Sheep Creek Trail Restoration:** Part of this trail extends onto private property owned by the Burns family. Kelsey (Chair of Recreation TF) is in the process of discussing the matter with the Burns family in an effort to gain access for equestrian use.
- **Station Flats Day Use Area:** This area is open but reportedly there was a problem with the gate. An AEF Member has since fixed the issue on his own. AEF is thankful for his efforts.
- **Fundraising:** A proposal has been made to consider the formation of a Fundraising Task Force.
- **Alberta Outfitters Association:** This organization has expressed interest in supporting the AEF's Alberta Economic Impact update via a donation. More to follow.

ii. Nominations Committee

As the newly appointed chair for the Nominations Committee, Jennifer encouraged board members to participate in this rewarding committee as work needs to begin soon.

e. Briefing Note for PTSO Boards of Directors – EC & PTSO Relationship and Special Meeting Rationale

With reference made to the previously circulated confidential briefing note regarding EC, Sonia noted the following:

- All PTSOs across the country have sent their support to AEF with regards to the Proposed Action and Confirmation of Support outlined in the document. Specifically, steps 1 and 2 as contained within the document.
- At this time, the intent is to seek AEF board support for steps 1 and 2.
- Within the structure of EC, AEF falls within category B (one of three categories), which refers to PTSOs. In turn, PTSOs elect 7representatives, typically the President, to represent all PTSO's as a voting member within Equestrian Canada's governance structure. There is a TOR that defines how these 7 voting members are selected.
- A robust discussion resulted with many questions and comments expressed with regard to the historical context of this situation, AEF's vested interest in this fractious relationship with EC along with any sanctions or consequences that may be imposed on EC which may in turn negatively impact AEF.

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MOTION: Jennifer moved to ratify the two steps as documented in the "Briefing Note for PTSO Boards of Directors – EC & PTSO Relationship and Special Meeting Rationale."
Pat 2nd. In favor (5); Against (0); Abstain (1). Approved.

9. Adjournment

Jason opened the floor to any additional questions or comments. Hearing none, he requested a motion to adjourn the meeting.
MOTION: Louise moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 pm.

2025/2026 Board Meeting/Event Dates

NOTE: *Meetings are subject to change due to inclement weather and/or the urgency of issues. As much notice as possible will be provided.*

Date	Time	Meeting Type	Location
Thursday, November 6, 2025	6:30 pm – 8:00 pm	Board Meeting	Zoom
Thursday, February 19, 2026	6:30 pm – 8:00 pm	Board Meeting	Zoom
Friday, March 13, 2026	12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	Board Meeting with Auditor	Zoom
Thursday, March 26, 2026	6:30 pm – 7:30 pm	AEF AGM	Zoom
Sunday, April 26, 2026	9:30 am – 4:00 pm	Board Meeting	Red Deer, Westerner Park, Viewing Room – 2nd floor
Thursday, June 18, 2026	6:30 pm – 8:00 pm	Board Meeting	Zoom
Saturday, September 19, 2026	9:00 am – 4:00 pm	Board Meeting – In person	TBD
Thursday, November 5, 2026	6:30 pm – 8:00 pm	Board Meeting	Zoom