

Draft Minutes - Subject to approval at January Committee Meeting

AUSTRALIAN FLYBALL ASSOCIATION MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON  
3<sup>rd</sup> December 2007 BY TELEPHONE HOOKUP.

**Present:** Glenn Pritchard, Eric van Zuyden , Jenny Millar, Rosie Milton, Leoney Pritchard , Terry Hunter, Justin Allen, Pat Byrne, Brian Lindsay, Clair Ellis ,Lyn Clyde, Joanne Drake, Catherine Saberton , Amy Williams and Kylie White (from 8.30p.m.)

**Apologies:** Dot Baverstock

**Meeting Opened at 7.40 pm.**

**ITEM 1 – 2009 Nationals Bids – Presentations.**

The Chair advised the Meeting that he had arranged to have representatives of the two Clubs bidding for the Nationals join the Meeting to present their bids. Meeting agreed to this process and to take the presentations as the first Item of business. Chair called Stephanie Cox of Berwick to make first presentation. Chair indicated to Stephanie that the DVD presentation was excellent and very impressive and thanked Berwick for the obvious effort the bid represented. Stephanie presented the bid to host the 2009 Championship as part of the Dandenong Show in November 2009 and answered all questions from Committee. Chair advised that Committee would be making a decision later in Meeting and he would call her back with result.

Chair then called Kevin Bulman to present Norwest's bid. Again Chair thanked Norwest for its effort in putting forward the Power Point presentation. Kevin presented the bid to host the 2009 Nationals at Castle Hill Showground in October 2009 and also answered all questions from Committee. Chair advised Kevin on decision process to be followed.

Having received the two bids the Meeting returned to its normal Agenda

**ITEM 2 - "Starred" Items.**

The following Items were 'starred' for adoption without discussion:

- 1) Minutes of 5<sup>th</sup> November Meeting;
- 2) Correspondence Listing; (Schedule of all correspondence in and out)
- 3) Accounts Payable
- 4) New Memberships
- 5) Renewal of Memberships
- 6) Change of Clubs

**Moved and Seconded that the above Agenda Items be adopted without discussion. CARRIED**

**ITEM 3 – Treasurer’s Report.**

**Treasurer presented her report for November and answered questions from Committee. Report showed end November Bank Balance of \$11,823.23 with outstanding cheques totaling \$2069.70, which included the 2008 AFA Insurance premiums of \$1232 and the purchase of the Judges headset payment of \$600.**

**Q- what was the \$68 received in November from QAFA – Answer – proceeds from sale of Nationals photos;**

**Q- had the Treasurer received membership application for Russell Robinson which may have been sent to Qld P.O. Box – Answer No - but redirect still in place and it should be on forwarded.**

**There being no further questions Moved and Seconded Treasurers Report be accepted. CARRIED**

**ITEM 4 – Sanctioned Events approved.**

**Competition – PICSI 21<sup>st</sup> September 2008 – Holroyd Pet Fest- Holroyd Gardens Merrylands;**

**Competition – St.George – 8<sup>th</sup> March 2008 - Camden Show – Restricted Entries Comp ( max 20 Teams);**

**Competition – St. George – 10<sup>th</sup> Feb 08 - Crookwell Show – Restricted Entries Comp (max 20 Teams);**

**Competition – Dapto Dishlickers - Dapto Show – 19<sup>th</sup> January 2008 – Dapto Showground’s.**

**(Rosie Milton indicated she was still exploring whether to host a Competition at the Milton Show on first weekend in March. If so she would circulate details to Committee for approval by email).**

**ITEM 5 - Administrative Matters.**

**a) Development of Protocols for computer back up.**

**Noted we were now backing up daily to an external disc drive and that no further action seemed necessary.**

b) Group email software acquisition.

Noted this software was needed to allow Group Messages to be sent to all AFA Members with email addresses . Would be useful for things like membership renewal notices. Justin indicated he should be able to get a 25% discount on software, Pat to send Justin details of the software so prices can be obtained. Chair asked Meeting if it was willing to approve an upper purchase price so software could be ordered. Moved and Seconded that a \$300 limit be approved. CARRIED.

c) Supervisory Judge report.

Rosie reported following members had sat Exams and she was in process of marking:

Steve Pitt – Stewards Exam and Timekeepers Exam,

Trent Shepherd – Timekeepers Exam.

Supervisory Judge also reported that she now had someone in Tasmania interested in doing the Judges Exam and potentially 4 Members in Qld interested. Problem in both cases would be how to deal with supervision of practical experience training. In Tasmania's case there were no local Competitions. In Qld. problem was getting a Level 1 Judge to Supervise at Competitions. Suggestion put forward that the Tasmania candidate should do some practical training at a Victorian Comp before sitting the Exam in order to better understand the Rules. Suggestion made that in circumstances AFA should consider some level of subsidy to travel cost if candidate wished to follow this approach. In Qld. Rosie suggested asking previous Supervisory Judge to supervise training. Some concern expressed at this proposal given the person had resigned as a Judge and possibly resigned from AFA. Rosie agreed to explore this matter and in particular enquire whether the person still saw themselves as a member of AFA and if so that she was happy to accept the role.

Supervisory Judge proposed that the practical requirements for Level 2 Judges to upgrade to level 1 be reduced. In discussion there was general agreement with the proposal. Rosie to circulate a written proposal for Committee approval.

d) Late Membership Renewals, New Members urgent requests for approvals and late Club affiliations.

Committee was advised of a growing problem of dealing with late renewals (over 70 received after the 30 day grace period this year to date) and the growing number of urgent requests to approve new memberships so people could attend Comps or Demos and also issue of Clubs not renewing Club affiliations until they wanted to host a Competition.

Committee discussed the problem of wanting to do all possible to assist members versus the problem of increased workload on Secretary and Treasurer and risk of non financial Members possibly competing or taking part in AFA activities and

risking insurance exposure. Committee noted AFA already granted members a 30 day grace period to end July to renew and in 2008 we would be sending out email reminders re Membership being due. In this situation view put it would not be unreasonable for AFA to impose either a late payment fee or to charge the higher “new member” rate where member was renewing after end July.

View also put that we should stop the process of email approval of new Membership every time someone asked to get urgent approval. Under our Policy New Members should come to Committee for approval once a month. Alternative view – email approvals did not take a lot of effort to do so why not use this process.

General agreement that Clubs needed to be encouraged to renew affiliations by end July each year.

Suggestion made we should make it clear on web that Committee meets first Monday of each Month and new membership applications needed to be in a week before this date to go to Committee and would only be approved urgently under very extenuating circumstances.

After full discussion no consensus had emerged. Secretary offered to draft a set of specific recommendations so that they could be voted on at next meeting. Agreed.

e) 2008 Insurance Cover. Secretary advised Meeting that he had just renewed the AFA’s Insurances for the 2008 year, as they were due on 1<sup>st</sup> December. Premiums for Trailer Policy, Public Liability and Member Personal Accident Policy amounted to \$1232.00. NOTED.

ITEM 6 - Matters arising from AGM.

a) Update of Rules and Policies Documentation

The updated Rules and Policies document had now been printed (200 copies). As agreed all Judges and Committee members would receive a copy. New Members would be issued with copy and we should advise Members via the web that copies can now be purchased for \$6 each.

b) Measuring Sub Committee.

Eric reported the Sub Committee was continuing to investigate measuring methods and tools and that Gary had designed a leg measuring device similar to that used in U- Fly and it was now in trail to assess results. Point made that Sub Committee also needed to look at the more traditional measure system using a standard, common, measure device. Chair indicated that the Terms of Reference

required the Sub Committee to report to the Committee within 6 months of the AGM. To make this timeline the Sub Committee needed to report on progress and any outcomes by the February Meeting of AFA. This timeline was adopted.

c) Engraving of Equipment Holdings.

Eric indicated that he and Terry had still to finalise this matter. Deferred to next Meeting.

d) Investigation of laminated membership cards. Treasurer reported card layout was totally finalised except for LOGO design. Card would cover up to 5 dogs and all AFA qualifications (such as Judge, Steward, Timekeeper etc). Rosie suggested AFA Representative be added as a qualification – agreed to add. Separate cards would be produced for Junior and Associate members. Treasurer asked when she needed Logo in order to ensure cards available for 2008/09 renewals. Treasurer indicated preferably by end February.

#### ITEM 7 - General Business

a) Clarification of Breakout Policy wording.

Supervisory Judge indicated she had circulated to the Committee a draft of replacement wording, which clarified the breakout rule. Leoney advised she had just suggested some changes to the wording, mainly to place “clear run with 4 dogs” as the first requirement to obtaining points. Suggestion made we include explanation as to why after 3 breakouts no competition points apply (i.e. we consider team has been entered in wrong Division). Rosie agreed to update and circulate for final approval. Secretary to then get Webmaster to update Web for new Policy.

b) Review of suggestions re changes to format of Competition Timesheets and proposed new Excel formats for draw.

New Timekeeper worksheet had been trialed at competitions and reports indicate they were excellent. Moved and Seconded that the new Timekeeper worksheets be adopted. CARRIED. XL Draw format still being fine-tuned.

c) AFA Logo redesign. President advised Ilona had circulated to Executive a range of possible Logo designs. Feedback had been given and the Logos were now being refined before being circulated to Committee for consideration.

d) Champion Trophy Racing Format Proposal. The trial of the new format had occurred at Dapto Competition. Observations made regarding False start

situation. Terry advised Signature Lights could be programmed to move to a second false start situation at start of each heat in Champion Trophy format races. Agreed that it would be better to allow a fifth dog run for false start rather than stopping race.

Problem had also emerged where the final two teams were from same Club and had sibling and handler duplication issues and did not want to race each other because of likely cross overs. Kylie suggested in this case the rule should be that the slower team retires and the team they eliminated becomes the second team in the final. Agreed that the Champion Trophy format worked and could be a useful addition to racing formats. Kylie suggested that if she could quickly update and circulate the new Format Rules it could be used at Nationals. Moved and seconded that Champion Trophy Format be approved subject to Kylie updating and circulating Rules for approval.

e) Declared Seed Time Clarification.

Meeting noted that the rule for submitting a slower declared seed time was that it had to be more than 1 second slower than the Web Time. Clarification sought about what was position where a Team declared a faster seedtime – did it need to be at least 1 second faster. Consensus view – no, any faster time should be accepted. Breakout Rule of breakout time being 1 second faster than the declared time would apply to both faster and slower declared times. This clarification to be placed on web and advised to officials.

f) Points position where non-financial member raced in a Team.

Webmaster indicated that such a situation had occurred at two recent competitions in Queensland. A member of the Pine River Club had competed for Pine Rivers Aussie Pooches and then Pine Rivers Dare Devils teams at Comp 212 and 215 respectively without being a financial member of AFA. Committee noted existing Rule was that no member of the team gained points and this had been enforced on quite a number of occasions. It was responsibility of team captains to check all team members were financial and indeed they were required to sign entry forms to so indicate. Moved and Seconded that the AFA rule apply and that Qld Representative advise Pine Rivers Club of this situation and Webmaster adjust points data base. CARRIED

g) Qualifications for AFA Representative Position

Supervisory Judge proposed that the AFA develop a Exam format for the role of AFA Representative given the import of that role at Competitions and Demonstrations .If agreed Rosie proposed she and Kylie develop suggested Exam along similar lines to Stewards Exam and bring it to February or March Meeting next year and that say after 1<sup>st</sup> July 08 AFA Representatives to have to be qualified by Exam. Moved and Seconded that the process outlined be agreed. CARRIED.

h) Voting on 2009 Nationals Bid

Chair asked Members to vote on 2009 National Bids from Berwick and Norwest. Question asked what was situation re the Norwest members on the AFA Committee voting. Chair indicated that a precedent had been set in that for the 2007 Nationals bid the Queensland representatives had all voted for the Queensland bid and no one declared a conflict of interest. View put that this was an inappropriate situation and a conflict of interest should have been declared. Contrary view put that by doing that we were disadvantaging Clubs who were willing to take on Committee workloads.

After discussion Chair indicated he would be abstaining from the vote. He then put the Motion that the Committee Vote on the 2009 Bids.

Results - for Berwick's Submission – 4 Votes  
- For Norwest's Submission – 8 Votes  
- Abstaining from vote – 3 ( Chair and 2 Norwest Members)

i) Judges for 2008 Nationals

Secretary advised he had received 5 expressions of interest to Judge at Nationals. This was in addition to the two U.S. Judges. The expressions were from:

Sue Norton (Level 2 but doing her final practical for level 1 at Nationals).

Ian Kendt (Level 2)

Catherine Saberton (Level 1)

Eric van Zuyden (Level 1)

Rosie Milton (Supervisory Judge)

Terry Hunter advised he was also now available.

Kylie indicated she expected to have over 40 Teams and thus possibly 10 Divisions and even 3 Rings. On this basis Moved and Seconded that all Judges in above list be advised that it was expected they would be judging at Nationals.

**CARRIED.** This would give 8 Judges. Secretary to write to Judges not on Committee advising outcome.

j) Clarification - Incorrect breakout times applied at Competition - with effect of changing results if correct times had been applied.

Webmaster reported she had noted that at the recent Pine Rivers Competition one team had been given an incorrect breakout time and if the correct time had been applied that team would have broken out 3 times and points and results for the Competition would have been different. Consensus view was that results and points had to be amended to reflect the correct breakout situation. Discussion then occurred re need for AFA to reinforce requirement for Teams to carefully check carefully entry forms for all details including financial members, seed times, breakout times and for forms to be signed as having been checked. Question asked what happens with email Comp entries where they are not signed.

**Suggestion – get them signed at Competition before racing starts. Moved and seconded that Webmaster adjust points database for correct outcome. CARRIED**

**k) ANKC Agreement – for Chairs Signature**

**Chair advised ANKC had now submitted the Agreement and Statement of Intent for the AFA's signature. He sought Committee approval to sign on behalf of AFA.**

**The Committee noted that they had earlier approved the Agreements as a draft and accordingly it should be acceptable for signature. There was however a need seen to obtain information from ANKC as to the process to be followed to implement the Agreement and the timeline associated with that introduction and whether the AFA would have any representation in the process. Moved and Seconded that the Chair contact ANKC with these clarification points and subject to such clarification being acceptable to then sign the Agreement on behalf of the AFA. CARRIED.**

**l) Flying Times deadline**

**Jason apologized for the delay in the current Flying Times. The December issue would be out soon.**

**m) Member discipline matter at Ballarat Competition.**

**The Committee noted the two Witness Declarations regarding an apparent domestic argument, which took place outside the ring (at a Clubs tent site) at the recent Ballarat Competition and involved a member who was already under a 3 month suspended suspension for a similar incident. The Declarations indicated that the incident involved shouting and some swearing. The incident was between two people who were partners. After discussion the Committee agreed to attempt to mediate a behaviour change and an understanding that such disputes became public and did not reflect well on the participants or the sport of flyball. President agreed to contact member and discuss.**

**n) 2008 Nationals Update**

**Kylie indicated that at this stage it looked like the 2008 Nationals Championships would be in the main Show arena at the Canberra Show and that it would be the main spectator attraction for the Show. If this is the case the flyball will have to stop for a short period whilst the motorbikes perform in the main arena around lunchtime.**

**In discussion it was noted that given there were up to 10 Divisions there would be a need for the AFA to obtain additional Trophies so that each Division has a Trophy.**

**o) Signature Lights and Breakout Rule.**

Terry advised that an issue had arisen at a recent competition where the actual breakout time for a team was set in thousands of a second but the Signature lights only recorded breakout down to hundreds of a second. It was agreed that in these circumstances the breakout time should be rounded DOWN to the nearest one hundred of a second.

ITEM – 8 - Report of Dog Incident Appeals Panel.

The Meeting received the report of the Appeals Panel set up to deal with appeals received from members Sue Norton (re her dog Lizzie) and Trent Shepherd (re his dog Jem).

The AFA had established an independent appeals Panel (no member of panel being involved in the Investigation of the aggression incidents nor in the Committee decision re penalty). The panel comprised two Committee Members and two AFA Members with dog behaviour experience and qualifications. The Panel had followed the new AFA Appeals Protocol.

In case of Lizzie the appeal was against the imposition of a 6 month “suspended” suspension for an incident, which took place at a Queensland Competition on 8<sup>th</sup> September. The Panel reported that the member had provided new evidence not available to the Investigation sub committee and had put forward a range of mitigating circumstances, including the facts that her dog had been brought into the ring by someone without her knowledge or request and that the person holding Lizzie was not from her team and did not recognize signs of stress being displayed by the dog just before the incident. The Panel concluded that whilst it accepted that the incident may not have happened if the member had been handling her dog at the time, never the less an aggression incident (albeit of a somewhat minor nature) had taken place and that Lizzie had made contact with another dog. Taking into account all circumstances the Panel RECOMMENDED that the suspension period be reduced to 3 months (ending 8<sup>th</sup> December) and that it be suspended if no further incidents occurred in that period. The Panel also RECOMMENDED that the AFA write to the members Club suggesting that the Club reinforce to members the need to watch for early signs of aggression and take appropriate action to avoid incidents. Chair asked Members to Vote on these Recommendations. CARRIED unanimously.

In case of Jem the appeal was originally based on claim of denial of Natural Justice in that the member stated he had not been supplied with copies of all Witness Declarations and other documents held by the AFA and available to the investigating sub committee. These documents had however been supplied on a Confidential basis subsequent to receipt of the appeal notice and the member lodged a second appeal submission based on claimed anomalies in the Witness Declarations, claims of bias and the view that the conclusion of the Committee was unfounded and unfair.

The Appeals Panel considered all of the members arguments of anomalies and bias in the Statements and reached the conclusion that they did not support the members claims and that the evidence available supported the opinion that an aggressive incident had taken place at Kioloa and that it involved Jem and resulted in an injury to Kobe.

**The Panel then considered the matter of penalty and concluded that in all of the circumstances the penalty imposed of a twelve month minimum suspension was appropriate.**

**On that basis the Appeals Panel RECOMMENDED that the Appeal be dismissed and the original suspension be upheld and that there be a requirement to undertake and document the behaviour retraining of the dog during this suspension period. Chair asked Members to vote on the Recommendations. Carried with one abstention.**

#### **ITEM – 9 Report of Sub Committee on Dog Aggression Policy**

**The Sub Committee had further reviewed the recently developed Policy on Dog Aggression in line with the suggestion that the Policy be expanded to cover Interference, Distraction and Aggression. The sub committee had circulated papers dealing with suggested additions and amendments designed to clarify the definitions of interference, distraction suspected aggression and aggression. The Papers also contained the suggestion of amending the current rules re yellow carding for simply crossing the centre line where there was no interference involved. The Committee agreed that the Supervisory Judge should now circulate the suggested amended document (with the new Crossing with no interference proposal) to all AFA Judges for their review and comment. This recognized that in the main it was Judges that had to interpret the Policy and hence should be able to comment whilst it is under development. After circulation and comment the amended Policy would be represented to the Committee.**

**Date of Next Meeting.**

**Next Meeting is scheduled Monday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2008**

**There being no further business the meeting closed at 11. 25 pm.**

**Signed as a true record**

**President**

