



Board of Directors April
Mon Apr 13, 2026 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM EDT

ASHBA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Date: April 13, 2026

Time: 5:00 PM – 7:09 PM EST

Location: Virtual

Attendance

Present

Allen Bosworth, May Chadick, Sandra Currier, Allison Deardorff, Jennifer Dixon, Erin Eichenbaum, Sophia Fischer, Cece Hagan, Diane Hauslein, Melissa Moore, Clif Paulsen, Rachel Seifert, Chris Schubert, Brooke Simpson, Barbe Smith, Joan Todd

Absent

Smith Lilly, Malissa Welke

Executive Director

Sara Mayer

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chris Schubert. A quorum was confirmed.

a. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was amended to include:

- Director resignation discussion under President's Report
- USEF addendum

b. Approval of Minutes

Special Meeting Minutes, March 31, 2026

Motion: Approve the March 31 Special Meeting Minutes.

Result: Motion carried.

March 9 Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Motion: Approve the March 9 Regular Board Meeting Minutes as amended.

Result: Motion carried.

The amendment was proposed and approved.

c. Conflict of Interest Reminder

Board members were reminded to disclose any conflicts of interest related to agenda items.

2. President's Report

President Schubert reported:

- Positive results from the American Saddlebred presence at the Minnesota Horse Expo, where the booth received top honors.
- Appreciation to the Marketing Council and volunteers for grant-funded outreach efforts.
- Reminder of the upcoming in-person July Board meeting in Lexington.
- Encouragement for members to share positive industry news on social media.

Board Resignation

Julie Jones submitted her resignation due to family obligations and personal commitments. The Board expressed appreciation for her service.

Motion: Accept the resignation of Julie Jones.

Result: Motion carried.

Executive Session

The Board entered Executive Session at 5:19 pm EST to discuss Board vacancy.

Board Appointment

Steve Gaw was nominated to fill the vacant Board and Registry Council seat.

Motion: Appoint Steve Gaw to fill the Board and Registry Council vacancy.

Result: Motion carried unanimously.

The Board returned to regular session at 5:29 pm EST

3. Executive Director Report

Sara Mayer reviewed current organizational reports and metrics, including:

- Membership trends
- Development and donor activity
- Marketing reach and engagement
- Program participation
- Registry activity
- Strategic priorities

Staffing Update

Robin Carr accepted the Registrar position and will begin in May. Transition planning is underway.

Technology Update

Database migration planning remains in progress. Database Task Force to provide update later in meeting.

USEF Addendum

A proposed addendum to the USEF affiliate agreement was presented to improve reporting efficiencies and data sharing.

Motion: Approve the addendum and authorize the Executive Director to sign.

Result: Motion carried.

4. Council Reports

a. Finance Council

Sophia Fischer reported the organization remains in a strong financial position.

Highlights included:

- Revenue increased approximately 74% year-over-year
- Net income is strong
- Cash reserves remain strong
- Investments stable

The Board was also advised of the transition to QuickBooks Online.

b. Governance Council

The committee has met twice, established priorities, and continues work on governance matters. No action items were presented.

c. Development Council

Erin Eichenbaum and Allen Bosworth reported on fundraising strategy and annual giving efforts.

Discussion focused on the importance of achieving 100% Board participation in giving to support:

- Donor confidence
- Grant eligibility
- Organizational credibility

The Givebutter contribution link was shared with Board members during the meeting.

d. Registry Council

Discussion included implementation status of previously approved CH Points programming changes. Staff reported programming work had been completed and was pending final testing prior to release. Once testing is complete, communications and retroactive updates will be issued.

Board members also emphasized the importance of comprehensive Registry Council reporting, including:

- Current initiatives
- Challenges and concerns
- Operational updates
- Progress toward goals

e. Competitions Council

Jennifer Dixon presented recommendations for horse show grant allocations.

Following discussion, some applications will be returned to the committee for further review.

Motion: Approve all recommended grants except those under recommended review.

Result: Motion carried.

f. Programs Council

Sara Mayer presented the proposed 2027 Convention Budget, both revenue and expenses.

Motion: Approve the 2027 Convention Budget as presented.

Result: Motion carried.

g. Marketing Council

Share the Saddlebred Grant

A grant request was presented for the Minnesota Saddlebred Horse Association.

Motion: Approve funding up to the requested amount, contingent upon receipts.

Result: Motion carried.

Learn to Ride for Free Program

An update was provided regarding the relaunch of the program, including:

- New branding
- Updated website
- Lead capture system
- Future coordinated participation opportunities

No action was required.

h. Membership & Volunteer Engagement Council

The committee reported progress in the following areas:

- Membership growth strategies
- Retention efforts
- Member survey development
- Recruitment initiatives

No action was required.

5. Reports of Special Committees

a. Audit & Internal Controls Committee

Clif Paulsen presented the Audit & Internal Controls Committee report.

The committee reviewed its ongoing responsibilities, which include oversight of the annual financial review process and quarterly review of selected policies, bylaws, or procedures to determine compliance and identify items requiring further committee review.

Investment Policy Review

The committee reviewed the current Investment Policy Statement and noted the need for updated documentation regarding periodic review and ratification history. It was recommended that the policy be referred back to the Finance Council for review, updates, and documentation to ensure full compliance with internal procedures.

Board discussion further clarified that investments continue to be appropriately managed and investment performance remains strong.

2024 Financial Review

The Board was advised that the current accounting firm anticipated completion of the 2024 financial review in the near term, with materials to be presented to the Board upon receipt.

2025 Financial Review Engagement

The committee reported that proposals were solicited from several firms for the 2025 financial review. After evaluating qualifications, responsiveness, and pricing, the committee recommended engaging Cherry Bekaert to perform:

- Annual financial review
- IRS Form 990 preparation and filing
- Related year-end services

The proposed fee was reported to be in line with prior years.

Motion: Approve engagement of Cherry Bekaert for 2025 financial review services.

Result: Motion carried.

b. Database Task Force

Jennifer Dixon and Sara Mayer provided an update regarding the database migration project.

Phase One includes moving the association database to a cloud-based environment managed by a contractor experienced with affiliate transitions.

Priorities include:

- Securing direct control of association data
- Restoring system integrations
- Streamlining member login credentials
- Improving member portal functionality
- Maintaining continuity of business operations

Staff anticipates a two-week member support period following implementation.

c. Facilities Ad Hoc Committee

Sara Mayer reported on behalf of committee leadership that significant progress has been made with a space designer, and construction estimates are expected soon. A near-final proposal is anticipated within the next one to two meetings.

d. Nominating Committee

Joan Todd reported that the committee held its initial meeting and established the 2026 nomination and election timeline.

Key dates include:

- May 15: Nominations and applications open
- July 15: Nominations close
- August 16: Applications due
- September 9–10: Candidate interviews
- September 14: Final committee decisions

- Week of October 5: Notice to membership
- February 2027 Convention: Elections conducted

6. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:09 pm EST.