

**AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB**  
**Delegates Meeting**  
**June 10, 2025**

Gina M. DiNardo, President in the Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. ET.

The National Anthem was sung by Anthony Caputo, AKC Broadcast Manager.

Delegates were reminded to check in at the reception desk for attendance purposes. When Staff prints the purple-colored badge, the Delegate is automatically marked as present.

The Chair introduced the persons seated on the dais: Chairman, Dr. Thomas M. Davies; Vice Chairman, Dr. Michael Knight; Joan Corbisiero, Professional Registered Parliamentarian; Sheila H. Goffe, Executive Secretary; Shari Cathey, the Court Reporter.

Condolences were offered in the recent passing of Luis Sosa on May 14, 2025. He was the Delegate for the Louisiana Kennel Club from April 2002 to May 2025.

The Executive Secretary read the names of Delegates seated since the last meeting:

**Gloria Askins**, Murfreesboro, TN, to represent Greater Murfreesboro Kennel Club  
**Dr. James R. Davis**, Rockland, MA, to represent American Spaniel Club  
**Wayne A. Gilpin**, Prior Lake, MN, to represent Cairn Terrier Club of America  
**Judy A. Harrington**, Monson, MA, to represent United States Australian Shepherd Association  
**Cristy Kay Joy**, Raymond, NE, to represent English Springer Spaniel Field Trial Association  
**Kathryn Kirk**, New Milford, CT, to represent Naugatuck Valley Kennel Club  
**Rebecca J. Koester**, Willow Park, TX, to represent West Highland White Terrier Club of America  
**Dominic Koon**, Woodstock, GA, to represent Kennesaw Kennel Club  
**Janet Vining Mitchell**, Santa Barbara, CA, to represent Channel City Kennel Club  
**Steve Ostrander**, Beach Lake, PA, to represent Lackawanna Kennel Club  
**Toni M. Pawson**, Manorville, NY, to represent Staffordshire Bull Terrier Club of America  
**Lisa Peterson**, Newtown, CT, to represent Norwegian Elkhound Association of America  
**Cathy Rubens**, Kenly, NC, to represent Salisbury North Carolina Kennel Club  
**Steven A. Sansone**, Malvern, PA, to represent Giant Schnauzer Club of America  
**Gaye Scharingson**, Des Moines, IA, to represent Central Iowa Kennel Club  
**Monica L. Schott**, Red Hook, NY, to represent Mid-Hudson Kennel Association  
**Bernadette “Bernie” Taflan**, Normal, IL, to represent Corn Belt Kennel Club

**Lois M. Tubbs**, Flemington, NJ, to represent Somerset Hills Kennel Club  
**Lynn Tyler**, Cumming, GA, to represent Sawnee Mountain Kennel Club of Georgia  
**Robert L. Vandiver**, Greenville, SC, to represent Greenville Kennel Club  
**Pam D. Whitley**, Austin, TX, to represent Austin Kennel Club

**Rachel Ann Wilson**, Scituate, RI, to represent Worcester County Kennel Club  
**Maggie Witwer**, Greeley, CO, to represent Greeley Kennel Club

The following Delegates, who were attending their first meeting since being officially seated, were introduced from the floor:

**Dr. James R. Davis**, to represent American Spaniel Club  
**Wayne A. Gilpin**, to represent Cairn Terrier Club of America  
**Vicki L. Gray**, to represent Havanese Club of America  
**Judy A. Harrington**, to represent United States Australian Shepherd Association  
**Kathryn Kirk**, to represent Naugatuck Valley Kennel Club  
**Rebecca J. Koester**, to represent West Highland White Terrier Club of America  
**Steve Ostrander**, to represent Lackawanna Kennel Club  
**Toni M. Pawson**, to represent Staffordshire Bull Terrier Club of America  
**Lisa Peterson**, to represent Norwegian Elkhound Association of America  
**Steven A. Sansone**, to represent Giant Schnauzer Club of America  
**Lois M. Tubbs**, to represent Somerset Hills Kennel Club  
**Lynn Tyler**, to represent Sawnee Mountain Kennel Club of Georgia  
**Robert L. Vandiver**, to represent Greenville Kennel Club  
**Pam D. Whitley**, to represent Austin Kennel Club

The minutes of the March 11, 2025 Delegate Meeting were published in the April 2025 issue of the online *AKC Gazette*. The complete transcript was posted on the Delegate Portal on AKC's website. There were no corrections, and the minutes were adopted as published.

The **Biewer Terrier Club of America** was duly elected as a member of The American Kennel Club.

Dr. Thomas Davies delivered the Chairman's Report as follows:

Good morning. It is my distinct pleasure to officially and publicly welcome our new Executive Staff members to their first Delegate meeting in their new capacities. Gina is our new President & CEO, and Sheila is our new Executive Secretary. While not new to the organization, they round out a spectacular C-suite along with Gordon and Ted. Together, to paraphrase our new tagline, they are leading the way in efforts to improve everything we do for our dogs, and our clubs, breeders, fanciers and owners. Join me in welcoming them.  
(Applause.)

There are two issues to explore when we discuss our current situation. The first, and that to which we have direct control is our Micro-Environment. It consists of those factors that directly apply to and are a function of what we are and do. They are factors that we can control: Our clubs, judging community, our cadre of purebred dog breeders, and our exhibitors. It certainly includes our governing organization – the great American Kennel Club.

We bemoan the decreasing registrations, the decreasing entries at events, and the decreasing number of breeders. And who do we blame? The great American Kennel Club.

However, in all our discussions, we seem to forget an equally important issue that directly affects and controls what we do. That is the Macro-Environment. It has an even greater impact on what we do and how we do it. These factors include demographic, ecological, political, economic, cultural and technological factors. These are things that we, as individuals and as an organization, have little or no ability to control. But as is clearly evident, they have an enormous impact on our sport and our organization.

I assert that we do pretty well with our Micro-Environmental factors. We also do our best to try to affect many of the factors within the Macro-Environment. I will elaborate on one such effort in a moment. Even as we try, we recognize that we can only educate the world, not control how these factors affect us. There are so many issues outside of our sphere of control.

Perhaps some of the most important factors in the Macro-Environment are addressed by our Government Relations Department. We are fortunate that the person who has built that department into the force that it is, our new Executive Secretary, Sheila Goffe, will continue to head Government Relations.

One of the latest enhancements that I would like to highlight today is the Government Relations Department's redesigned, updated reports of AKC's Economic Impact by State. Building on figures developed through the years of surveys of AKC dog fanciers, AKC Government Relations has reconfigured its national overview of the economic benefit of dog shows to present a more local picture. Now, after we offer 50 unique one-page reports, one for every state. These documents provide valuable information to share with lawmakers, local media, chambers of commerce, and other institutions about the positive contributions that AKC makes directly within the community.

The state reports are available for all in the Government Relations Toolbox found on the department's dedicated website, AKCGR.org, as well as on AKC.org. We offer a 51-page full report that begins with a summary cover letter introducing AKC and our affiliates, followed by information tailored to each of our states in alphabetical order. Individual state reports are valuable as one-sheets for easy reference for all. We also provide a national overview sheet to accompany the state reports. This document is called The Economic Benefit of AKC Dog Events. That's very clever because that's what it's all about. It estimates average local spending and potential economic impact of dog shows on a national scale.

The state reports present key information in new and impactful ways. They introduce the American Kennel Club prominently, calling out the specific number and growth of AKC clubs, events, and event participations in each state since 2024. We have expanded this information beyond the scope of Conformation to cover all AKC events in each state.

Another excellent feature of the State reports is the inclusion of data showing how AKC affiliates directly benefit communities. The number and names of police departments that have received grants from AKC Reunite are listed. The report also cites the number of disaster relief trailers that Reunite has donated, and corresponding numbers of pets that can be accommodated by state. Each report also provides cumulative dollar figures of grant money provided by the AKC Canine Health Foundation to specific numbers of institutions within the state.

These newly designed reports have already begun to prove the value of the work that went into them. According to Sheila, “AKC has stopped bad breeder bills cold” with these reports.

Delegates, know that these State reports are for your clubs’ use too. Share them widely. Post them on your clubs’ social media accounts. Use them to help others understand AKC’s positive impact. I am pleased that many in our sport are taking advantage of their state reports and sharing their feedback.

The Greater Ocala Kennel Club has told AKC, *“We are definitely using this when fighting new legislation.”* That region was facing a bill requiring owners of intact females to register with the state of Florida and submit to their inspections. That same bill was going to let local government agencies and rescue groups create standards of care for breeders and owners of intact dogs. Luckily, our advocates actively opposed this outrageous bill, armed with AKC’s data, and the bill was defeated.

All-Breed and specialty clubs are using the Government Relations new state reports to help them secure and retain venues and show sites. A cluster organizer shared *“I use the economic impact constantly in our community to get sponsors and lower the cost of our venue rent...Using the economic impact within a community allows the local politicians and government officials to realize dog showing is no small-time sport.”*

No small-time sport, indeed. The Official Tourism Association for Orlando, Florida has estimated the AKC National Championship can generate approximately \$65 million in economic impact. Even small AKC events also inject significant dollars into the local economy. Site owners, local businesses, politicians, and community leaders need to know that we matter, and we do bring them value.

Later this year, AKC will be sending out new surveys to understand how much money AKC event participants spend at shows in order to estimate our economic impact today. If you receive a survey, please spend time to complete it thoughtfully. Your answers will make a difference for all of us. As always, if you need any assistance, the AKC Government Relations Department is here for us. Contact [doglaw@akc.org](mailto:doglaw@akc.org) or visit [AKCGR.org](http://AKCGR.org) for access to the AKC Legislative Center. Thank you.

Ms. DiNardo delivered the President's Report as follows:

I am deeply honored to be here with you today. As part of my commitment to transparency, I want to take a few moments to share some of the important work that is happening across the AKC. Our teams are hard at work on some truly impactful initiatives, and I think it's important that we all stay connected to that progress. These updates are not just about what's been accomplished, but they're about recognizing the collective effort behind that progress and reinforcing the shared mission that will drive us all forward.

We begin with great news from our Sports & Events Department. With Board approval, we are launching a new Conformation Titling Program specifically for National Owner-Handled Series (NOHS) Exhibitors. Starting this October 2025, Owner-Handlers have the ability to earn NOHS Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum based on performance thresholds. This program underscores AKC's commitment to supporting Owner-Handlers, as we know they are vital to the future of our Conformation events.

Our Education Department has also been hard at work creating innovative resources to support the dog-owning community at large. One major development is the new AKC Canine College Training Center. It's a flexible, expert-led online platform designed to complement in-person training. This work responds directly to the rising demand for accessible, high-quality education in dog sports and foundational training. In addition, 39 breeder education modules, 16 of which are now fully mobile responsive via our new AKC Canine College app. They're available on the Apple Store and Google Play. These tools make it easier for breeders to access professional development resources anytime, anywhere – we are trying to be modern.

Our Government Relations team continues to make a strong impact, producing resources strengthening AKC's reputation and legislative influence. Key accomplishments, of course, are the AKC Economic Impact Reports that Dr. Davies just spoke about, updates to AKC Above and Beyond, which showcases exemplary breeder practices, and a scientific summary dispelling myths about breed health and advocating for fact-based dialogue. There's also a congressional briefing held by Sheila and her team to help distinguish between animal rights and animal welfare. This reinforces AKC as the trusted expert voice on responsible dog ownership and policy.

Meanwhile, our Registration Department has made tremendous strides in enhancing customer service for the dog registration process. They recently rolled out a new Online Dog Registration Application, and it has helped to transform the registration process. We're trying to make it easier for people to register dogs. It's a mobile-friendly design, has a streamlined, intuitive interface. You can now upload photos for color verification in the app. Before you would have to email or mail photos and that would take time. Now there is flexibility for users to complete payment or naming later, which was one of the points where we had registration fall off, so we're hoping that will help. In fact, we know that these upgrades are already delivering some success. Same-hour completion rates rose from 54 percent to 62 percent. Same-day completion increases from 86 percent to 94 percent. This is a good example of innovation, collaboration, and how we will be customer-focused to drive performance.

One of our most visible and meaningful achievements this season was AKC Salutes the Troops at Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield. This very special event brought together military families and the AKC dog community. We held three marquee competitions – AKC Agility Premier Cup, Fastest Dogs USA, and AKC Diving Dogs. These events will air nationally on ESPN beginning June 14, 2025 with the AKC Diving Dog Challenge, and Bill Ellis, our Senior Director of Broadcasting, will share additional details about this shortly. While preparing for these events, we learned that the 3rd Infantry Division (3ID), was looking to have a live Bulldog mascot to carry on the legacy of its historic mascot, Rocky the Bulldog, created by Walt Disney. In the infantry's history, they have only had two living Bulldog mascots, and the last one was Stubby back in World War I. We actually have a statue of him in the AKC Museum of the Dog. When we found out that 3ID was searching for a Bulldog, we were honored to assist in the effort. Thanks to Robin Stansell, who put out a call to the Bulldog community, and to the extraordinary generosity of breeders Terry and Kim Borcharding of Ardmore, Oklahoma, in two weeks we were able to provide the division with a beautiful AKC-registered Bulldog that now proudly serves as their live mascot. This is a very powerful collaboration and added profound meaning to the weekend, which coincidentally is the Army's 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. As part of the celebration, we created a customized AKC Challenge Coin. It's a symbol of camaraderie, honor, and service. The coins are a longtime military tradition to exchange to commemorate achievements. I had the honor of presenting the AKC Challenge Coin to Major General Christopher Norrie, Commanding General of the 3rd Infantry Division and Fort Stewart, and he proudly placed it under glass in his office alongside hundreds of other coins he has collected throughout his career. At the end of today's meeting, all Delegates are invited to pick up a coin at the registration table. We have one for each of you as a memento. They are cool, we're proud of them.

Finally, I'm pleased to share that there is a redesigned *Welcome to AKC* brochure. This is a refreshed brochure. It's an essential resource for our clubs. It will introduce the general public to AKC. It is thoughtfully aligned with our new current brand campaign, Declare Your Love. Many thanks to the marketing and PR teams for their collaboration in bringing this new piece to life. It's available on AKC.org with the option to order it for use at your events.

With that, we look forward to a busy and productive summer. I hope these updates remind you what we can achieve when we work together with purpose and heart. I thank you for your support, your leadership within your clubs, your dedication to AKC's mission, and I look forward to continued progress that we will make together. Thank you.

Ted Phillips, CFO, delivered the Financial Report as follows:

Well, good morning again. Thank you, Gina. It's a pleasure to be here. And as always, Delegates, we appreciate your time and your involvement.

Before I begin the first quarter presentation, I'd like to mention an update that has been posted to the Annual Report section of the AKC Delegate Portal. In our efforts to ensure that AKC is transparent with its financial information, we have posted audit reports for the past five years to ensure that everyone knows that AKC has been audited. There are reports prior to that, but

five years of audit reports is enough for anyone. In addition, we posted the Audited Financial Statements for the years ended December 31, 2023 and 2022. I've learned over the past five years that I don't entirely speak the AKC language. I'm not sure how many of you, but I know there's a few, who speak Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). If GAAP isn't your first language, there's a document that we posted called MD&A –Management's Discussion and Analysis. This is a document that in the SEC world would accompany annual disclosures. We have prepared it to allow you to look at the financial statements, be duly impressed, and then read how they're compiled, how they're put together. It includes our affiliates. What I present to you in financial information and to the Board of Directors is AKC standalone. The MD&A gives an overview of operations on a consolidated basis. It looks at our operations and our assets at year end. It also speaks to programmatic impact, stewardship, transparency, and forward-looking comments. The audit for the 2024 financial statements is underway and will be available in September 2025 after it's reviewed by the Audit Committee and the Board of Directors. From a finance operational point of view, I'd like to affirm with this group that the basis for preparing our annual budgets is always to break even with a small margin to the positive, between 1 and 5 percent. That's our goal. That's our direction. This is best practices for any tax-exempt organization. Since we're not a 501(c)(3), AKC's a 501(c)(4), which is a social welfare organization, we can't ask for contributions to balance the budget like many other organizations would be able to. I encourage you to read the document, ask questions, as it speaks to both financial and non-financial aspects of AKC as a tax-exempt organization. It also points to the impact that we have in a community where everything we do, we do for dogs.

Let's begin our review of the first quarter results. A little challenging, but this is where we are at the end of March 2025. We present key performance indicators of unaudited financial information and metrics for the first quarter. These reports include expenses authorized in our annual budget, which is approved by the Board of Directors. As of March 31, 2025, the net result from operations are a loss of \$1.014 million, principally due to registration revenues. Total revenue is \$23.4 million, which is 13 percent, or \$3.4 million below budget. Based on early forecasts, we expect this trend to be consistent for the remainder of this calendar year. Total expenses are \$24.4 million, or 7 percent, or \$1.7 million lower than budget. One of the benefits of having an investment portfolio, which you will see the balance as we get to the end of the report, is we have interest and dividends, investment earnings that help contribute to our annual budget. This quarter, we have recorded \$816,000 of investment income, which brings our net result essentially to a break-even point of \$198,000 loss. The important part to remember is while that is there and benefits us, the operating return is negative for the first quarter. We are always challenging internal practices and methods to reduce operating expenses without sacrificing the quality of delivering services to our clubs. The management team has informed the Board of Directors of our plans for expense reductions beginning in July of this year. As you've heard, our evaluation of business needs and delivery has to be thoughtful and best position the AKC, as the finance guy looks at it, for a lower registration environment.

On this slide, we show the primary areas of operating revenue. Registration and event fees total \$15.3 million and represent 65 percent of total revenues. For comparison to the same

period in 2024, we reported \$16.7 million of revenue. That's against budget. \$17.7 is the budget, \$16.7 is the priority number. It's not on the slide, but I'm giving it to you as a reference point. The slide shows that this revenue group is \$2.4 million or 14 percent below budget. Advertising, sponsorship, and royalty revenues, which represent an important revenue group, make up 19 percent of total revenues. This group is also experiencing lower revenue, principally due to lower advertising revenue that follows registration activity. The group reduction is about \$700,000 against budget, and we'll show you some additional details in a few minutes. Finally, various e-commerce products and services revenue total \$3.7 million or 16 percent of total revenues. This slide has a breakdown of dog and litter registrations, which total \$5.7 million in Q1 and was 22 percent below budget. The total number of dogs registered for the first quarter was 125,842, which is lower than the same period in 2024 by 28,000 registrations. Litter registration revenue totaled \$3 million in first quarter and was 12 percent or \$400,000 below budget. The total number of litters registered was 56,114, which is lower than the same period in 2024 by 9,000 registrations. Online litter and dog registrations continue to range anywhere between 80 and 87 percent, which is a significant statement for our business and has been consistent over the past five years.

Here's a breakdown of revenues from the three major sport categories. Conformation trending below budget by 13 percent or \$150,000. Companion and Performance events, again, this is all revenue-based, are close to budget. Total entries in the first quarter are 803,588, which are 3 percent lower than the first quarter in 2024. And total events in first quarter increased by 1 percent to 5,825.

The last slide of this presentation, as it's posted to the Delegate Portal, will have those details for you. This slide further delineates the lower revenue mentioned earlier in the sponsorship, advertising, and royalty area. As I said, the principal subline here is the advertising line, lower by \$400,000 at 27 percent as that follows registration. To summarize our revenue, we can see continued softening for the rest of the year.

Moving on to operating expenses, here we have a breakout of the total operating expenses I mentioned earlier, which total at \$24.4 million. Staff expense is \$11.6 million or 48 percent of operating expenses. The cost of staff in this quarter is consistent with budget and not higher than the same period in 2024. Professional fees total \$4.75 million or 19 percent of total. This total is higher than the prior year, same period, due to the additional focus on brand image marketing approved by the Board of Directors and launched earlier this year. Our operating expenses, including salaries, are carefully managed through a competitive bidding process, use of a compensation consultant, and senior management review. I have a "no" pen that I use occasionally – "No, you can't have it."

This slide presents non-operating expenses. These are consistent with budget, and it's important to know that AKC continues to support its charitable affiliates with a contribution equal to five percent of total expenses, or in Q1, \$1.3 million.

Now, the balance sheet. This whole presentation, please remember, is standalone AKC. The total assets of AKC on March 31, 2025, were \$260 million. The largest asset on the balance sheet is our investment portfolio. I'm going to move ahead one month, April 30, 2025, was essentially break-even, and that correlated with the benchmark, which was negative, principally due to equities. However, the asset allocation mix helped offset where we would have been if we were more equity-based. The liability section, as a reminder, is primarily comprised of lease and retirement plan obligations. These total \$76 million at the end of Q1. Net assets, this is in the financial statements, are restricted by the Board for the protection of retirement plan obligations and supportive of affiliates. Pension and retiree expense obligations will continue to be a long-term cash flow draw on AKC.

In closing, thank you for your time. I appreciate your attention, and if you have any questions, I'm always available. Thank you.

There was a vote on the amendment to **Article XI, Section 9** of the *Charter and Bylaws of The American Kennel Club*, which adds verbiage to indicate the requirement of the President to obtain the advice and the consent of the Board of Directors prior to appointing an Executive Vice President, Vice President or Assistant Vice President.

The amendment was requested by the AKC Board of Directors, endorsed by the Delegate Bylaws Committee and brought forward with the approval of the AKC Board of Directors.

The Chair recognized Pat Cruz, Delegate from the Heart of the Plains Kennel Club, who spoke as follows:

I only ask that you consider with this vote, that a vote in favor to change this Article XI, Section 9, will remove the President & CEO of the AKC from having the final definitive say about who comes to work for us, the very people who send the Delegates to the AKC. It's time to ask why this is necessary. Thank you.

The Chair recognized Ann Wallin, AKC Board of Directors and Delegate from the Atlanta Kennel Club, who spoke as follows:

I wanted to clarify one issue with this particular amendment that was brought up, and that was how it affects our tax-exempt status. We did get some counsel from our corporate attorney, and these are her findings: She did research back to the 2000 AKC Bylaws and did not find anything that states that there was a legal concern related to AKC's exempt status. In addition, she does not understand how the proposed amendment could affect AKC's tax-exempt status. That particular issue is not really involved nor does it apply to this amendment, so our tax-exempt status would not be in jeopardy. Thank you.

There was a two-thirds vote in the affirmative and the amendment was adopted.

The Chair called on the Executive Secretary to read the proposed amendment to **Article IV, Section 5** of the *Charter and Bylaws of The American Kennel Club*.

Ms. Goffe: This amendment is to **Article IV, Section 5** of the *Charter and Bylaws of The American Kennel Club*, which reduces the requirement to publish CLUB candidate information in the *AKC Gazette* from twice to once before consideration by the AKC Board of Directors.

This amendment was proposed by the Delegate Bylaws Committee and brought forward with the approval of the AKC Board of Directors.

It will be published in two issues of the *AKC Gazette* and you will be asked to vote on it at the September 2025 meeting. The full text is on the worksheet previously emailed.

There were no questions or discussion.

The Chair called on the Executive Secretary to read the proposed amendment to **Article VI, Section 4** of the Charter and Bylaws of The American Kennel Club.

Ms. Goffe: This amendment is to **Article VI, Section 4** of the *Charter and Bylaws of The American Kennel Club*, which reduces the requirement to publish DELEGATE candidate information in the *AKC Gazette* from twice to once before consideration by the AKC Board of Directors.

This amendment was proposed by the Delegate Bylaws Committee and brought forward with the approval of the AKC Board of Directors.

It will be published in two issues of the *AKC Gazette* and you will be asked to vote on it at the September 2025 meeting. The full text is on the worksheet previously emailed.

There were no questions or discussion.

The Chair called on the Executive Secretary to read the proposed amendment to **Article VII, Section 1** of the Charter and Bylaws of The American Kennel Club.

Ms. Goffe: This amendment is to **Article VII, Section 1** of the *Charter and Bylaws of The American Kennel Club*, which changes the time period that a Board member must remain off the Board before being eligible to run again from one year to four years.

This amendment was proposed by the Doberman Pinscher Club of America and disapproved by the AKC Board at the May 2025 meeting.

Pursuant to **Article XX, Section 3** of the AKC Bylaws, the Doberman Pinscher Club of America demanded that it be brought forward to the Delegates.

It will be published in two issues of the *AKC Gazette* and you will be asked to vote on it at the September 2025 meeting. The full text is on the worksheet previously emailed.

There were no questions or discussion.

The Chair called on the Executive Secretary to read the proposed amendment to **Article XIV, Section 1** of the Charter and Bylaws of The American Kennel Club.

Ms. Goffe: This amendment is to **Article XIV, Section 1** of the *Charter and Bylaws of The American Kennel Club*, which adds verbiage to address that a fee is required to be submitted to the event-giving club when a complaint is filed at an AKC event.

This amendment was proposed by the Delegate Bylaws Committee and disapproved by the AKC Board at the February 2025 meeting.

Pursuant to **Article XX, Section 3** of the AKC Bylaws, the Delegate Bylaws Committee demanded that it be brought forward to the Delegates.

It will be published in two issues of the *AKC Gazette* and you will be asked to vote on it at the September 2025 meeting. The full text is on the worksheet previously emailed.

The Chair recognized Sylvie McGee, Delegate from the Nisqually Kennel Club, who spoke as follows:

Ms. McGee: I'm Sylvie McGee, from the Nisqually Kennel Club. This amendment on the service fee was discussed yesterday in the Bylaws Committee, but we know that the Board disapproved of this amendment, but I haven't heard any discussion from the Board about why they disapproved of this amendment, and I think that would be helpful as we go back to the clubs and discuss it with them. Could someone from the Board discuss their concern or their objection to the fee being applied in order to file a complaint?

Ms. DiNardo: I can share that from my perspective, the Board thought that it would be an unnecessary burden to some people and may prevent people from coming forward with legitimate complaints.

Ms. McGee: That's it?

Ms. DiNardo: I recall that there were issues about how the fee would be processed and concerns about making it more difficult.

Ms. McGee: Thank you.

The Chair called on the Executive Secretary to read the proposed amendment to **Article XVIII, Section 2** of the Charter and Bylaws of The American Kennel Club.

Ms. Goffe: This amendment is to **Article XVIII, Section 2** of the *Charter and Bylaws of The American Kennel Club*, which removes the requirement that notice of meetings be made by

postal mail, allowing for email notice in accord with New York's Not-for-Profit Corporation (NPC) Law §605.

This amendment was proposed by the Delegate Bylaws Committee and brought forward with the approval of the AKC Board of Directors.

It will be published in two issues of the *AKC Gazette* and you will be asked to vote on it at the September 2025 meeting. The full text is on the worksheet previously emailed.

There were no questions or discussion.

The Chair called on the Executive Secretary to read the proposed amendment to **Chapter 6, Section 2** of the *Rules Applying to Dog Shows – Premium Lists and Closing of Entries*.

Ms. Goffe: This amendment is to **Chapter 6, Section 2** of the *Rules Applying to Dog Shows – Premium Lists and Closing of Entries*, which modifies the required information published in premium lists to when any specialty club chooses not to offer the three-point major to the Reserve Winners when the number of dogs competing in a sex is twice the number required for a five-point major.

This amendment was initiated by AKC Staff, proposed by the Delegate Dog Show Rules Committee and brought forward with the approval of the AKC Board of Directors.

It will be published in two issues of the *AKC Gazette* and you will be asked to vote on it at the September 2025 meeting. The full text is on the worksheet previously emailed.

There were no questions or discussion.

The Chair called on Bill Ellis, Senior Director of Broadcasting, for an update on AKC Broadcasting and Media, who spoke as follows:

Hi, good morning, everybody. I'm Bill Ellis and I'm the Senior Director of Broadcasting for the American Kennel Club. There are a number of different initiatives and projects that we work on in the Production Department, but I'm going to focus this morning on our work that we do with our "AKC on ESPN" series. For anyone in the room that might be new to this information, this is a relationship that the American Kennel Club has with Disney, and it focuses on a series of dog sports shows that we produce for ESPN throughout the year. It also includes the ABC Network, which of course broadcasts the AKC National Championship Dog Show annually. This provides an enormous amount of reach for the American Kennel Club. Last year alone, we reached over 15 million people with these broadcasts throughout the year. While they are first and foremost sports shows, we really take a lot of pride, focus and energy in the additional content that goes into these shows in the way of features, storytelling and explainer pieces. We like to assume that anybody who is flipping through channels maybe unfamiliar with dogs on ESPN and maybe it's their first time watching so we want to make sure that the audience is

really engaged throughout the show, and we're providing those touch points to hold them until the end.

So far this year, we have worked on five shows that have been completed and delivered to ESPN in three different locations. That's important to note because we like to focus a great deal of our efforts on the first half of the year. We have worked really closely with the researchers at ESPN to identify where our shows perform the best and identifying those broadcast windows to really maximize the audience. When we're able to work on these shows earlier in the year and get them delivered, then we can really focus our attention on finding the exact moments and windows to really let those shows shine and perform their best. We started the year at the AKC National Agility Championship, and I will tell you this is the fifth year that we worked on this show. So you know, I've shown dogs my whole life. I'm a Conformation kid at heart. But watching these Agility competitors in the finals at the highest level of competition is some of the most emotional moments that I've ever seen people have with their dogs. They are incredible teams. These people are so dedicated. I'm amazed at what they're able to accomplish with their dogs.

From there, we moved onto our first diving dog show of the year. We worked closely with our friends at North America Diving Dogs to host these diving competitions. This one was held at Mississippi State University, and the veterinary school at Mississippi State University actually hosted us. They invited us to come down. We were able to secure a location right in front of their football stadium, and it served as a great backdrop for us. We had an amazing crowd – not only for show day but also practice day. It aligned really nicely with a lot of campus visits. We had students, families, faculties, and the local community come out for this show that we're really proud of. We were able to bring an additional production crew that was focused solely on capturing content and interviews with the College of Veterinary Medicine down there, so it was a really nice synergy of not only bringing that live event and producing it for ESPN, but the canine health point of view and being able to capture some of that supplemental content. As we were finishing up this show, I was watching these segments and reviewing them to make sure that everything was correct and accurate. I got to the end of the show, and I watched this two-minute moment, and I rewound it, and I watched it again. I want to share it with you all because in the midst of going over this show with a fine-tooth comb, I thought that this moment really showcased in a bigger way why we do what we do and the joy that dogs really bring to all of us.

(Video played.)

(Applause.)

Mr. Ellis: I think, I hope, we created a lasting memory for that young man, and he gets the chance to see himself on ESPN.

From there, we moved on to our AKC Salutes the Troops events, which you've heard already a little bit about this morning. Gina mentioned in her report, and hopefully you've seen the banner over here, that these events really were a landmark achievement for us in this series that we work on for ESPN. I think that we will look back at shows before AKC Salutes the

Troops and shows after AKC Salutes the Troops, but it was a real celebration with the U.S. Army. None of this happens by accident. These shows, but all the shows that we work on for ESPN, they're conceived by us. It takes a lot of work and a lot of planning. This is no exception. It took about 18 months of planning with the U.S. Army to bring these to fruition from the initial concept when we brought it to Gina, who of course wholeheartedly supported this, all the way through building those relationships, not only just AKC and the U.S. Army, but ESPN and their buy-in. We were lucky enough to have them onsite for these events, and of course the sponsors who are integral. You can imagine the logistics planning and all of the work that goes into it, with multiple site visits. As we worked through that, we really discovered so many different ways that the American Kennel Club and the U.S. Army have this connection. There's, of course, this incredible history with both of our organizations, but there's also this shared sense of tradition and excellence and our love of purebred dogs. Of course, we know about that, but for the military, the working dogs that are soldiers that keep our country safe every day, the veterinarians that are also soldiers that care for them, and we were able to continue to unearth this connection and tell these stories when we were there. I think this really benefits not only the AKC and the content we're able to produce but really showcases the U.S. Army in a way that might be new to most viewers. Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield were our great hosts just outside of Savannah, Georgia. It's the largest Army installation that's east of the Mississippi and one of the most decorated divisions in the U.S. Army's history. The soldiers, getting to work with them for the week that we were down there, was an incredibly humbling experience, one that I know that myself and all of us that were there, are eternally grateful for. They were just an amazing support system for us.

We worked on three shows. The first show that we hosted was AKC Fastest Dogs USA, which is a fancy television title for Fast CAT®. We worked on the Agility Premier Cup the following day, which is an invitational competition for about the top 100 Agility teams, and then we moved to the airfield, and we hosted the Diving Dogs Challenge just outside one of the hangars surrounded by military aircraft. We're super excited about all three of these shows. Once again, we deployed two additional crews. We had the full production crew complement working on the sports show for ESPN. We also had two additional crews that were there throughout the week gathering content, so telling the stories of these soldiers, the military working dogs. There's even a feature with the Army chef and his dog biscuit recipe. We were everywhere that we could be while we were there to really tell that full story and also to create an in-person experience for the families on base. On Friday, during that Agility Premier Cup event, we hosted a barbecue for the military families and our competitors. We built out a kid zone, which included face painters, bounce houses for the families there, and before the Agility finals that afternoon, a full opening ceremony. We had the Army marching band, the Army rock band. I didn't know there was an Army rock band. There is. They were both there. The presentation of the colors, swearing in ceremony for new soldiers, and Gina was kind enough to kick it all off delivering her opening remarks there in person to get the competition started, which is also when we presented Rocky to everyone there on base. This is the bulldog that Gina mentioned earlier. We were really thrilled to be able to bring Rocky to Fort Stewart. He's with his new family, adored, of course. I know that they are continuing to order more dog beds

so that more and more offices on the base can have a dog bed ready for Rocky when he's out and about on base and can be comfortable wherever he is.

This is what it looks like as we look ahead. Ted was kind enough to mention that this weekend we have a show premiering this Saturday, June 14 and that's important because Saturday is Flag Day, which is the official 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Army. AKC Fastest Dogs USA premieres this Saturday, perfectly aligned with that anniversary of the Army, followed by the National Agility Championship on Sunday, June 15. Then we move on to another patriotic weekend, July 4, and we have two shows premiering that weekend, the Diving Dogs Challenge and the Agility Premier Cup, both from our time with the Army that will premiere on July 4 and 5, 2025. We're excited about those, but really also grateful to the great partners at ESPN who work so closely with us like I said, to find these moments on the calendar to really let our shows shine. I'm going to leave you with one more video, because I'm the video guy, so there's two in here. This is a full recap video from our time down at Fort Stewart that was put together by our AKC Social Media team. They were on the ground as well, capturing content all week to support the event. It will give you a bit of an overview of what happened during our time down at the base.

Thank you.

(Video played.)

(Applause.)

The Chair called on Mari-Beth O'Neill, Vice President of Sports Services, for a presentation on behalf of AKC and the Junior Task Force, who spoke as follows:

Good morning. Once again, representing the Junior Task Force, we would like to honor one of our clubs that has had a continued influence with their local 4-H group. Members of the Somerset Hills Kennel Club have worked with the Somerset 4-H group by facilitating ring steward training for Obedience. The 4-H members have successfully competed in Obedience as well as Conformation Junior Showmanship. Additionally, these 4-H youth participate in AKC Meet the Breeds® at the Cocker Spaniel Booth, greeting the public with their dogs. The relationships established between all breed or dog training clubs for the 4-H community will serve both entities for the future of each organization. Thank you to the Somerset Hills Kennel Club, and if our new Delegate would please come forward to receive this.

(Certificate presented.)

Ms. O'Neill: If your club is currently engaged and doing things with your local 4-H group, please share that information with me so I can honor you in the future.

The Chair called on the Executive Secretary to read the list of vacancies for the Delegate Standing Committees that are to be filled in September.

Ms. Goffe: These are the vacancies on Delegate Standing Committees that are to be filled at the September 2025 Delegate meeting:

**All-Breed Clubs Committee – 4 three-year terms**

**Bylaws Committee** – 4 three-year terms and 1 one-year term  
**Canine Health Committee** – 4 three-year terms  
**Companion Events Committee** – 4 three-year terms  
**Delegate Advocacy and Advancement Committee** – 4 three-year terms  
**Dog Show Rules Committee** – 4 three-year terms  
**Field Trial & Hunting Test Events Committee** – 4 three-year terms  
**Herding, Earthdog, Coursing and Scent Work Events Committee** – 4 three-year terms and 1 one-year term  
**Parent Clubs Committee** – 4 three-year terms and 1 two-year term  
**Perspectives Editorial Staff** – 6 two-year terms and 1 one-year term

Ms. DiNardo announced that the Delegates will be emailed self-nomination forms by the end of June. The self-nomination form must be returned to the Executive Secretary by Friday, July 18, 2025.

Questions on the procedures to be followed should also be directed to the Executive Secretary. Delegates may only self-nominate for one committee, except that a member of the *Perspectives* Editorial Staff may also serve on another standing committee.

In August, the Delegates will be emailed the nominees for each committee, and their qualification statements with the September Delegate meeting notification.

The Chair called on Gail LaBerge, Delegate from the Atlanta Obedience Club, to provide an update on the AKC PAC, who spoke as follows:

If you were in the Legislative Caucus this morning, you heard Sheila talk about how important the PAC is for GR. Of course, in June we kick off – and those that were there this morning got a heads up – on what the package is this year for our fundraiser. You know, we do the sweepstakes for a fundraiser. It's our main fundraiser for the year. This year we've gone back to something we haven't done in a very long time that was a big favorite, and it's a Westminster package. It will be four nights of your hotel, plus tickets to all the events and tickets to parties, and we're adding to this. We have other things coming in every day for it. It's five tickets for \$100, one for \$25. We hope you'll do the \$100. We will be out at the GR table, and yes, we can accept credit cards. So please be generous and support the PAC, which in turn supports Government Relations. Thank you.

The Chair informed the Delegates that the Tuesday, September 9, 2025 Delegate Meeting will be held at the Doubletree Newark Airport Hotel. More detailed information will be emailed as soon as it becomes available.

Lunch was served following the meeting's conclusion on the Terrace.

Delegates were not required to return the badges; new badges will be printed at each meeting. Delegates were given an option to recycle the badge holders and lanyards.

The following Delegates spoke during the continuation of New Business:

Pamela Rosman, Delegate from the Canaan Dog Club of America, expressed the club's excitement in welcoming Gina DiNardo and Sheila Goffe to their new Executive positions, the new members of the AKC Board and working together to benefit the sport moving forward. As a low-entry breed, she was thrilled to share that they had seven Canaan Dogs represented at their supported entry in Doswell, Virginia in March 2025. Pamela remarked on the collaborative effort that made the event a success – she gave appreciation to Tim Thomas for facilitating an impromptu judge's education and mentoring program, thanked Nancy Fisk, Karen Burgess, Maggi Strouse, and the Virginia Cluster members for their assistance and creative resources and acknowledged the judges for their motivation to learn more about the breed.

Joyce Rowland, Delegate from the Australian Cattle Dog Club of America, highlighted the value and importance of the Darkness to Light® program for the AKC, however reported that 56 percent of Herding Judges had not completed the training by the deadline, prior to it being extended. Since many of the judges are outdoor oriented without frequent computer use or experience, she suggested that the Board and Staff explore alternative training methods to accommodate those who are less inclined to engage in long online sessions. Ideas included leader-led Zoom training, dividing the training into shorter segments, or providing a handbook to facilitate learning in the field.

Harvey Wooding, Delegate from the San Mateo Kennel Club, spoke on behalf of the Parent Clubs Committee, who presented the Pat Laurans Difference Maker Award for the quarter. The three honorees were Carrie DeYoung, Dominic Carota and John Nielsen.

Monica Stoner, Delegate from the Saluki Club of America, announced that the next issue of *Perspectives* will be released in September 2025 with a submission deadline of July 15, 2025. For this issue, she encouraged the Delegates to contribute articles and/or photos that highlight dogs with titles outside the Conformation ring and recent National Specialty events and offered that if a Delegate has an idea for an article, the committee can assist in writing it. She also reminded them that the *Perspectives* newsletter is by and for the Delegates, which allows them to speak up.

Dominic Palleschi Carota, Delegate from the Pharaoh Hound Club of America, called attention to the AKC Humane Fund's \$23,000 donation to the club two years ago during a serious rescue crisis. This funding allowed the club to save 25 dogs, which they did not think would survive. In gratitude, the club later raised \$18,000 to refund the AKC Humane Fund to help other dogs in need. Recognizing the AKC Humane Fund's commitment to save and protect pets, he recommended that clubs apply for grants if they face challenges in their organizations or communities.

Hearing no further business, the Chair adjourned the meeting.

*(One sharp rap of the gavel.)*

(Proceedings concluded at 11:55 a.m. ET.)

***The opinions expressed by the speakers may not necessarily reflect those of The American Kennel Club.***