

American Knife & Tool Institute Special Board of Regents Meeting

Wednesday, October 30, 2009... 1:00 p.m. CDT
Teleconference

AKTI President Goldie Russell (A.G. Russell Knives) called to order the Board of Regents meeting of the American Knife & Tool Institute at 1:20 p.m. CDT, Wednesday, October 30, 2009.

Other AKTI Board of Regents present: Rod and Peggy Bremer (Columbia River Knife & Tool), Clint Kadel and Howard Fox (United Brands), Gil Hibben (Knifemakers Guild), and Bill Raczkowski (Gerber)
Regents absent: CJ Buck (Buck Knives), Les de Asis (Benchmade), Jack Igarashi (Kershaw Knives)
AKTI Advisory Members present: Mike Manrose (Meyerco), Nick Trbovich Jr (Ontario)
Others Present: David Kowalski, AKTI Communications Coordinator, Jan Billeb, AKTI Executive Director.

Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation (CSF)

Jan Billeb explained that AKTI received two invitations from the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation (a coalition member on U.S. Customs' issue): 1) CSF has offered AKTI a display at their annual D.C. fundraiser on October 7th. Approximately 500 people will attend, including 70 Members of Congress. This event will provide a venue to talk to members of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus about support (or provide opportunity for thank you if issue is resolved by then). Nicole Bivens Collinson is willing to develop the display and represent AKTI. CSF had suggested that the display include representative knives donated to their silent auction.

2) CSF invited AKTI to attend and/or be a sponsor at their National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses 6th Annual Summit Oct. 27-30 in McCall, Idaho with the suggestion that this would be an opportunity for the two organizations to get better acquainted and develop an ongoing relationship. This event is expected to be attended by state legislators from approximately 25 different states. Cost to attend the event, including lodging, is \$1,000. Jan contacted CJ Buck who would be willing to consider representing AKTI. Sponsorship amount is flexible.

Questions followed regarding the differences of the two events, whether invitations would be extended every year, who attends, etc. Dave Kowalski and Jan Billeb were directed to get more information.

Rod Bremer moved to approve \$1,000 for Nicole Bivens Collinson's ticket to attend the 2009 Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation's annual dinner. Motion seconded by Clint Kadel and approved unanimously.

Knives (approximately 5-6) to donate to the CSF (a 501 c 3 nonprofit) were discussed. Anyone interested in donating were directed to email Jan Billeb before the end of the day. She and Goldie Russell would review them and contact donors where to send them.

Update on D.C. Development – U.S. Customs Effort

David Kowalski reviewed that last week the emphasis had been on contacting Rep. Waxman (CA), Chair House Committee on Energy & Commerce, due to jurisdictional concerns raised by staffer Michelle Ash during the September 16th D.C. trip by AKTI members and representatives. On the Friday, September 18th conference call with coalition lobbyists it was reported that there would be no objections raised by Energy & Commerce. However, on Monday, the 28th Nicole Bivens Collinson heard from Andy York, Chief of Staff, Senator Pryor (AR), that he had heard concerns over "some issues" raised by Rep. Obey's (WI), Chair House Appropriations Committee, staff. While not certain these "issues" related to Amendment 1447, efforts were directed at reaching out to Congressman Obey through hand-delivered letters to Obey and Price (NC) (Chair, Homeland Security Subcommittee of House Appropriations Committee) from the International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers (long time AKTI member), letter from Chet Krause, founder of Krause Publications, and phone calls from Blade Magazine people. Kevin Keegan from Gerber agreed to call Obey's Chief of Staff.

Nicole Bivens Collinson reported to David earlier in the day that Jeff Ashford, staffer for Homeland Security Subcommittee, that conferees were expected to be named today and would meet tomorrow.

Nicole cautioned again that no victory could be claimed yet. She indicated that her optimism level was 60%, good.

On-going Contract with Sandler Travis & Rosenberg (STR)

Jan Billeb reviewed that she and Goldie Russell had discussed AKTI's contract with Nicole Bivens Collinson of STR while in D.C. They had agreed to an on-going 30 day contract at \$20,000 per month as had been recommended during the September 10, 2009 teleconference call. She noted that should the issue be resolved, for example 5 days after the beginning of the next month's term, that AKTI would be liable for an entire month at \$20,000.

Goldie Russell moved to approve the on-going contract with Sandler Travis & Rosenberg at \$20,000 per month. Motion seconded by Bill Raczowski and approved unanimously.

Discussion of Current Financial Status

Tentative nine month financials were emailed prior to the meeting. Jan Billeb noted that some adjustments needed to be made to contributions and membership. She reported a current asset balance of \$72,535 with another \$20,000 due Sandler Travis & Roseburg for September 15-October 15, leaving a balance of approximately \$45,000 after other bills were paid. If the legislative effort continues beyond October 15, the cash reserves could be quickly depleted. Jan encouraged everyone to pay any outstanding pledges, dues promptly and encourage others to make contributions. David Kowalski will be making additional phone calls of pleas for support. Discussion followed on making direct contact with suppliers, rep groups, printing companies and others and emphasizing the importance to them of AKTI winning this fight.

Gil Hibben moved, Bill Raczowski seconded to adjourn the meeting at 1:58 p.m. CDT.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Billeb
AKTI Executive Director