

# AMERICAN KNIFE AND TOOL INSTITUTE

## Minutes of Board of Regents Meeting

November 19 and 20, 1998

Phoenix, AZ, Courtyard Marriot

Thursday, November 19, 1998 Meeting called to order approximately 1:00 p.m. by meeting facilitator CJ Buck. Regents present: Les de Asis, CJ Buck, Sal Glessner, D'Alton Holder, Bob Miller, Jim Wehrs. Others: Jan Billeb, Executive Director, and Roger Combs, Communications Director. Regent Wally Gardiner arrived approximately 4:00 p.m. The meeting was recessed approximately 6:00 p.m. and reconvened Friday, November 20, 1998 at 8:00 a.m..

These minutes are presented on a per subject basis, not chronologically.

### Board of Regents Business

**Minutes:** De Asis moved, Miller seconded, to approve as written the August 7-8, 1998 Minutes.

**Insurance:** Approval was given for an expenditure of \$1,000 for officers and directors liability and general liability insurance. Holder will put insurance information together and forward to Billeb.

### Administrative Details

**Mailing list:** Questions about the AKTI membership and mailing lists were discussed. It was decided to add an option box to not receive additional mailing to all printed materials and include a note regarding the option when membership cards are sent. Billeb will also have the form on the web site modified. The Board will assess the quantity of those noting objection to additional mailings at a future meeting and determine parameters for use of the mailing list by the AKTI or others.

**Use of Regents' Resources/Personnel:** Wehrs moved that Regents do memo invoicing to AKTI for expenses on specific projects when otherwise not officially solicited (contracted up front), Buck second, carried.

**Logo Use:** Discussion followed about the proper use of the AKTI logo by members in advertising and stationary. Buck will send everyone dummy ad samples using the AKTI logo for approval.

**Accepting membership fees by retailers:** Discussion about pros and cons of retailers offering to handle on site acceptance of AKTI membership. Policy established: AKTI appreciates the efforts of any recruiter of members. We cannot authorize others to act as an agent of AKTI by accepting dues and providing an AKTI receipt. Receipt of AKTI membership will be the membership card sent from the main office.

### Legal

Discussion of information provided by lawyer Mary Ryder Brett on service mark registration. De Asis moved, Wehrs seconded to approve expenditure to have Brett file three applications: 1) American Knife and Tool Institute (words) 2) AKTI logo and 3) akti.org, in the category of trade or business association. Billeb will coordinate with the attorney and Roger will work on the necessary wording changes to the membership and web site materials in the form of a "services

to provide” statement.

### **SHOT Show**

Discussion regarding pros and cons of attending and promotional activities at the SHOT Show February 1-4, 1999. Decisions made: (1) AKTI will not have a booth in '99. (2) Combs will attend 4 days to meet with press and writers and be available for discussions with potential premier members. (3) There will be no press announcement meeting and (4) no Board of Regents meeting during SHOT. (4) Each Regent attending will promote AKTI in their booth. (5) Roger will take a recruiter pad (to be developed by Glessner) to each of the distributors, manufacturers, and ask for their support displaying them. (6) Combs will also attend the Sword Show in Atlanta the same time. Motion by Miller, second by Wehrs, approved.

Other avenues of promotion discussed included: (1) Article in *Blade Trade* magazine which will be mailed in advance and passed out to retailers. (2) *Hunting and Fishing News* allows inserts to possibly 20,000 attendees. Combs will check out details and costs regarding insertions.

**Press kits:** Combs requested company profile for possible use in press kits and newsletter articles

### **Committee Reports**

**Finance:** Wehrs reported that it is too difficult to develop a working budget at this point because of lack of revenue and emphasis needs to be directed to recruiting.

**Public Relations:** No activity reported beyond article for *Blade Trade*.

**Education:** Holder will be doing Optimist and other club presentations in Phoenix. This may provide the foundation for future standardized presentations to be made available to service and social organizations.

**Legislative:** Buck reported no legislation action except following gun suits filed by various cities. Gardiner provided update indicating that in conversation with lawyers they see no precedent in the tobacco suits for use in the gun cases as the tobacco suits were settled voluntarily.

**Volunteers:** Discussion followed about volunteers interested in AKTI committees or projects, on what volunteer can do, potential for volunteers with access to legislative contacts and others, and the need to script volunteers about AKTI. The message to volunteers could include “we want to help you do the right thing,” “we want you to understand what AKTI is about and how can we work with you.” Consensus was it is too early to develop a volunteer base until individual committee chairman have a need. No action taken on volunteer form.

### **Newsletter**

Combs reminded everyone he wants company history, Regents’ photographs and public interest articles to put the first newsletter together. His plan for the first issue is to use it as a recruiting tool, reprinting when necessary, and inform non members about AKTI, the Regents and other companies that are members. Roger’s concept is to have a one page newsletter, two sided for the first issue. Combs intends to have the newsletter ready by the middle of January and for distribution at the SHOT Show. Gardiner suggested this newsletter should also be used as a recruitment tool to the Regents’ suppliers. Also discussed was adding the newsletter to the web site for Ambassadors and keeping the first issue available for reprint and on the web as informative of what AKTI is and AKTI will do.

### **Communication Director - 6 Month Plan of Action**

Roger stressed the importance of everyone communicating with him more and responding to communication drafts with comments and changes.

Discussion and review on Combs's 6 month plan faxed November 15. ??? proceed except item??

The request to subscribe to the clipping service was put on hold until funds are available to consider it. Advertising space was discussed and it was agreed that Combs would draft a letter to publications (to be signed by all regents) asking for complimentary space.

Additional communication and/or recruiting ideas suggested included the possibility of a mailing to A.G. Russell's catalog list of approximately 550,000. Holder will check out the arrangements and costs for that as well as a possible mailing with the Knifemakers Guild.

### **Web Site Issues**

Discussion on the questions of who can link to AKTI's web site, who will AKTI link to and should knife people be posting information about AKTI membership on their sites or collecting AKTI membership. It was agreed that: (1) no other site should collect AKTI membership dues; (2) AKTI will encourage knife people and others to link to the AKTI site as a public service; (3) all Regents with web sites should link to the AKTI site as soon as possible; (4) Combs should ask publications to link to AKTI; (5) AKTI will not link to any commercial entities; (6) AKTI may link to specific articles in publications by reference, but not to the publication's site directly.

Buck moved, Glesser seconded that AKTI will allow and encourage knife people to hot link to AKTI's web site, but AKTI will not link out from its site, motion approved

### **Redefine the Message**

Discussion on issues and positions followed to redefine the message that AKTI wants to present in recruiting members and to the public included:

*"AKTI members have been successful in opposing poorly conceived legislation and effective in educating legislators on knife issues."*

Gardiner provided a synopsis on the New York situation:

NY (1996): 4 state senators from introduced a bill to NY state that would have outlawed all locked-back knives. Legislators did not understand the concept a lock-back knife (and uses) because they had only been presented with one example. Gardiner gathered examples of less than 3" blades to demonstrate and presented information on the economics of industry in the state of New York. A motion was accepted to move the bill back into committee on the basis that there was not enough information on what the knife was, who the industry was and how it would impact on the state of NY. By being placed by in committee in defacto the legislation was defeated in NY.

Buck provided a synopsis on the California situation:

CA : 12024 altered the definition of dirk and dagger to "something that was designed to be capable to inflict great bodily injury" written because the district attorney's office was having problems with the previous definition and getting convictions. 12024 law passed and had to be altered later and amended with two different definitions. The difficult part was getting changes

made was convincing the District Attorneys Association to support the measure. Folding knives were exempted since they are not capable of ready use because they have to be opened. In the second California (AB33141, 1997) example regarding switchblades a pro-active approach was taken to amend the law so that the definition of switchblade does not include a knife designed to open with one hand.

*“AKTI’s mission, goals and projects will change the image of the knife-using community, reduce fear in the minds of the public and police the knife industry.”*

Discussion about how AKTI is the “NRA organization” of the knife community. We don’t have the same issues as the NRA. AKTI will talk about different things that are separate from gun industry issues - not that AKTI how is separate from the NRA.

*“This is what we are going to do for US! We want you to be a part of ‘US’.”*

1. What is AKTI’s role in providing a Unified Voice?

- \*Background information
- \*Source of information
- \*Clearinghouse
- \*United industry as a force
- \*Common knowledge
- \*Grassroots source of information
- \*Web site
- \*Print media
- \*TV
- \*Newsletter

Course of action: (1) Combine information based on experiences and provide to people confronted with legal problems or harassment; (2) provide preprinted guidelines of what to do - if this happens, here is some information to help you deal with problem - will include such items as *“we suggest that you have an attorney review your problem.”* will not deal with an illegal knife issue; (3) offer grassroots contacts in their area; (4) general consumer card of rights.

2. What is AKTI’s role in General Awareness of Knives?

- \*Web site
- \*Newsletter
- \*Free/paid advertisements (print/TV)
- \*Seminars/presentations
- \*Consumer and trade shows
- \*Press releases and articles

3. What is AKTI’s role in Sensible Legislation?

- \*Clearinghouse
- \*Mobilize grassroots
- \*Pro-active

- \*Modify existing legislation
- \*History of successes
- \*Help educate and assist in developing responsible and enforceable legislation

Course of action: Letter to national legislators announcing AKTI

4. What is AKTI's role in Educating
- \*Assembly/rally prep package
  - \*Contact youth organizations, 4-H, boy and girl scouts, FFA, Dare,
  - \*Contact teacher associations
  - \*NRA Youth Education Challenge

### Financial Projections

'98 - Need 15K to meet obligations:

- \$5,000 - ACMA (next week) (CJ)
- \$2,000 - Bear MGC (Jim - call Mon. - ask them to contact Cooper)
- \$2,000 - Camillus (Jim)
- \$5,000 - Benchmade - (next week); \$5,000 balance in couple weeks.

Maybe:

- \$2,000 - AG Russell - (D')
- ? knife material suppliers (D')

'99 - \$200,000 Revenue Goal:

BOR	50,000
Premier (\$2000) (goal 20)	40,000
Associate	
Magazine, club, vendors (\$500) (goal 100)	50,000
Retail locations (\$200) (goal 200)	40,000
Flea market/custom (\$100) (goal 200)	<u>20,000</u>
	200,000

The question was posed if anyone was aware of a foundation that might have an interest in AKTI's efforts.

### Recruitment Plans

Glesser will develop a stand-up 5x7 recruiter pad with forms to tear off for use by members at shows and for retailers to have in their stores. Wehrs will develop a small "support" logo sign for use by knifemakers on show tables or for other members.

Recruiting plan discussed for vendors and suppliers who will receive a personalized letter.

Vendor category: Ask for \$1,000 membership from each.

\*Combined recruiting letter (use signatures of all Regents, when appropriate).

\*\*Individual letters

Steel\*:

3M  
Norton  
Hermes  
Sanduski  
Radiac  
Bader  
Siepman  
ACMA Association list  
Interamco  
Allegheny  
Aemco  
Hitachi  
Aveesta Sheffield:  
Crucible  
Acme  
Sanick

Abrasives:\*

3M  
Norton  
Hermes  
Sanduski  
Radiac  
Bader  
Siepman  
ACMA Association list  
Interamco

Sheaths:

OK Leather  
Berger  
Atchinson  
Burgess

Others:

Hitchner  
American Vermont  
PSM  
Fibdon  
Altamont\*\*  
Peterson Precision  
FeinTool  
Union\*\*  
CPC\*\*  
Vision Plastics\*\*  
Brewer Molding\*\*  
RMI

**Revise Membership Strategies**

Buck moved, Wehrs seconded to approve the membership plaque for premiere members presented by Gardiner, carried. Cost will be \$67.64 per plaque.

Member Categories and Dues: The following revisions were made.

**Dues:**

**Benefits:**

<b>Premier -</b>	\$2,000	Plaque/membership card
<b>Associate</b>		
Vendors -	\$1,000	Letter of appreciation signed by BOR
Sm vendors -	\$ 500	Decal/membership card
Magazines/clubs/ etc.	\$ 500	
Consumer show retailers/Internet/ knife show/flea market	\$ 100	Medallion -counter top Decal - door/window
<b>Ambassador</b>	\$ 15	Membership card and decal

It was noted that the format for the decal and medallion would be a square block logo without the flag. It was decided that lapel pin would not be used as a membership benefit but would be used for promotion at shows or for sale. Jan will revise the membership information sheet and send some to everyone.

The proposed article for Blade Trade was briefly reviewed for comments.

#### **Next Meeting**

The next BOR meeting was scheduled for March 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, 1999, starting at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, going during or after dinner, and ending at 1 p.m. on Thursday in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Buck moved, de Asis seconded to adjourn meeting, approximately 12:15 p.m., passed unanimously.

Minutes submitted:

Jan Billeb  
AKTI Executive Director