

AMERICAN KNIFE AND TOOL INSTITUTE

Executive Committee Meeting (Board of Regents & Advisory Members)

June 12, 2003

Renaissance Waverly Hotel, Atlanta, GA

The Executive Committee meeting of the American Knife and Tool Institute on Thursday, June 12, 2003 was called to order promptly at 9:00 a.m. EDT by AKTI president CJ Buck. Other regents present: Les de Asis, Al Pendray, Bob Miller, A. G. Russell; Advisory members present: Doug Flagg and Jack Igarashi (Kershaw), Jim Furgal (Camillus), R. C. Crisp (United), Thomas Arrowsmith, (WR Case). Others present: Jan Billeb, Executive Director; David Kowalski, Communications Coordinator; Goldie Russell. Regents absent: Walter Gardiner, Mike Jones (for Chad Vincent).

These minutes are formatted on a per-subject basis, not the chronological discussion.

Administrative

Minutes: Les de Asis moved, Doug Flagg seconded to approve the minutes of the February 17, 2003 Executive Committee meeting. Passed unanimously.

Future Meetings: It was agreed that the September 2003 meeting originally scheduled for Chicago would be a teleconferenced meeting on September 16th at 1:00 p.m. Eastern time. The next scheduled physical meeting will be the day after the 2004 Shot Show in Las Vegas.

Bylaws: Bob Miller moved that the bylaws be amended to allow Advisory Members to serve as AKTI officers. Seconded by A. G. Russell. Carried unanimously.

Election: Bob Miller announced the slate of officers of Jim Furgal (Camillus), President and Mike Jones (Gerber), Vice President/Secretary. A. G. Russell moved, Les de Asis seconded, to accept the slate of officers and for the term to begin effective immediately after the annual meeting.

Annual Meeting: The proposed agenda for the Annual Meeting was reviewed with no additions or corrections made.

AKTI Sign: The need for a tabletop sign at collectors' meetings, knife shows, and trade shows was discussed. David Kowalski will work on one without a membership application pad attached. Signs could be placed next to current newsletters which contain membership applications.

Financial

Current Reports: Jan Billeb reviewed the financial reports for the period ending May 29, 2003, commenting on minor changes from the previous year's report. She reported that the accounting firm now requests that AKTI's president also sign the review agreement letter. The 2002 review is done and will be mailed shortly.

Auction Knives: David Kowalski reviewed the current auction knife status. Jan Billeb noted that the auction knives since inception have generated approximately \$3316 in revenue. A. G. Russell moved, CJ Buck seconded to discontinue the AKTI auction knives. Passed unanimously. CJ Buck announced he would auction the Buck 15th anniversary knife he has donated to AKTI at an upcoming Buck event. Kowalski thanked everyone for their generous donations.

501(c) 3 Corporation: Jan Billeb reviewed her findings about costs and procedure to establish a 501(c) 3 non profit corporation as suggested in the report submitted by Bill Stockwell. It was decided to not move forward on this issue at this time.

Invoicing: Jan Billeb noted that AKTI's policy has been to send only one renewal notice to Ambassador and Associate members and that the renewal rate has dropped off drastically in the last year. Some renewals have been received by mailing newsletters to inactive members. It was agreed that three (3) notices would be sent to Ambassadors and Associates.

Organizational Chart: Jan Billeb asked for input or approval on the proposed AKTI organization chart as requested by the accounting firm. It was agreed that the box for the Board of Regents should be moved one level up and a new copy supplied to McGladrey & Pullen.

Legislative – Buck, Chair

Florida: Kowalski reported that Florida Governor Jeb Bush signed the ballistic knife law clarification bill on June 2, 2003 and the law became effective immediately upon signature. After the Florida group established their own organization, he continued to stay involved by emailing updates and calls to action. He maintained the position that AKTI's purpose in supporting the bill was to clarify the definition of ballistic knives (so that definition could not be wrongly applied to automatics, easy-openers, and one-hand openers). AKTI's goal was not to save switchblades and he attempted to present a balanced view of AKTI involvement over the two-year period it took to resolve the issue.

Model Law Legislation: Attorney Dan Lawson was unable to attend the meeting but continues to work on the proposed model law guidelines. Doug Flagg noted that Kershaw's attorney is willing to work with Dan Lawson to help tone down some of the wording.

StateNet Report: Kowalski provided a copy of all laws currently being tracked on StateNet during the first half of 2003 for possible AKTI attention.

Internet Forums: CJ Buck announced he is getting much better responses to AKTI posts on the internet forums and believes it is due to increased credibility.

Attorneys General: David Kowalski had Dan Lawson review a letter he sent to all Attorneys General using the approach of asking if they had a standardized method in their respective state for measuring knife blades. Most states currently have knife laws related to the length of blade, but typically do not detail how to measure them. He will provide a synopsis of the survey results. The aim is to collect the responses, then have AKTI agree on and propose a measuring protocol, even if it is only by posting it on AKTI's website as a resource. The problems in establishing standard measurements related to both cutting edge and stabbing depth were discussed.

Zero Tolerance: Kowalski explained a Savannah, GA case of an outstanding female student being expelled in an unusual case of accidentally having a knife at school. That school board intends to reassess its zero tolerance policy and is expected to move for use of more discretion in future cases. A. G. Russell will get Kowalski information on a school board that completely eliminated the zero tolerance policy. Tom Arrowsmith noted that this issue is the type of thing that will rally or broaden AKTI's audience.

Airline Issues: The case of an automatic knife confiscated in Maine from checked baggage of an Oregon resident returning home was discussed. Kowalski noted that TSA's rules allow individual discretion by security personnel at airports. He acknowledged that Dan Lawson has been very helpful in talking to individual cases and providing information to their attorneys.

Membership - Gardiner, Chair

Memberships: David Kowalski reported there was approximately \$26,000 in outstanding dues from premier and above memberships. A. G. Russell suggested that he and others would be helpful in making phone calls to encourage premier and others to maintain their membership. Kowalski noted that Dexter Russell has decided not to renew indicating they did not believe AKTI membership met their needs. Cheapeake Knife and Tool almost certainly will rejoin. Meyerco and William Henry are very strong prospects. Progressive Team is renewing. Boker USA is renewing.

Dealer Recruitment Plan: Bob Miller discussed the current plan for a retailer recruitment mailing to individual stores. The mailing will include a letter from either Bob Miller or Les Edelstein, an application for membership and an offer for AKTI dollars worth \$25 off an invoice from a participating company. The AKTI dollars will be redeemable at the companies listed on the back (to include: Buck, Case, Kershaw, Moteng, United, Benchmade, Camillus, Procut, Moteng). Kowalski will help refine the plan and letter. It was agreed that the Retailer Associate membership category would be \$100 and this offer would be for an introductory fee of \$50 to join and receive AKTI dollars in the amount of \$25. Jan Billeb will validate the coupons by putting the new member's AKTI membership number on it and return the coupon to the member. The AKTI dollars will include an expiration date for the end of the year or for one year. Whichever participating member received the signed coupon would honor it and

absorb the \$25 amount. Bob Miller estimated the letters will be sent out in the next 4-6 weeks. The renewal for membership will be for a \$100 Retailer Associate Membership.

Membership Categories: Discussion followed about the current AKTI membership categories which basically let a person decide what level of dollar commitment they want to make versus having a set amount or suggesting categories for dealers, collectors, retailers, wholesalers, knife collector clubs, etc. It was agreed that David Kowalski, Jan Billeb and CJ Buck would establish clearer descriptions on each membership category amount and better define benefits associated with each level.

Life Memberships: Goldie Russell volunteered to be the first AKTI life member at \$750.

Publicity - Kowalski, Chair

David Kowalski will be talking to magazine editors about doing a new story on AKTI as it approaches its sixth anniversary. Jan Billeb suggested it was time to redo the ads that publications insert at no cost. Jan Billeb announced that Ambassador member Bob Gillingham, Uniontown, PA, has volunteered to help with some technical aspects of the AKTI website. She had a printed-out copy of the website and suggested anyone interested in reviewing it for changes see her at the AKTI booth during the Blade Show.

Education – de Asis, Jones, Co-Chairs

Jan Billeb and Les de Asis reported that the Education Committee has been contacting collector clubs to obtain information for the AKTI website and to send them materials to distribute at meetings and shows. The committee continues to work on information on workplace safety.

A. G. Russell moved, Les de Asis seconded to adjourn at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Billeb
AKTI Executive Director