

# AMERICAN KNIFE AND TOOL INSTITUTE

## Board of Regents and Advisory Meeting

September 22, 2002

Marriott Suites O'Hare, Chicago, IL

The Executive Committee meeting of the American Knife and Tool Institute on Monday, September 22, 2002 was called to order at 9:00 a.m. CDT by AKTI president CJ Buck. Other regents present: Walter Gardiner, A. G. Russell, Mike Jones (for Chad Vincent); Advisory members present: Les Edelstein (Moteng), Doug Flagg and Jack Igarashi (Kershaw), Jim Furgal (Camillus), R. C. Crisp (United). Others present: Jan Billeb, Executive Director; David Kowalski, Communications Coordinator; Goldie Russell, A.G. Russell Knives; and Attorney Dan Lawson. Regents absent: Al Pendray, Bob Miller, Les de Asis.

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

### Administrative

**Minutes:** Les Edelstein moved, Wally Gardiner seconded to approve the minutes of the May 30, 2002 Executive Committee meeting. Passed unanimously.

**Future Meetings:** The Executive Committee will meet the Monday after the Shot Show on February 17, 2003, in Orlando; location to be announced later. The fall meeting will be announced after the AEPMA conference dates are available and will be the following Monday in Chicago again.

**Committee Update:** Jan Billeb distributed an updated listing of Executive Committee members noting that R. C. Crisp was replacing Deb Garvick as United Cutlery's representative and the addition of Goldie Russell as an additional contact for A. G. Russell Knives.

**Insurance:** Billeb distributed a copy of the Officers & Directors Liability Insurance coverage through Aon Insurance to each member present.

### Financial

**Current Reports:** Jan Billeb distributed the comparative profit and loss statement for 2001 and 2002 as of August 31, 2002. She noted that Ambassador and Associate membership dues were up approximately \$2,500 attributable mainly to the website and Blade Show new members; Premier memberships were down \$5,850, primarily to timing of invoicing; Consulting was up \$2,302.80 which was the expense for the William Stockwell presentation; Legislative Advocacy was down \$6,835.41 and Meeting Expenses were down over \$1,000, partly in thanks to Bob Miller for hosting the Las Vegas meeting in February.

**2001 Yearly Review:** Billeb provided a copy of the accountant's review for 2001 from RSM McGladrey & Pullen along with accompanying letters of arrangement. She reviewed the three areas of internal management the accounting firm pointed out where internal control systems should be implemented: 1) review of monthly bank reconciliation; 2) review of monthly cash disbursements; 3) review of membership billings. She noted that with online banking the president and vice president do have direct access to (1) and (2) above. Dave Kowalski will set up a monthly email of premier memberships to the Regents.

**Memberships:** Dave Kowalski reported on corporate memberships outstanding, indicating he will be doing additional invoicing.

**Auction Knives:** Discussion followed on the value versus effort involved in the internet auction knives. It was agreed that a minimum bid should be set consistent with a realistic value. CJ Buck offered to donate a Buck Centennial Dagger.

### Legislative

**Florida:** Kowalski reviewed the Florida situation and AKTI's position to put the burden of the Florida effort on the Florida group. He will contact Steve Corn to reiterate AKTI's intention to continue as a collection point for fundraising efforts, but AKTI will not be liable for any contractual obligations, and

to discuss the Florida entity structure and need for a complete and accurate accounting of funds. The strategy continues to be to introduce separate legislation to address the issue directly.

**StateNet:** Jan Billeb reviewed the proposed two-year contract with StateNet at \$800 per month, a reduction of \$100 per month and the terms of a competitive bid from NetScan. Les Edelstein moved, A. G. Russell seconded to approve the two-year contract with StateNet. Passed unanimously.

**Model Law Legislation:** Attorney Dan Lawson gave a presentation on a proposed “AKTI Statement of Policy as to Legislation Regarding Knives.” He emphasized that the timing is good due to public awareness of common items that have been prohibited on airlines and the FBI’s position that does not include a definition for knives in their data collection. Lawson described the process as (1) finalizing draft; (2) placing on website; (3) identifying states where there’s a good demographic and socioeconomic likelihood of success; (4) AKTI members present to respective representatives; (5) possible introduction to the American Law Institute. Lawson and Buck will develop a series of steps on the procedure. Lawson will check when the American Law Institute meets and the potential for a presentation. Everyone was encouraged to review the proposed “AKTI Statement of Policy as to Legislation Regarding Knives” for input and comments to Dan Lawson as soon as possible (preferably by October 11<sup>th</sup>.)

### **Membership - Gardiner, Chair**

**Recruiting:** Wally Gardiner gave a review of Bill Stockwell’s presentation and Jan Billeb distributed a summary of the notes. It was agreed that a combined list of prospects would be emailed to the Executive Committee. Members will attempt to tag-team on specific prospects to use any unique personal relationships to encourage AKTI membership. Discussion followed on ideas to increase Ambassador memberships and membership from dealers and collectors.

**Action:** A. G. Russell emphasized the importance of building numbers and offered suggestions for using his mailing list as a basis for implementation. It was agreed that A. G. Russell would do a one-time emailing to his list of 40,000 offering free AKTI memberships as a gift from A. G. Russell Knives. Anyone accepting membership will receive all Ambassador benefits. Wally Gardiner will check out offering collectors some type of insurance with memberships. Les Edelstein agreed to contact Bob Miller and work up ideas on how to approach dealers.

**Life Memberships:** A. G. Russell moved, Wally Gardiner seconded to establish an AKTI Life Membership category at \$750 with the option of having life members’ names listed on the website.

**Honorary Memberships:** It was agreed that an honorary membership should be developed. Wally Gardiner and Jim Furgal will develop guidelines for approval.

### **Publicity - Kowalski, Chair**

Discussion followed on publishing ideas including: an AKTI magazine, contract publishing, Kowalski coordinating writers to do publicity work and publishing the AKTI newsletter four times per year. It was agreed that Kowalski would check with Blade Magazine about inserts and Billeb would put together costs of the newsletter per issue. If costs are under \$2,000/issue it was decided to go to four issues per year.

### **Strategic Planning**

A strategic planning session followed based on the questions provided by Bill Stockwell.

\*What are the three biggest challenges AKTI will face in the next two years?

1. Legislation/Regulation/war on terrorism/homeland defense
2. Membership Recruitment – retention & credibility; news media bias
3. Funds

\*What is the fear that will happen in each of the above?

1. Legislation – over-reaction; prohibition against knives (out of business)
2. Membership – loss of membership, credibility, ability to impact; not growing in numbers
3. Funds – loss of ability to impact

\*What puts pressure on our industry?

Politics, terrorist acts; anti-hunting, PETA; media/consolidation of media; economic cycles; social bias/misinformation about knives.

**Reorganization and Prioritizing of Committee Efforts**

**Membership:** Gardiner (chair); Russell; Edelstein, Kowalski

Immediate priority: Coordination and follow-up of recruiting efforts

**Legislative:** Buck (chair); Lawson, Flagg

Immediate priority: Model legislation – widest possible dissemination and acceptance

**PR/Communications:**

Kowalski (chair)

Immediate priority: Develop materials to use in membership drives

**Education:** de Asis, Jones (co-chairs), Billeb

Immediate priority: Gather information from collectors and others for use on website.

A. G. Russell moved, Gardiner seconded to adjourn at 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Billeb

AKTI Executive Director