

American Knife & Tool Institute
Executive Committee Meeting (BOR & Advisory)

January 31, 2005

Stardust Hotel, Las Vegas, NV

The Executive Committee meeting of the American Knife and Tool Institute on Monday, January 31, 2005 was called to order at 11:00 a.m. PST by AKTI president Jim Furgal (Camillus). Regents present: Les de Asis (Benchmade) (arrived 11:30 a.m.), Mike Jones (for Jason Landmark – Gerber), Jeff Goddard and Jack Igarashi (Kershaw), Tom Arrowsmith (W.R. Case). Advisory members present: R. C. Crisp (United), Les Edelstein (Moteng). Others present: Jan Billeb, Executive Director; David Kowalski, Communications Coordinator; Sal Glesser (Spyderco). Regents absent: A. G. Russell, C J Buck, Eugene Shadley (Knifemakers Guild)

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

Administrative – Jan Billeb, Executive Director

Minutes: Tom Arrowsmith moved, Les de Asis seconded to approve the minutes of the June 3, 2004, June 21, 2004 and June 29, 2004 Executive Committee meetings. Passed unanimously.

Financials: Comparative year-end profit and loss and balance sheets were distributed on January 14, 2005 with the agenda. Jan Billeb reviewed the financial statements noting an increase in individual memberships and explaining that the difference in premier membership was timing of invoicing. From the previous year, postage was increased due to additional mailings to former members; accounting fees had increased; commissions for the communications director were increased as a relationship to increased commissionable memberships, and the net result was a net ordinary income increase of \$20,136.39. She explained that the transfer of the majority of operating funds to a money market account resulted in an increase of almost \$500 in interest income for the year. Mike Jones moved to accept the financial reports as presented, Les de Asis seconded. Passed unanimously.

StateNet Contract: Billeb reported that the StateNet contact had been renewed for two additional years at the same monthly rate of \$800. She had reviewed competitive quotes from two other services which were higher, and they offered additional services AKTI does not require now.

Corporate Membership Plaques: Billeb noted that she had received the AKTI premier wood plaques from Imperial Schrade and there was a sufficient supply to last indefinitely.

Future Meetings: Billeb noted that the next physical meeting will be prior to the Blade Show Thursday, June 2, 2005 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Renaissance Waverly Hotel in Atlanta, with the Annual Meeting scheduled for 5 p.m. Discussion followed with the suggestion that the next SHOT Show meeting be held later in the afternoon, perhaps 2:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. on the last day of the Show, and preferably in a room at the Convention Center or the Hilton to save travel time. Conference call meetings will be announced as needed.

Website: Discussion on the current AKTI website resulted in the consensus that Jan Billeb and David Kowalski would review options for a change of server location and website design to allow both Billeb and Kowalski easier access to make changes. Les Edelstein was thanked for the services his company has provided AKTI for the current hosting and website.

Education – Les de Asis, Chair

Les de Asis explained that the Education Committee had no new projects. He offered AKTI access to a dealer trainer manual Benchmade developed. Tom Arrowsmith volunteered kid's safety information from W. R. Case. Education materials will be incorporated into the new website design as resources from AKTI.

Public Relations – David Kowalski, Communications Coordinator

David Kowalski reported that he continues to provide publications and others with news releases on AKTI's activities. He will work on a story on knife definitions, the questionnaire in the last AKTI newsletter, and what it takes to repeal laws on the federal and state levels, including an estimate on the lobbying expenses involved. Members were updated on the NY retailer situation and the multi-bladed Michigan case. Kowalski reminded everyone that AKTI brochures reviewing achievements are available for distribution in their mailings, with invoices and/or correspondence.

Membership - David Kowalski, Communications Coordinator

Corporate Memberships: David Kowalski reported on new memberships and renewals. Swiss Army Brands has renewed as a Premier Member (11/04); C.A.S. Iberia became a Premier Member (8/04); William Henry Knives became a Premier Member (12/04); and Meyerco agreed to become a Premier Member at the SHOT Show,

NICA Meeting: Either Bob Miller or Steve Corn were expected to provide NICA with an AKTI update, but no report was available at this time. AKTI later learned that NICA members voted at the SHOT Show to renew their Advisory Member status for another year.

Knifemakers Guild: Kowalski announced that the Knifemakers Guild would welcome an AKTI update at their general membership meeting at their show in July. He will coordinate a presenter for the event.

ProCut: Someone questioned whether ProCut was still an AKTI member. Kowalski explained Bob Miller was very supportive of AKTI, including arranging the SHOT Show meeting, and that he was encouraging him to rejoin the Executive Committee at the Advisory level.

Dealer Recruitment Plan: Les Edelstein questioned the status of the AKTI \$ program. Jan Billeb noted he has the artwork from Bob Miller. David Kowalski will check the information he has and work with Edelstein and Miller to firm up the recruiting plan and the mailing.

Legislative

California 653k: Jan Billeb reviewed Chris Micheli's proposal to lobby to clarify the wording of California 653k because of recent court cases. It was agreed to thank Micheli for the proposal, and inform him that AKTI had other priorities to deal with currently and would appreciate his update should the situation require more immediate action.

Knife Definitions: David Kowalski summarized the action behind AKTI asking Attorney Dan Lawson to develop knife definitions as a starting basis for Executive Committee and membership discussion, explaining that the problems AKTI has had to deal have been due to questions or misinterpretations of definitions. He reviewed AKTI's position on the importance of continuing to be proactive after the acceptance of the knife measuring protocol. Kowalski noted that knife definitions will have, in his view, a long-term impact for the knife industry.

For discussion he posed the questions: (1) Does AKTI want to define knives? (2) Which knives should AKTI define? (3) What should the phrasing be for the definitions? (4) What will AKTI do with the definitions? As additional thoughts to these questions, Kowalski suggested that (1) AKTI is currently confined by definitions on the books. (2) The list of terms Dan Lawson used and presented in the Winter 2004 News & Update was developed by the Executive Committee members during the Blade Show meeting. (3) Actual phrasing needs to be carefully examined, acceptable to the Executive Committee as representative of the industry and probably will be in opposition to current definitions on the books since many of the 40-year-old definitions in statutes did not anticipate current knife technology. (4) Once finalized, definitions can be distributed to the 50 state attorney generals, broadcast to the knife community as widely as possible, and then state laws could be searched for possible AKTI initiatives to get definitions revised.

Discussion followed on various additional terms including fixed blade versus non-fixed blade, gravity versus inertia, assisted opening knives versus switchblades and the philosophy of definitions – what it is or what legal definitions have been used.

It was agreed that: The proposed definitions by Dan Lawson be distributed to the Executive Committee by email as a Word document as an attachment. Individual companies would review them, request additional legal input as they desired, and give any comments or suggested revisions to David Kowalski by March 1st. He will collect the information from the Executive Committee, and forward it to Dan Lawson by April 1st. Lawson will be asked to provide updated proposals for approval at the Blade Show Meeting June 2nd.

Les de Asis moved, Tom Arrowsmith seconded to adjourn at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Billeb
AKTI Executive Director