

**American Knife & Tool Institute, Inc.**  
**Board of Regents Meeting**  
Friday, January 22, 2021

The Board of Regents (BOR) meeting of the American Knife & Tool Institute on Friday, January 22, 2021, was called to order at 11:00 am Eastern time via Zoom by AKTI President John Sullivan (W. R. Case). Regents present: Curtis Smith (AOB), Jon deAsis (Benchmade), Kurt Ronacher (Boker) AKTI Vice President, CJ Buck (Buck Knives), Eric Moore (Gerber), and Mark Schreiber (CRKT). Regents absent: Ken Trbovich (Ontario) and Doug Lauer (SOG).

There was a quorum present. Others present: Jan Billeb, AKTI Executive Director, and attorney Dan Lawson.

**Review of AKTI Mission, Goals and Committee Mission and Goals**

**Legislative Committee – CJ Buck, Chair**

CJ Buck reported that the Legislative Committee's mission and objectives did not need any revisions. He reminded everyone that Tremont Strategies was re-engaged in December on both the federal and state level. The Executive Committee reviewed the updated proposed contract with Tremont Strategies, it contained no substantial changes from the previous one, and they recommended it be approved. CJ Buck moved, Kurt Ronacher seconded, to approve the agreement with Tremont Strategies. The motion was approved.

CJ explained that Liesl Sheehan was working with Senator Wyden who plans to reintroduce the Interstate Transport Act, which had passed the Senate in 2018 but stalled in the House and then passed the Senate Commerce Committee in 2019.

The top-tier state initiatives the committee is working on include: Ohio (already signed into law), New Mexico, Pennsylvania, and Washington.

**Membership Committee - John Sullivan, Kurt Ronacher, Co-Chairs**

Kurt Ronacher noted that membership is flat and probably to be expected due to the Covid-19 issues. Discussion followed on encouraging more retailers and distributors to join.

**Marketing Committee – Curtis Smith, Chair**

Curtis Smith thanked those companies that had stepped up to engage more people on the Marketing Committee and encouraged others to contact him. The committee is meeting every three weeks for a half-hour.

Curtis reviewed that the committee had decided that the AKTI branding was in good shape for now and that the current effort would focus on increasing AKTI's audience. A one-year plan to do that on social media was developed with a commitment from brands to provide a giveaway, post once per month, share posts, and send an email once a year to drive people to AKTI's membership page. AOB, CRKT, Boker, Case, and Work Sharp have committed to participate so far.

**Fundraising Committee – Mark Schreiber & Curtis Smith, Co-Chairs**

Mark Schreiber explained that because of the online auction's success last year, the committee plans to continue with the Free to Carry event in August again. The committee will be working on ways to tap into the opportunity that the brand members have to increase participation.

**Industry Support Committee – Mark Schreiber, Chair**

Mark Schreiber reviewed that the committee's name had been changed from Anti-Counterfeiting to Industry Issues to address the broader range of issues that impact the industry and AKTI's members. A press release about the committee, including the new Career Center, was ready to distribute.

**Finance Committee** – Kurt Ronacher, Chair, Executive Committee

Kurt Ronacher reviewed the 12/31/2020 financial report noting that membership revenue was down. CJ Buck moved to approve the report, seconded by John Sullivan. The motion carried.

It was agreed to approve approximately \$150 to upgrade from a free Zoom account for meetings.

**Executive Committee** – John Sullivan

State of the Industry - John Sullivan explained that the uncertainty with the Covid-19 pandemic, the next State of the Industry Report is still in limbo.

Tribute to Les de Asis – Jon de Asis agreed to discuss with his mom Roberta the ideas AKTI had been discussing for a tribute to his dad. These have included an annual celebratory event of the industry at the Blade Show in Les' honor or renaming the AKTI Common Sense Award in his honor.

**Administrative** – Jan Billeb, Executive Director


Mark Schreiber moved, CJ Buck seconded, to approve the AKTI Editorial Guidelines provided.

CJ Buck moved, John Sullivan seconded, to approve the minutes of the Board of Regents meetings of October 29, 2020, meeting.

It was agreed to cancel the in-person meeting scheduled for Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, in March.

The meeting adjourned at 12:25 pm Eastern time.

Respectfully submitted,



Jan Billeb  
AKTI Executive Director