

Approved Minutes
Board of Directors Meeting
AVA: America's Walking Club

Thursday, March 12, 2026, 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM CDST
Location: Video Conference via Microsoft Teams

- 1. Call to Order –Chairman, Carl Cordes:** The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Carl Cordes, at 5:00 PM CDST.
- 2. Roll Call – Secretary:**
 - a. All the sitting officers and the CEO were present.
 - b. All Regional Directors were present except NE_RD Carol Giesecke and RM_RD Christopher Benoche
 - c. DRDs present were MA_DRD Roxie Geiser-Weaver, NW_DRD Pat Jewett, PA_DRD Susi Glass, and SW DRD Susan Noonan. RM_DRD & SC_DRD are vacant.
 - d. Committee Chairs in attendance were App-Jeff Giddings, IT-Mike Green, Programs-Diane Evans and Publicity-Susan Fine.
 - e. AVA National
Office: Erin Grosso and Marian DeVaul.
 - f. Guests included Ed Hainline, Helen Hull, Mike Schwencke, Dawn Gruber, Kathy Piffat, Joe Piffat, Wayne Knapp, and Chris Mellon.
- 3. Approval of Agenda:**
 - a. With no corrections, the agenda was accepted.
- 4. Approval of Minutes of December 18, 2025, Board Meeting:** Chairman, Carl Cordes declared the minutes accepted with no corrections.
- 5. CEO's Report – Henry Rosales:**
 - a. Liability insurance was secured. We were unable to find a different insurer, but we were able to reduce the cost to \$24,964.00. The aggregate amount is \$3,000,000.00.
 - b. Thanks to all who came to the Texas Trail Roundup (TTR) in San Antonio. There were 258 walkers from 13 countries and 25 states. This was up from last year by 80-100 people. The biggest growth came from the Texas region.
 - c. Henry requested that Board members to send him your room information and if you need transportation while in Rapid City, SD for the June 5, 2026, Board of Directors meeting. Henry is checking the costs and options for transportation, but he needs to know how many will be attending and need transportation.
 - d. Regarding the other 50th Anniversary events, Henry would like to know which Board members are attending which events. All events will have a representative from the Board attending, but the points of contact at the



events would like to know who is attending so they can be acknowledged and so they can say a few words about our organization and present appreciation gifts.

- e. The mobile Walk App is included in my report. There will be a full report at the June 5, 2026, meeting. Everything is still on budget. Looking for 10 to 20 people to interview for selection to provide input for the front-end design of the app. Design work would run from now through the end of April. Please let Henry know if you would like to volunteer or know someone who would like to volunteer. This portion of the development could be completed between May and early July.
- f. There is confirmed club interest for the Silver Sneakers Partnership. We are planning a call on April 8, 2026, for a follow-up meeting with Silver Sneakers to go over the details on the program. We will not be getting the whole \$4.00 per walker. The AVA would receive \$2.75 for each walker, and the AVA would send \$1.25 to the club and would keep \$1.50 for administrative costs. There is a question about if the clubs could charge extra for the stamp, this is being explored. Silver Sneaker members would not be charged anything by the club if they come to a club walk. This applies only to clubs that agree to host Silver Sneaker walkers. This will be explained in detail at the next webinar.
- g. Henry would like to revisit the Americaspiad as well as the IVV Congress of Delegates. Would like hold both the Americaspiad and the IVV Congress of Delegates at Crazy Horse in June 2028.
- h. The AVA received a letter from the IML for the Texas Trail Roundup, through the AVA, to participate in voting regarding Mongolia's candidacy for IML membership and the proposed removal of Beijing, China from the IML.
- i. The AVA will take part in the King William Parade. If anyone would like to participate, please contact Henry.
- j. The Convention Committee has a recommendation for the 2027 Convention. It will be discussed later in the meeting.
- k. Letter of "Support for Transportation Alternatives" in packet, urging congressional leaders not to defund transportation alternatives. There is a long list of businesses and non-profits supporting this action.
- l. Finance report will be deferred to Finance Chair, Seth.
- m. Total AVA clubs are 158. Clubs deactivating must turn over their walk directions and maps to another club, state organization, Regional Director or the National Office.
- n. A grant application has been submitted to AARP for a grant to help fund the Walk App. Also, we are preparing grant applications to fund the walk app for Texas Parks & Wildlife, Walk SA, Impact San Antonio, and Economic Development Council.

6. Old Business

- a. **Walk App Update:** App Development Chair, Jeff Giddings, advised that he has nothing to add to his report. His report was not included in the



meeting packet so he will resend the report to Henry for inclusion at a later meeting.

7. New Business

a. Discuss possible hosting of international events in 2028.

i. **Americaspiad:** To be approved by IVV Americas and Oceania and we must prepare a proposal by the end of March. This would be a smaller version of an Olympiad. It would be a minimum of 2 days but must have 20K options. Swimming could be optional and biking is required. We are suggesting Crazy Horse as a location for both the Americaspiad and the IVV Congress of Delegates. This would be the first Americiaspiad.

1. Discussion followed. Options are either, both or none.
2. Vice-Chair, Ed McCabe, motioned “to pursue both events”. The motion was seconded by Finance Chair, Seth Werner. The motion passed unanimously.

ii. **IVV Congress of Delegates:** See the above notes as they apply to this item too.

b. **IML Actions:** CEO, Henry, earlier in the meeting, advised that the AVA is a member of the IML due to its sponsorship of the Texas Trail Roundup IML event. As such, the AVA gets to vote on IML proposals. Chairman, Carl Cordes, introduced the proposals that need to be voted on. The Board would be voting to advise Henry on how to vote. There will be no motions, only consensus.

i. **Mongolia Candidate Membership in the IML:** Accepted by consensus

ii. **Beijing Expulsion from IML for infractions of the rules:** Accepted by consensus.

c. **Letter of support for Transportation Alternatives:** This is a letter that has gone to congress to support bicycling and walking infrastructure. The letter is a living document. The issue is whether the AVA should be a signatory organization to the letter.

i. PA_RD, Holly Pelking moved “that the Board support this letter in support of transportation alternatives and be a signatory on there”. The motion was seconded by SE_RD, Jeanne Stokes. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Officer Reports

a. **Chairman:** His report was included in the packet. Accepted as submitted.

b. Finance Chair Report (Unaudited Preliminary 2025 Year End Financials) – Finance Chair, Seth Werner

i. Finance report has been sent out. Found an accounting error in 2024 that made the “wages, benefits & taxes” line item for 2024 be underreported by \$33,000.00. This changed the overall impact of 2024 to 2025. Instead of us increasing salary wages & benefits



from 2024 to 2025, the number decreased by 3.7 percent. For transparency, the report has been corrected and reissued.

- ii. Recommendations are:
 - 1. That the AVA should fully support the Silver Sneakers Partnership. Will be following up with Henry with recommendations.
 - 2. We should be encouraging clubs to create knowledge-based repository for club resources, software, programs, and ideas to help other clubs.
- iii. Discussion followed. No action was taken.

9. Committee Reports:

a. Award Recognition (Karen Kaufman)

- i. The committee did meet in February. Request RDs to refer people interested in serving on the committee.
- ii. Chairman, Carl Cordes mentioned that Committee Chairs needed to send their committee members names to CEO Henry as there are forms that the committee members need to sign.

b. Convention Committee: (Jerry Wilson)

- i. This discussion is regarding the 2027 AVA Biennial Convention, subtitled: "Walking Week, Walkers Socializing, Workshop Presentations, and Legislation. We want to get people to walk.
- ii. At 2025 convention, three Visitors' Bureaus made presentations to encourage the 2027 convention at their location. The locations were Norman, OK; Rogers, AR; and Springfield, MO. Springfield received the most votes.
- iii. All three sites were visited by the Convention Committee in November and December 2025. The Trail master visited all three sites to explore trail options.
- iv. The committee is recommending Springfield, Missouri. The proposed dates are Monday, June 28 through Friday, July 2, 2027. Prior weekend pre-convention walks, offsite, with Monday, June 28 pre-convention walk, or allow existing area walks, and soft registration opening and merchandise sales. Tuesday, June 29, a convention walk in Springfield, and an evening welcome social in Springfield. June 30 and July 1, Convention walks, Vendor tables, workshops and legislation sessions. July 1 will be our gala dinner and Hall of Fame Ceremonies. July 2 & July 3 post-convention walks, and a community walk combined with a post-convention walk and possibly some July 4 celebrations in Springfield or off-site.
- v. Reasoning, Springfield received the most votes. Convention Hotel is large enough to get most of the attendees into one location. A premier location for Tuesday's social is located at the host hotel. Sufficient meeting space and free space is available to the AVA. The location allows up to 3 walks starting and ending at its location and there is sufficient free parking for attendees. The hotel is pet



friendly, and at a reasonable cost, which includes free breakfast. All Springfield convention routes will be new routes.

- vi. Discussion followed.
 - vii. The committee is putting forth a motion to hold the 2027 AVA Biennial Convention in Springfield, Missouri on the dates of June 28 through July 2, 2027, with pre-convention events on June 30 and July 1 and post-convention events on July 2 and July 3, 2027. This motion is from Committee and does not need a second. The motion passed in the majority. There were two dissents.
- c. **Governance (Carol Giesecke)** There was no report.
- d. **(Ad hoc) New Club Model Study (Holly Pelking)**
- i. Our objective is to determine how to work with clubs and individuals to maintain walks when a club decides to disband and what rights and responsibilities the club and individuals would have and what rights and responsibilities individuals would have if they didn't want to form an AVA club.
 - ii. We have looked at by-laws. We would like to replace the word "club" with the work "entity".
 - iii. Holly would like to request a member of the Governance Committee be a liaison to this committee.
 - iv. We have received interest in serving on this committee from our article in the "Checkpoint."
 - v. We are trying to define what this new entity would be called and what it would do.
 - vi. A requirement of the entity would be that the person be a member of the AVA.
 - vii. Discussion followed. No action was taken.

10. Regional Director Reports or Comments:

- i. Secretary: Looking forward to New Zealand/Australia Trip.
- ii. Finance Chair: Looking forward to the Atlantic Region Conference next week.
- iii. AT_RD: Hope to see some of you in Williamsburg next week.
- iv. MA_RD: The brochure for the Mackinaw Bridge Walk on September 7 is out. Twenty-five to thirty people have pre-registered for the Mid-America Walking Weekend to be held June 19 through June 21, 2026. You can pre-register for the Mid-America Walking Weekend until the end of May.
- v. PA_RD: Looking forward to the 50th anniversary event that the Bay Bandits are doing in San Francisco. Theme is 50 works of art for 50 years of AVA. Pre-registration required for walking. Trying to get local clubs to add group walks prior to the Bay Bandits walk. There will be a post walk too.
- vi. SC_RD: No info to report on our 50th Anniversary Event in October.



- vii. SE_RD: Looking forward to celebrating The Happy Wanderers' 35th Anniversary on Saturday and participating in their Deltona walk on Saturday, and another walk on Sunday, too.
- viii. SW_RD: Just had the TVA meeting in Ft. Worth and those were interesting walks and they are year-rounds.
- ix. Chairman: Will be sending a spreadsheet to identify who will be available at each of the 50th Anniversary events. I will be attending the first Oceaniapiad in Australia.

11. Member Comments (Deputy Directors & Guests): No Comments.

12. Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made by PA_RD Holly Pelking. SE_RD Jeanne Stokes seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 P.M. CDST.

The next Board Meeting will be June 5, 2026, Tentative 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM MDST, Rapid City, SD

