

American Kennel Club, Inc.
MEETING of the BOARD OF DIRECTORS
AKC Offices at 8051 Arco Corporate Dr.
Raleigh, NC
May 11-12, 2026

The Board convened on Monday, May 11, 2026, at 8:33 a.m. Eastern Time.

Present in the Raleigh Office: Dr. Thomas Davies (Chairman), Dr. Michael Knight (Vice Chairman), Ms. Gina DiNardo (President & CEO), Dr. Carmen Battaglia, Mr. Dominic Carota, Ms. Sally Fineburg, Mr. Eduardo Fugiwara, Dr. Charles Garvin, Mr. Steven Hamblin, Mr. Jason Hoke, Mr. Dan Smyth, and Mr. Robin Stansell. Ms. Sylvia Thomas and Ms. Sue Goldberg joined via video conference.

The Executive Secretary and the Chief Financial Officer were also present.

April Minutes

Copies of the April 13-14, 2026 Board Meeting minutes had previously been provided to all Directors for review.

Upon a motion by Dr. Davies, and seconded by Dr. Garvin, the Board VOTED (unanimously) to approve the April 2026 Board Meeting minutes.

President's Update

Ms. DiNardo reported that AKC is continuing to receive interest from numerous foreign national registries and kennel clubs about expanding recognition of pedigrees and opportunities for cooperation with AKC.

AKC has recently signed mutual cooperation agreements with the New Zealand Kennel Club and with the Korea Kennel Federation. Meanwhile preparations are continuing for AKC's first internationally sanctioned dog show, in Mexico City this November.

Closer to home, AKC is making preparations for AKC's own USA 250 celebration in Philadelphia, on June 5-7. *AKC Celebrates USA 250* will offer three days of canine sports in a family-friendly educational environment at the Marine Parade Grounds at the Philadelphia Navy Yard. The festival is free to the public and offers interactive canine educational activities, and a mini AKC Meet the Breeds® event alongside the AKC Diving Dogs Team Challenge, the AKC Agility Premier Cup, and the AKC Team Agility Challenge – all of which will be broadcast on ESPN as part of their USA 250 festivities.

Legal Update

Heather McManus, VP & General Counsel, and Patricia Hines, Corporate Counsel – Litigation, participated in this portion of the meeting.

The Board reviewed the Legal Status update as of May 2026.

Quarterly Update on Communications, Social Media & Digital

Brandi Hunter Munden, VP of Public Relations and Communications, joined this portion of the meeting via video conference. She presented an update highlighting the collective achievements of the Communications, Social Media, and Digital Content teams in Q1.

Unique Clips Evaluated in Q1: 15,387 (+19% from 12,921 in 2025)

Q1 Totals Comparison

Year	Clips Evaluated
2023	9,162
2024	11,263
2025	12,921
2026	15,387

*Numbers and values provided by media monitoring platform Notified.

Media Coverage Highlights Resulting from Proactive Pitches:

Date	Media Outlet	Subject
1/2	<i>Yahoo! Life</i>	New Breeds
2/7	<i>CBS</i>	AKC Meet the Breeds®
3/18	<i>TODAY Show</i>	Most Popular Breeds
3/18	<i>Associated Press</i>	Most Popular Breeds
3/18	<i>WRAL</i>	Raleigh's Most Popular Breeds

- Ongoing media pitching executed to key audiences with stories that speak to positive qualities of AKC purebreds and breeders. Distributed 12 press releases to appropriate media outlets.
- Promoted all major AKC events and broadcasts on ESPN with press releases and media alerts.
- Continued positioning the American Kennel Club and its spokespeople as the expert on all things dog.

Q1 Performance Highlights

- 7.19% increase in media relations and press coverage in Mandarin language and Spanish language publications.

- 9.1% increase in the media visibility of our Chief Veterinary Officer (+2.5% from Q4 2025)
- Maintained a 97% positivity rating.
- Media coverage of AKC Affiliates (AKC Reunite, AKC MoD, AKC Humane Fund and AKC CHF) on par with Q1 2025.

AKC Education Q1 Review

Ashley Jacot, VP, Education, participated in this portion of the meeting. She presented Q1 highlights for the Education Department.

AKC Canine College (AKC CC)

In Q1 2026, the AKC CC developed and published 6 new courses. The Learning Management System (LMS) now hosts 521 courses, totaling 1,621 modules.

AKC CC Breed-Specific Courses

In Q1, six new breed-specific courses were released, two breed-specific courses were updated, four breed courses are under Parent Club review, and seven new breed courses are in development or queued. In Q1 2026, 694+ course enrollments were recorded, with 18 days remaining in the quarter, representing approximately a 4.7% increase over Q1 2025.

Required Judge's Exams

As of March 13, 2026, in Q1, 2,100 exam enrollments were purchased, which included 812 breed exams, 422 judge recertification exams, 225 performance exams, and 649 CGC Evaluator exams.

Expanding Reach Through Courses, Campaigns, and Cross-Promotions

AKC CC is looking to deepen cross-promotion across AKC's platforms and services, creating a more connected ecosystem to drive learner engagement while unlocking new revenue opportunities for other areas of the business. AKC CC currently features targeted placements linking learners to relevant AKC products and services, including the AKC Shop, AKC Pet Insurance, AKC DNA, AKC GoodDog Helpline, and more.

Breeder Development Support

In Q1 2026, three webinar sessions were hosted and three more are currently planned for Q2.

- OFA Testing and the Breeder's Commitment to Canine Health
- A Breeder's Blueprint, the Breed Standard
- Breeding Quality, Healthy Dogs – Selection that Epitomizes the Breed
- Troubleshooting Canine Infertility in Females (*scheduled*)
- Neonates: The Critical Period (*scheduled*)
- [June 2026 session – TITLE TBD (*scheduled*)]

AKC Meet the Breeds® (MTB) 2026

The Public Education team received over 300 art contest entries from around 32 different schools this year. The artwork of 100 finalists and four winners was displayed at MTB. The four winning pieces are being displayed at the AKC Museum of the Dog for the next few months.

The Education team also ran the popular AKC Patch Program at the event, with over 500 families participating.

Other highlights include:

Bailey's Birthday Surprise: This children's picture book, written by the AKC Public Education team and illustrated by Kathleen Stack, is scheduled for completion at the end of June, with printing planned for Q3.

Pee Wee Patch Program: This program is being expanded for ages 3-6.

RDO Coloring Book Update: The Education team has developed a plan to update the book's language and content to provide clearer, more comprehensive information about responsible dog ownership, along with refreshed illustrations that promote inclusivity.

Breed Posters: The Public Education collection of dog breed posters has grown to approximately 130 and continues to expand.

AKC Library and Archives: Work this quarter focused on improving access to collections, strengthening internal workflows, and more effectively supporting researchers. L&A is moving toward more sustainable, accessible, and user-centered services.

Webinars: In Quarter 1 of 2026, AKC Education hosted ten webinars for 1,262 participants, bringing the total number of participants to 84,798 since March 2020.

AKC Groomer Program: In Q1, the AKC Dog Grooming Program continued to implement process improvements designed to streamline the user experience, reduce administrative burden, and strengthen margin performance across existing offerings.

National Dog Groomers Association of America: NDGAA membership certificates have been transitioned to a fully digital format aligned with updated branding. Campaigns are underway for improving member retention and expanding new membership.

National Certified Master Groomer Program: Many of the program updates initiated in Q3 focused on the National Certified Master Groomer (NCMG) program, which includes both in-person and virtual evaluations. Given the number of customer and evaluator touchpoints, efforts have centered on simplifying the experience while maintaining the program's position as a leading industry certification.

IT Transformation Plan – Update

Since the October 2025 update, AKC's IT Transformation program has moved from planning into formal execution. Following a competitive evaluation process, AKC selected BDO as its transformation partner. The contract has been fully executed, the program kickoff has been completed, and structured interviews and discovery activities with leadership and key stakeholders are now underway.

These steps mark a significant transition from analysis and roadmap development to active delivery of a multi-year business and technology transformation. The program is now focused on establishing a shared understanding of current-state challenges, aligning leadership on future-state objectives, and defining a sequenced, executable roadmap that addresses business alignment, cost, risk, and delivery effectiveness. BDO's timeline for the first phase of the effort is expected to take seven months.

FINANCE**Preliminary Financial Statements (Unaudited) March 31, 2026**

Ted Phillips, Chief Financial Officer, reported on preliminary financial statements for the first quarter ending March 31, 2026. This period reported a Net Operating Loss of \$796K, primarily due to registration revenue trailing Q1-2025 by 11%. Q1-2026 NOL excludes an investment spend rate allocation of \$710K. Q1- 2026 NOL represents 4% of operating revenues, the same as Q1 2025, indicating financial stabilization across the two comparative periods. The 2026 Q1 vs 2025 Q1 results reported lower operating revenues of \$1.5MM, or 6%, and lower operating expenses of \$1.7MM, or 7%. Donations to AKC affiliates are on budget and are funded by the matching use of investment funds.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Mari-Beth O'Neill, VP, Sport Services, joined this portion of the meeting.

Foundation Stock Service® (FSS®) Guidelines – AKC Citizen Science Task Force Recommendations

The Citizen Science Task Force has submitted recommendations to modify the Foundation Stock Service® Guidelines as follows:

1. FSS® breed Parent Clubs will annually submit a report about their progress and status: For FSS® breed Parent Clubs, if there is a lapse of three years in communication between the Sports Services Department and the designated Parent Club, the club will no longer be considered representing the breed.
2. One of the criteria for a breed to be considered for full recognition is that there must be minimum of ten unique Parent Club households owning dogs that have earned AKC titles.
3. The AKC Communications Department will develop a 12-month media and social media plan for clubs of newly recognized breeds. This plan will serve as a practical roadmap to

help clubs build visibility, generate interest, and raise public awareness for the breed, with AKC offering guidance and support to assist clubs.

Upon a motion by Mr. Hoke and seconded by Ms. Fineburg, the Board VOTED (In favor: Dr. Davies, Dr. Knight, Mr. Carota, Ms. Fineburg, Mr. Fugiwara, Dr. Garvin, Ms. Goldberg, Mr. Hamblin, Mr. Hoke, Mr. Smyth, Mr. Stansell, Ms. Thomas. Abstained: Dr. Battaglia) to approve the recommended modifications.

These modifications to the Foundation Stock Service® Guidelines are effective June 1, 2026.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was an EXECUTIVE SESSION to discuss business matters.

Russian-Bred Dogs

It was reported out that the Board VOTED to repeal the ban on registering Russian-born dogs.

Trial Board Administration

It was reported out that the Board VOTED to establish a Board committee to review Trial Board member applications and adherence to the *Trial Board Member Requirements & Guidelines*. The Board appointed three Board members to the committee: Mr. Dan Smyth, Mr. Dominic Carota, and Ms. Sue Goldberg.

Government Relations Update First Quarter 2026

Sheila Goffe, Executive Secretary and VP, Government Relations, updated the Board on quarterly and year-to-date Government Relations and advocacy highlights. Updates included key issues, coalition building, legislative and regulatory trends, advocacy and educational outreach at the state and federal levels, successes and challenges, and recent alerts, publications and new resources for dog owners, lawmakers and advocates.

AKC Community/Economic Impact

In March, GR introduced newly researched studies of AKC economic and community impact figures for all 50 states. This newly revised resource utilizes survey data of expenditures in local communities by exhibitors in 2025 at AKC Conformation, Companion and Performance events. On average, AKC exhibitors spend approximately \$982 in a local community during a dog show weekend.

AKC Impact by State reports provide data on the positive impact that AKC affiliates, clubs, and events have in each state. This is valuable information to share with lawmakers, local media, chambers of commerce and other community entities to educate the public about the positive impact that AKC has in every community we touch.

Each state summary includes a broad range of information including:

- Economic impact of AKC dog shows.
- The number of AKC dog clubs and events by state.
- AKC Reunite Disaster Relief Trailer and K-9 Officer donations by state.
- AKC Canine Health Foundation (AKC CHF) Research grants and dollars by state.

The full report is available in the AKC Government Relations online toolbox.

Legislative/Regulatory Tracking

As of April 24, 2026, Congress and legislatures in 33 states and the District of Columbia are in session.

The AKC GR team is currently monitoring more than 2,500 active bills and regulations at the local, state and federal level that could impact responsible dog ownership, the health and well-being of dogs, the rights of dog owners, and/or the interests of the sport and the American Kennel Club.

To date in 2026, GR has prepared and published more than 100 legislative alerts and provided direct advocacy to lawmakers or written and/or oral testimony on more than 85 measures.

By volume, the most common types of bills monitored in Q1 2026 related to:

Cruelty/ Breeder Restrictions	268	22%
Working Dogs	241	20%
Veterinary	203	17%
Hunting/Land Use	186	15%
Animal Control/Dangerous Dogs	174	14%

The remainder of bills fell into other, smaller categories, including performance events, rescue/shelters, enforcement actions, service dogs, retail and other bills. This illustrates the broad range of canine legislation introduced and tracked by the GR team.

Administrative/Implementing Regulations

AKC GR also tracks administrative (implementing) regulations and rule changes impacting dogs. In Q1, GR monitored 688 active regulatory proposals: 15 federal; 673 at the state level.

By far, the most common regulatory category continues to be *Hunting/Land Use* (383 total; 54% of measures tracked). Regulations regarding *Veterinary Medicine* (130; 18%) are also common. *Veterinary Professions* are third with (85; 12%), *Dogs in Public* are fourth with (50; 7%). The last two categories are *Other Canine Policy Issues* (43; 6%) and *Public Health* with (24; 3%) round out the top six specific categories.

New Breed for Foundation Stock Service® – Lucas Terrier

The Foundation Stock Service® (FSS®) Committee recently approved a petition for the Lucas Terrier to be accepted into the FSS® Program.

COMPANION & PERFORMANCE

Doug Ljungren, EVP, Sports and Events; Mari-Beth O'Neill, VP, Sport Services; Lisa Liggins, Administrative Director, Obedience, Rally, and Tracking; Caroline Murphy, Director of Performance Events; and Douglas Hurley, Director of Agility, joined this portion of the meeting.

Parent Club Request for Three-Quarter Jump Height in Obedience – Norfolk Terrier

The Norfolk Terrier Club has submitted a request to have the regular jump height requirement in Obedience lowered to three-quarters the height of the dog at the withers.

This change requires an amendment to the *Obedience Regulations* and may be approved by a vote of the Board.

Upon a motion by Ms. Fineburg and seconded by Dr. Battaglia, the Board VOTED (In favor: Dr. Davies, Dr. Knight, Dr. Battaglia, Mr. Carota, Ms. Fineburg, Mr. Fugiwara, Dr. Garvin, Mr. Hamblin, Mr. Hoke, Mr. Smyth, Mr. Stansell, Ms. Thomas. Absent: Ms. Goldberg) to approve lowering the regular jump height requirement for Norfolk Terriers to three-quarters the height of the dog at the withers.

This change is effective June 1, 2026.

Agility – Allowing the Wall Jump in all Classes

Staff presented a recommendation to modify the *Agility Regulations* to allow all AKC licensed Agility clubs to use the wall jump as an optional piece of equipment in all AKC Standard and Jumpers with Weave classes (but not allowed in FAST or T2B). The wall jump may replace the panel jump or be substituted for a spread jump (triple, double, ascending or the broad jump). The wall jump may only be taken one time in Standard and Jumpers with Weaves classes.

Upon a motion by Dr. Garvin, seconded by Ms. Fineburg, the Board VOTED (In favor: Dr. Davies, Dr. Knight, Dr. Battaglia, Mr. Carota, Ms. Fineburg, Mr. Fugiwara, Dr. Garvin, Mr. Hamblin, Mr. Hoke, Mr. Smyth, Mr. Stansell, Ms. Thomas. Absent: Ms. Goldberg) to waive standard procedure to vote on the recommendation immediately.

Upon a motion by Dr. Garvin, seconded by Ms. Fineburg, the Board VOTED (In favor: Dr. Davies, Dr. Knight, Dr. Battaglia, Mr. Carota, Ms. Fineburg, Mr. Fugiwara, Dr. Garvin, Ms. Goldberg, Mr. Hoke, Mr. Smyth, Mr. Stansell, Ms. Thomas. Abstain: Mr. Hamblin) to modify the *Agility Regulations* to allow use of the wall jump as an optional piece of equipment.

This change is effective August 1, 2026.

Pointing Breed Field Trials – Retrieving Test

The Board considered a recommendation to allow clubs the option to host a retrieving test at Pointing Breed Field Trials. This is a pass-fail test where dogs that pass earn one retrieving credit which counts toward earning a Field Championship (FC) or Amateur Field Champion (AFC) title.

This is a change to the *Standard Procedures for Pointing Breeds* and may be approved by a vote of the Board. If approved, the change will become effective November 1, 2026.

This will be discussed further at the July Board meeting.

CAT and Fast CAT® – Clarifications & Updates

The Board considered a series of nine technical clarifications/updates to the *CAT and Fast CAT® Regulations* designed to offer clearer guidance to exhibitors and host clubs. Changes made to the *CAT and Fast CAT® Regulations* and may be made by a vote of the Board. If approved, the changes would be effective November 1, 2026.

This will be discussed further at the July Board meeting.

Lure Coursing – Allowing FSS® Breeds to Earn Prefix Titles

The Board considered a recommendation to allow Foundation Stock Service® (FSS®) breeds to earn prefix titles in Lure Coursing. FSS® breeds have been eligible to earn prefix titles in Companion events.

This is a change to the *Lure Coursing Regulations* and may be made by a vote of the Board. If approved, the recommendation would become effective upon the completion of programming.

This will be discussed further at the July Board meeting.

CONFORMATION

Doug Ljungren, EVP, Sports & Events; Tim Thomas, VP of Conformation; Mark Desrosiers, Director Event Programs; and Guy Fisher, Director of Club Development, participated in this portion of the meeting.

At the January 2026 Board meeting, the staff was directed to study ways to improve scheduling of Conformation dog shows. Following its review of the memorandum presented by staff concerning the scheduling of Conformation dog shows at the April 2026 meeting, the Board directed staff to further pursue potential rule and policy changes discussed within the memorandum and/or emanating from its discussion.

Required Number of Rings for Conformation Dog Shows

The Board reviewed a proposal to adopt a *Minimum Number of Rings Policy* to establish the requirement for All-Breed and Limited-Breed dog shows to provide a minimum of one ring per 150

entries, inclusive of all Conformation classes/competitions offered by the club. Staff was directed to forward the proposal to the Delegate All-Breed Clubs Committee for discussion at its June meeting and to provide feedback for the Board's consideration.

This will be discussed further at the July Board meeting. If the recommended changes are approved at that time, the effective date would be January 1, 2027.

Group and Best in Show Judges

The Board reviewed a proposal to amend current Board policy to prohibit judges assigned to the regular Group or Best in Show competitions from being assigned to judge the Four-to-Six Month Beginner Puppy Competition or FSS® Open Show on the same day. Staff was directed to forward the proposal to the Delegate All-Breed Clubs Committee for discussion at its June meeting and to provide feedback for the Board's consideration.

This will be discussed further at the July Board meeting. If the recommended changes are approved at that time, the effective date would be January 1, 2027.

Conformation Judges Daily Limit

The Board reviewed proposals concerning the daily limit for Conformation Judges to either: (1) lower the daily limit for all Conformation Judges from 175 to 150 entries, or (2) maintain the 175 entry daily limit for Conformation Judges, with the caveat that judges assigned to a regular Group or Best in Show are limited to 150 entries per day inclusive of All-Breed, Junior Showmanship, Sweepstakes, Futurity, Four-to-Six Month Beginner Puppy Competition and FSS® Open Show assignments.

Staff was directed to forward the proposals to adopt the *Judges Daily Limit for Group and Best in Show Judges Policy* to establish the maximum number of entries that may be assigned to judges assigned to a regular Group or Best in Show at Conformation dog shows may not exceed 150 on the day, inclusive of All-Breed, Junior Showmanship, Sweepstakes, Futurity, Four-to-Six Month Beginner Puppy Competition and FSS® Open Show assignments to the Delegate All-Breed Clubs and Dog Show Rules Committees for discussion at its June meeting and to provide feedback for the Board's consideration. .

This will be discussed further at the July Board meeting. If the recommended changes are approved at that time, the effective date would be January 1, 2027.

Santa Ana Valley Kennel Club 3rd Show Request

Santa Ana Valley Kennel Club has requested approval to hold a 3rd show at the Industry Hills Exposition Center in the City of Industry, CA on week 39. From the Industry Hills Exposition Center, it is 368 straight-line miles and 446 driving miles (7+ hrs. driving time) from the closest shows in Carson City, NV. The distances do not meet the Limited Number of Events isolated criteria.

This memo provides the Board with information related to the club's request for an exception. The recommendation is to approve the Santa Ana Valley Kennel Club's request for an exception to the Limited Number of Events Isolated Criteria to hold a 3rd show.

This recommendation is an exception to Board Policy and may be made by a vote of the Board.

Upon a motion by Mr. Smyth, seconded by Ms. Fineburg, the Board VOTED (In favor: Dr. Davies, Dr. Knight, Ms. Fineburg, Mr. Fugiwara, Ms. Goldberg, Mr. Hamblin, Mr. Hoke, Mr. Smyth, Mr. Stansell, Ms. Thomas. Opposed: Dr. Battaglia, Mr. Carota, Dr. Garvin) to waive standard procedure to vote on the recommendation immediately.

Upon a motion Mr. Hamblin, seconded by Mr. Smyth the Board VOTED (In favor: Dr. Davies, Dr. Knight, Mr. Carota, Ms. Fineburg, Mr. Fugiwara, Ms. Goldberg, Mr. Hamblin, Mr. Hoke, Mr. Smyth, Mr. Stansell, Ms. Thomas. Opposed: Dr. Battaglia, Dr. Garvin) to approve Santa Ana Valley Kennel Club's request for approval hold a third show until such time as circumstances may change.

Fines & Reprimands

Staff updated the Board on recent fines and reprimands.

Events & Entries

Staff updated the Board on event and entry numbers.

JUDGING OPERATIONS

Doug Ljungren, EVP, Sports & Events, and Tim Thomas, VP of Conformation, participated in this portion of the meeting.

Rules, Policies, and Guidelines for Conformation Dog Show Judges – Individual Examination of Dogs

The Board reviewed a proposal to amend the *Rules, Policies and Guidelines for Conformation Dog Show Judges* to remove the requirement for Group and Best in Show Judges to re-examine dogs judged earlier at the same event for standard disqualifications and check for two normally descended testicles in males.

This will be discussed further at the July Board meeting. If the recommended changes are approved at that time, the effective date would be July 19, 2026.

REGISTRATION

Doug Ljungren, EVP, Sports & Events; Mari-Beth O'Neill, VP of Sport Services; Keva Allen, Director of DNA Operations; and Jill Zapadinsky, Sr. Director of Customer Service, participated in this portion of the meeting.

Cloned Dogs Listed as PAL Dogs

The Board considered a recommendation to clarify Board Policy regarding cloned dogs, specifically the phrase “under certain circumstances a cloned dog may obtain a PAL enrollment.” to better define what circumstances would qualify a cloned dog for PAL (Purebred Alternate Listing) enrollment.

The Board VOTED (In favor: Dr. Davies, Dr. Knight, Dr. Battaglia, Mr. Carota, Ms. Fineburg, Mr. Fujiwara, Dr. Garvin, Ms. Goldberg, Mr. Hoke, Mr. Smyth, Mr. Stansell. Opposed: Mr. Hamblin. Abstained: Ms. Thomas.) to approve the recommendation to modify AKC Board policy as follows: The AKC will not provide full registration to a cloned dog. A cloned dog may enroll in the PAL (Purebred Alternate Listing) program provided they meet all PAL requirements, including spaying/neutering. Further, cloned dogs that are enrolled in the PAL program are eligible to participate in any event that a dog with a PAL listing can participate.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was an EXECUTIVE SESSION to discuss business matters. Nothing was reported out of this session.

CLUBS

Doug Ljungren, EVP, Sports & Events participated in this portion of the meeting. Lisa Cecin, Director of Club Relations, joined this portion of the meeting via video conference.

Report on Member Club Bylaws Approved in March and April

All Breed Training Club of Akron, Akron, OH (1954)
American Sealyham Terrier Club (1913)
Ann Arbor Kennel Club, Ann Arbor, MI (2008)
Blackhawk Retriever Club, La Crosse, WI (2005)
Detroit Kennel Club, Detroit, MI (1916)
Five Valley Kennel Club, Missoula County, MT (2002)
Manitowoc County Kennel Club, Manitowoc County, WI (1949)
Newnan Kennel Club, Coweta County, GA (2005)
Sioux Empire Kennel Club, Minnehaha County, SD (1968)

Report On Newly Licensed Clubs Approved in March and April

East Tennessee Working Dog Association, greater Knoxville, TN (including communities north to Kentucky state line, south to Walland, east to Johnson City, and west to Crossville), 27 total households, 14 local.

Northwest Rat Terrier Association, greater Seattle, WA (including communities north to Mount Vernon, south to Centralia, in proximity to Interstate 5), 22 total households, 14 local.

COMPLIANCE

Heather McManus, VP & General Counsel, Patricia Hines, Corporate Counsel – Litigation, Bri Tesarz, Director of Compliance and Inspections, and Jessica Lopez, Compliance Manager, participated in this portion of the meeting.

Code of Sportsmanship & Civility Enforcement Policy Changes

The Board of Directors considered a recommendation to incorporate clarifying language into the *Code of Sportsmanship & Civility Enforcement Policy* and continuing to utilize the *AKC Discipline Guidelines* to bring charges for more serious violations. It also considered recommendations to reorder parts of the policy for greater clarity.

This will be discussed further at the July Board meeting. If the recommended changes are approved at that time, the effective date would be July 15, 2026.

Staff Event Committee Report of Actions Taken

The Board received a report of actions taken.

Summary of Finalized Disciplinary Actions as of April 20, 2026

The Board received a report of finalized disciplinary actions as of April 20, 2026.

(Final Board Disciplinary actions are reported on the Secretary's Page.)

Compliance Status Report – First Quarter 2026

The Board received a report of Compliance quarterly statistics for the first quarter of 2026.

Inspections Status Report – First Quarter 2026

The Board received a report on inspections statistics for the first quarter of 2026.

CONSENT**Retriever Hunting Tests – New National Retriever Gun Dog Championship**

The Board considered a recommendation to amend the *Regulations & Guideline for AKC Hunting Tests for Retrievers*, to allow the newly-formed, AKC-licensed, National Retriever Gun Dog Championship Club, Inc. to host an annual national event within the AKC Retriever Hunting Test program called the National Retriever Gun Dog Championship.

Upon a motion by Dr. Garvin, seconded by Mr. Carota, the Board VOTED (In favor: Dr. Davies, Dr. Knight, Dr. Battaglia, Mr. Carota, Ms. Fineburg, Mr. Fugiwara, Dr. Garvin, Mr. Hamblin, Mr. Hoke, Mr. Smyth, Mr. Stansell, Ms. Thomas. Absent: Ms. Goldberg) to consider this measure separately from other items on the consent agenda.

Following further discussion, and upon a motion by Mr. Hoke, seconded by Ms. Fineburg, the Board VOTED (In favor: Dr. Davies, Dr. Knight, Dr. Battaglia, Mr. Carota, Ms. Fineburg, Mr. Fugiwara, Dr. Garvin, Ms. Goldberg, Mr. Hamblin, Mr. Hoke, Mr. Smyth, Mr. Stansell. Abstain: Ms. Thomas.) to approve that the newly-formed, AKC-licensed, National Retriever Gun Dog Championship Club, Inc. host, as a pilot program, an annual national event within the AKC Retriever Hunting Test program called the National Retriever Gun Dog Championship. (See Appendix A.)

These changes are effective June 1, 2026.

Following a motion by Dr. Garvin, seconded by Mr. Carota, the Board VOTED (unanimously) to approve the Consent agenda items to follow.

Redefine the meaning of “Fast” in the Obedience Regulations

The Board VOTED to approve a request of the Delegate Companion Events Committee to amend the *Obedience Regulations*, removing the words “must run” from the current statement and replacing them with “Fast,” meaning that the handler and dog must move forward at a noticeably accelerated speed. (See Appendix B.)

This change is effective June 1, 2026.

Judging Applications and Pending Discipline Policy

The Board VOTED to approve a staff recommendation to amend the *Judging Applications and Pending Discipline Policy* to specify the handling of applications for judging approval previously placed on hold pending the resolution of a pending disciplinary matter.

Judging Applications and Pending Discipline

When a judging applicant is under investigation and has been informed or has been charged for alleged misconduct under AKC’s *Judging Misconduct Policy* or under the disciplinary provisions of AKC’s *Bylaws*, any pending or newly submitted judging application for breeds or classes will be held in abeyance until the resolution of the disciplinary matter. If final resolution results in no suspension to affect judging privileges, the hold on the application will be lifted, and processing of the application will resume. If final resolution results in a suspension to affect judging privileges, the application will be returned to the applicant and will require resubmission if and when privileges are restored to good standing.

This change is effective May 20, 2026.

Approval of Newly Recognized Breeds

The Board VOTED to approve the staff recommendation to modify the *Adjunct Application Process* to extend the period in which an Adjunct breed is added to an application for the balance of the group to one year after the date of full recognition.

Adjunct Application Process

Additional breed applicants that have applied for a balance of a group in which an Adjunct breed would automatically be added upon final approval of the balance of that group will be required to submit a non-refundable \$35 application fee per applicable adjunct breed(s) prior to being scheduled by staff for their interview on all applied breeds with an AKC Executive Field Representative. The applicant Applicant must be interviewed satisfactorily by an AKC Executive Field Representative on the adjunct breed. Credit will be applied on future application(s) of any breed(s) not approved. This applies to applications for the balance of a group in which an Adjunct breed is entering received within one year after the Adjunct breed's date of full recognition.

This is effective immediately.

Parent Club Request to Retire Cutwater (Portuguese Water Dog)

The Board VOTED to approve the request of the Portuguese Water Dog Club of America to retire the kennel name "Cutwater" on behalf of the owners.

Parent Club Request to Retire Damasyn (Doberman Pinscher)

The Board VOTED to approve the request of the Doberman Pinscher Club of America to retire the kennel name "Damasyn" on behalf of the owners.

Delegate and Club Approvals

Terry R. Bridges

To represent Illinois Capitol Kennel Club

Published in *AKC Gazette*: March, April 2026

Dennis N. Corash

To represent Terry-All Kennel Club

Published in *AKC Gazette*: March, April 2026

Sharon A. LeVan

To represent Clermont County Kennel Club

Published in *AKC Gazette*: March, April 2026

Joao Machado

To represent Oakland Dog Training Club

Published in *AKC Gazette*: March, April 2026

Christian A. Morales Reyes

To represent Greater Miami Dog Club

Published in *AKC Gazette*: April, May 2026

Lori Sage

To represent Sherwood Dog Training Club

Published in *AKC Gazette*: March, April 2026

Sharon Tracy

To represent Pocatello Kennel Club

Published in *AKC Gazette*: March, April 2026

Linda C. Wozniak

To represent Durham Kennel Club

Published in *AKC Gazette*: March, April 2026

Approved for AKC Membership

Rat Terrier Club of America

Households: 96 households

1st Licensed Show: July 31, 2015

Bylaws: Acceptable

Published in *AKC Gazette*: March, April 2026

Investment Committee

CFO Ted Phillips provided the Board with an update from the Investment Committee.

Adjourned: Tuesday, May 12, 2026 at 12:54 p.m. Eastern.

Attest: _____

Sheila H. Goffe, Executive Secretary

Appendix A

**REGULATIONS & GUIDELINES FOR AKC HUNTING TEST FOR RETRIEVERS
NEW CHAPTER 8. NATIONAL RETRIEVER GUN DOG CHAMPIONSHIP**

Regulation Current	Proposed Line In/Line Out	Comments
	CHAPTER 8. NATIONAL RETRIEVER GUN DOG CHAMPIONSHIP	
	<u>A Retriever Gun Dog Championship for qualified retrievers shall be run not more than once in any calendar year by a club formed for that purpose. The club shall file an application for permission to run the event under the Regulations and Guidelines for AKC Hunting Tests for Retrievers subject to such modifications of these Regulations and Guidelines as may be considered necessary by the club. The purpose of the National Retriever Gun Dog Championship is to promote the advancement of retrieving breeds by testing and recognizing quality training and performances in the field. The event shall be run in as many divisions as the hosting organization deems necessary to achieve this end and shall be introduced as a pilot program where upon successful completion shall be held each year thereafter. The club may also make special regulations, policies or guidelines as are deemed necessary for the conducting of the Retriever Gun Dog Championship provided they do not conflict with the existing Regulations and subject to the approval of the Performance Events Department.</u>	<i>Describes the purpose and establishment of a new annual national retriever championship in the hunt test program.</i>

Appendix B

OBEDIENCE REGULATIONS
CHAPTER 3 NOVICE

Regulation Current	Proposed Line In/Line Out	Comments
CHAPTER 3 NOVICE	CHAPTER 3 NOVICE	
SECTION 5. Heel on Leash and Figure Eight. The principal feature of this exercise is the ability of the dog and handler to work as a team. The orders are: “Forward,” “Halt,” “Right turn,” “Left turn,” “About turn,” “Slow,” “Normal” and “Fast.” “Fast” means that the handler must run, and the handler and dog must move forward at a noticeably accelerated speed. All about turns will be right about turns. Orders for halts and turns will be given only when the handler is moving at a normal speed. The other orders may be given in any sequence, and turns and halts may be repeated. However, the judge should standardize the heeling pattern for all dogs in the class.	SECTION 5. Heel on Leash and Figure Eight. The principal feature of this exercise is the ability of the dog and handler to work as a team. The orders are: “Forward,” “Halt,” “Right turn,” “Left turn,” “About turn,” “Slow,” “Normal” and “Fast.” “Fast” means that the handler must run, and the handler and dog must move forward at a noticeably accelerated speed. All about turns will be right about turns. Orders for halts and turns will be given only when the handler is moving at a normal speed. The other orders may be given in any sequence, and turns and halts may be repeated. However, the judge should standardize the heeling pattern for all dogs in the class.	<i>Refining the meaning of “Fast”.</i> <i>The remainder of the section is unchanged.</i>

**OBEDIENCE REGULATIONS
CHAPTER 16 BEGINNER NOVICE**

Regulation Current	Proposed Line In/Line Out	Comments
CHAPTER 16 BEGINNER NOVICE	CHAPTER 16 BEGINNER NOVICE	
SECTION 6. Heel on Leash. (paragraph 4) Signs to be used are “Right turn,” “Left turn,” “About turn,” “Slow,” “Normal,” “Fast” and “Halt/Sit.” “Fast” means that the handler must run, and the handler and dog must move forward at a noticeably accelerated speed. Turns will be used only when the handler is moving at a normal speed. Turn signs may be placed in any sequence and may be repeated. Two of each turn sign must be available for the judge’s use. Both the fast and slow signs must be followed by a normal sign. The “Halt/Sit” sign will be used once at the end of the exercise. The judge will standardize the heeling pattern for all dogs in the class.	SECTION 6. Heel on Leash. (paragraph 4) Signs to be used are “Right turn,” “Left turn,” “About turn,” “Slow,” “Normal,” “Fast” and “Halt/Sit.” “Fast” means that the handler must run, and the dog must move forward at a noticeably accelerated speed. Turns will be used only when the handler is moving at a normal speed. Turn signs may be placed in any sequence and may be repeated. Two of each turn sign must be available for the judge’s use. Both the fast and slow signs must be followed by a normal sign. The “Halt/Sit” sign will be used once at the end of the exercise. The judge will standardize the heeling pattern for all dogs in the class.	<i>Refining the meaning of “Fast”.</i> <i>The remainder of the section is unchanged.</i>

**OBEDIENCE REGULATIONS
JUDGE'S GUIDELINES**

Regulation Current	Proposed Line In/Line Out	Comments
JUDGE'S GUIDELINES	JUDGE'S GUIDELINES	
CHAPTER 4. Physically Challenged Handlers. (paragraph 3) With respect to speed of the handler in the heeling exercises, a physically challenged handler is expected to do the regular heeling at the equivalent of a brisk pace with significant changes in speed for the slow and fast. Judges must penalize a handler, as they would any other handler disabled or not, who does not perform the regular heeling at the equivalent of a brisk pace or with a true slow and fast.	CHAPTER 4. Physically Challenged Handlers. (paragraph 3) With respect to speed of <u>The physically challenged handler in the heeling exercises, a physically challenged handler</u> is expected to do the regular heeling at the equivalent of a brisk pace with significant <u>noticeable</u> changes in speed for the a slow and or fast pace. <u>Judges must penalize a any handler, as they would any other handler disabled or not, with or without disabilities who does not perform the regular heeling at the equivalent of a brisk pace and/or with without a noticeable change in speed for the true</u> slow and fast.	<i>Refining the meaning of "Fast".</i> <i>The remainder of the section is unchanged.</i>