

Meeting Minutes
March 12, 2012

Secretary Report of The Vermont Horse Council's

March 11, 2012 Annual meeting

Held at the UVM Extension Office, Berlin Vermont

Meeting called to order by President Roger Morin at 1:10 pm

In attendance were 37 members and 2 guests.

Officers and Directors Present: Roger Morin, President; Patricia Branon, VP; Terry Rose, Secretary/Treasurer; Morris Lasell, Carmel Stone and Mike Benoit all Directors.

Members Present: Karen Blow, Shelly Lauzon, Brenda Lasell, Annette Deberville, James Deberville, John Farr, CJ Altland, Sue Altland, Jyl Emerson, Bea Gill, Vickie Smith, Martha Benoit, Rick Vanderploeg, Suzanne Hoeppner, Mary Gilman, Phyllis Civitello, Mike Civitello, Tim Stone, Steven Vieira, Art Sinclair, Tammy Simon, Skip Derry, Ken Hoeppner, Fay Ferris, Heidi Krantz, Charles Fergus, Belinda Brown, Ilene Douglas, Roger Morin, Jody Barna, Terri Devlin, Beverly McMullin

Guests: Doug Smith, Betsy Greene

The secretary minutes as typed by Terry Rose of the January meeting were approved as printed in the most recent newsletter. Motion made by Terry Rose, seconded by Karen Blow. So moved.

The Treasurer's report as presented by Terry Rose was read and accepted as follows.

VHC Checking at 3/1/12: \$4880.79
Savings \$17,401.29
Petty Cash \$63.80
Total balance: \$22,345.88

Pledges:

Parade Group: 0
Equine Emergency: \$605
Trail Maintenance \$2073.11
Irene Emergency: \$375.05
NEKET: \$5524.42
LATR: \$318.32
General/4-H: \$168.74
Clif/Floyd: \$2834.04

Total Pledges: \$11,898.68

Making total available funds: \$10,447.20

Heidi Krantz made the motion, seconded by Carmel Stone. So moved.

The Paypal Account on the VHC website was questioned specifically because Cindy Cross-Greenia's name is displayed on a member's credit card statement instead of the Vermont Horse Council name and she wanted to know how to submit her donation to the Irene Disaster Fund to her accountant. She needs proof. We decided all pay-pal donors would get a thank you letter from the Vermont Horse Council on Horse Council letter head. Ken Hoeppner stated there should have been a separation of duties in our accounting system of receipts and dispersements and he offered to help us in that regard.

The Membership report as submitted by Terry Rose was approved. Motion made by Morris, Seconded by Patricia Branon.

Committee Reports:

American Horse Council:

Ilene Douglas reported that the American Horse Council Equine Directory is out and we discussed subjects such as which states had the largest horse population. Texas is first, California second and Florida third. The horse industry spend \$102 billion annual. The annual American Horse Council meeting will be held in Washington, DC June 24th thru the 27th, 2012. Ilene thinks the VHC president should be sent when funds become available. The group tried to encourage her to go to represent VHC, but she does not feel she has enough history with VHC to attend. The Coalition of State Horse Councils meets the Sunday night of the AHC meeting. Ilene said nothing has been passed in the House budget this year that affects us. The trails bill at the Federal level are not going to the Senate. Foreign labor has not been approved. The Congressional Calgary Program was formed to help voters approach the American Horse Council about issues we feel need to be addressed. You can sign up at the American Horse Council and AHC will deal with that issue with Congress. So, if you know of a trail at the State or Federal level that has been closed, please let them know. And, regarding the Unwanted Horse Coalition, AHC does a lot at the Federal level.

If we decide to send a representative to the AHC annual meeting, estimated costs for one person are as follows:

Total Cost- \$1600-\$1700

Flight: \$240-\$245

Hotel: \$235/night

Registration: \$200.

Taxi: \$25

Meals: (7 meals) (no estimate for meals at this time)

Some discussion ensued about forming a committee to do fund raising to send a representative some time in the future.

Some discussion about the Green Mountain National Forest (GMNF) ensued. One member said trails are closed due to Hurricane Irene. We might propose to help the Forest service so we can use them again in the Southern, Central and Brandon areas. This would be a good time to talk to Congressmen and Senators to better the trails in GMNF. Mike Benoit offered to call the Senate.

Annual Trail Ride:

Karen Blow reported that the meeting met just before the VHC annual meeting. It was decided to keep the prices the same this year at \$85 for a non-member and \$65 for members.

Farm Bureau:

Bev McMullin reported that there are many advantages to joining the Farm Bureau on an individual basis. Such benefits include discounts on home and auto insurance, discounts on pyrofax propane and fuel oil. Bev has brochures supporting farms throughout Vermont that she'll send out to anyone interested.

Large Animal Technical Rescue:

Tammy Simon reported that this fall LATR plans to do training at two different fire schools. Roger from the ASPCA and the committee need to coordinate the times for when these trainings will take place.

Vickie Smith commented that she found a stack of LATR manuals that she'd be happy to share with anyone interested in them.

Newsletter:

Carmel Stone reported that there is No News

Northeast Kingdom Equestrian Trails (NEKET):

Martha Benoit reported that they are thinking of having a work day June second. If anyone is interested in helping, please contact Martha. Predicted jobs to be done are driving trucks to scope out trails and dirt roads. Chuck Fergus reported that he has been groomed by Steve Simpson to work with the Department of Natural Resources and Chuck wants to get out on the trails with Lou Bushy to scope out exactly what needs to be done. A piece of paper was sent around for volunteers to sign up with contact information for NEKET use.

The NEKET map was discussed. Chuck is trying to meet with Lou and some volunteers to take GPS's and map out the various NEKET routes. Then the new map can be made. Mike Benoit pointed out that the roads are accurate on the map as we know it, but the scale is not

accurate. Discussion about signs ensued and Chuck said signage is important but we must try to think of why we have the trails this way. The Department of Natural Resources wants the trail system to have a wilderness look to it. Discussion ensued about the NEKET maps and why some people had them and some did not. Perhaps LIFE members did not get one?

Phyllis Civitello brought up the fact that she would like to see smaller loops in the NEKET area. Chuck and Ken are working on creating smaller loops. A letter went out to Lou Bushy on January 19th and a follow up letter went out at the end of February. There has been no response from Lou yet.

There is still a beaver/flooding situation.

It was suggested that the weekend of the trail ride at least, have ribbons or silly string in the trees for the trail the group will be using for the trail ride/trail ride weekend in September.

Parade Group:

Jody Barna reported that last year Sharon Stearns contacted her about riding in a parade in Brandon. Sharon wanted to let her daughters and she and her husband represent the Vermont Horse Council by riding their horses in the Brandon 4th of July Parade. Jody arranged to get the helmet covers, saddle pads and banner to Sharon and the whole family as well as the town were pleased.

At the July 3rd in Montpelier, VHC had a successful showing. VHC parade horses were the only animals in the whole parade. The group purchased a muck bucket on wheels for manure removal. Labor Day Parade was cancelled due to inclement weather.

A motion was made by Heidi Krantz to budget \$600.00 for the year 2012 for insurance and other purchases necessary to keep the Parade Group active. Seconded by Patricia Branon

Parade dates for 2012:

July 3rd in Montpelier, Labor Day in Northfield, and James and Annette offered to represent VHC in the Tunbridge Fair parade.

It was suggested that we purchase **Pinnys** to replace the t-shirts. Perhaps the Tunbridge 4-H club could help with making some for us. Vickie Smith suggested she take the parade saddle pads for storage. She could represent VHC in the Bristol Parade and the Brandon Parade.

Riding & Driving:

Brenda Lasell reported that there is no news in the activities of the riders since the last meeting. Martha Benoit recreated the riding & driving applications and cover letter for when riders join. Copies of the application will be available at Everything Equine.

Scholarships:

Morris Lasell reported that we need more money in the General/4-H fund. Camp season is coming up. We need to support our young people.

Sue Altland reported that there are currently no applications for the Clif/Floyd Memorial Scholarship fund. Sue admitted she and Morris don't always agree on the minimum amount to give, but they both agree that the maximum remain \$500.

A motion was made by Heidi to take \$1200 from the general fund and put it into the General/4-H fund. That was seconded by Karen. All in favor.

It was agreed that an article would go out in the newsletter explaining the General/4-H scholarship account. It was also agreed that the adult recipient of a scholarship should come to a meeting to speak to our group about their experience. There was discussion about creating a committee and with the help of the secretary and treasurer look into changing the name of the General/4-H fund. No action or direction was taken though.

Trail Maintenance Fund:

Morris Lasell reported that the fund was created to help horse clubs fix trails in their area using a matching funds program. This fund needs more advertising and the information needs to get to trail clubs in the state.

Website:

Ken Hoepfner offered to be the new chair for our website on a temporary basis. He is going to perform a comparison of features from NY, Mass.NH and Wisc. Horse Councils and will deliver a report to the rest of the members.

By-Laws:

Mike Benoit reported that he and Morris met to discuss the by-laws. Changes were made to selection of Directors, clarification of terms for President, revision of membership categories that resulted from incorporating NEKET access and use into the membership benefit package and modernizing the language with minor editorial changes.

Comment/Commentary/Suggestions were requested. Discussion ensued regarding members who wanted to vote but could not make the meeting. Could we have a proxy vote or an absentee ballot? It was **suggested** that if VHC had a proxy vote, people would not come to meetings.

It was pointed out that members need to be warned 20 days prior to a meeting.

Mike and Morris will finish the changes and WARN it for the next meeting or at a special meeting.

Lamoille Valley Rail Trail:

Ken Hoeppner reported that there are two meetings scheduled for March 23rd and 29th for Act 250 review at the Lamoille Union High School.

This project was expected to be complete by 2008 but is still in the permitting process. Currently the footing is not good for horses.

The final plan would like an 8 foot wide limestone path with 4 foot of grass on either side.

Right now there are a lot of wash outs due to the hurricane.

VAST has approached FEMA for funds but they were refused as VAST does not own the land.

Everything Equine:

Jyl Emerson reported that she was not able to attend last year due to mechanical problems with her truck but she is willing to help out this year. Roger indicated last year's event was a good one. Discussion ensued about where all of VHC equipment is, how the slide show was created and displayed, who has a lap top, etc. It was decided we need some nice pictures sent to Jyl so she can create a slide show of everything VHC does throughout the year. Hopefully we can do better this year. It was suggested we get pictures from riders at Tunbridge and NEKET and the parades, pictures showing how much VHC helped during the Irene Flood situation. Some software may be required to make the change from power point to slide show.

It was decided a committee would be formed to handle all of the Everything Equine details. Carmel will work with a few people to work on booth ideas.

Discussion ensued regarding the laptop that got approved at the last meeting. Is it a VHC laptop? It was mentioned that because the laptop was purchased through the Vermont Humane Federation, the lap top should not be out in the public. It was suggested the board look at the grant to determine who owns the lap top and what we can do with it.

Vermont Trails & Greenways Council:

Heidi Krantz reported about the Renewal Of the Recreation Trails Program. Vermont receives money from this Federal program and passes it along through our state program. The VHC can apply for grants. The Trails and Greenways Council likes having equestrians as part of their group.

New Business:

The Lucky Trail Riders (LTR) donation of \$1466 was discussed. Jill Devoe, President of Lucky Trail Riders, sent dissolution papers of LTR and a check in the amount of \$1466 to Terry Rose, VHC Treasurer. The group decided to split the money as follows: \$500 to Trail Maintenance Fund, \$500 to Clif/Floyd Fund and \$466 to the Emergency Hay Fund. Motion made by Morris and seconded by Patricia. All in favor.

Horse Person of the Year:

Roger Morin, President read a beautiful letter submitted by Cindy Cross-Greenia recommending Leslie Chadwell of Stockbridge receive this award. Congratulations Leslie!

Crossing Canadian Borders:

Mary Gilman, a VHC member from Canada attended the meeting to discuss crossing the Canadian border from Vermont. On October 31st the United States will have lost veterinary service onto the Canadian side using Interstate 89. Coming south, will be fine since there is a US vet. But, to go into Canada and do not have 30 day papers you will have to cross into Canada via I-87 in New York State just for the Veterinary service. If you sold a horse across the border, you will have a problem. It is her opinion that I-89 is a major thorough fare and was wondering if VHC Officers could send a letter of concern to the Governmental officials that might fix this problem. Patricia Branon committed VHC to do so.

No motion, no vote.

Election of Officers:

The nominating committee recommended the following slate of officers:

President: Ken Hoepfner and Mike Benoit

Vice President: Patricia Branon and Heidi Krantz

Secretary: Brenda Lasell

Treasurer: Terry Rose

Presidential Race: Terry Rose was nominated for President from the floor. Mike, Ken and Terry each spoke for themselves and the results were: Ken 24, Mike 7 and Terry 6 votes.

Vice President: Patricia spoke for herself and Heidi withdrew her nomination

The new officers are: Ken Hoepfner, President, Patricia Branon, Vice President, Brenda Lasell, Secretary and Terry Rose, Treasurer.

Ken began his new Presidency by announcing his plans for a Public Service Announcement. He hopes to have a road safety video recording and an audio recording sent to TV stations and radio stations. He'd like to use Morris and his brother as actors for this project.

Next meeting date: May 20th at 9:00 am at the Berlin UVM Extension office

Meeting Adjourned. Motion made by Roger, seconded by Patricia. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted by Terry Rose, Interim Secretary