

Vermont Horse Council Membership Meeting
Held May 11, 2013
At Vermont Technical College Green Building Room G128

Meeting called to order by President Patricia Branon at 12:40 pm.

President reported that Patrick Berry, John Austin and Doug Morin, all with the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department, any one of these gentlemen are expected to be a guest speaker soon to discuss management of State lands and how it pertains to us. Places we can ride, want to ride and can't ride, etc. Mike Benoit reported that everything you current ride on will not change. The state is creating a new map. Any questions, contact Patricia. The first step is to help them redo their map.

Secretary's report was approved as printed in the newsletter, motioned by Morris Lasell, Seconded by Martha Benoit.

Heidi Krantz reported she was not able to open her newsletter.

Treasurers Report was approved as read with little discussion. Motioned by Heidi Krantz and 2nded by Ilene Douglas.

Membership Committee: Martha Benoit reported 6 new members at Everything Equine. We have quite a few new members but quite a few still need to renew

American Horse Council: Ilene Douglas passed around the American Horse Council Directory. AHC should be getting new officers emails. Ilene will call them and make the changes. AHC started a new committee, Time to Ride. Eight organizations joined together to make this happen. At the AHC convention in June in DC will be a convention. Health certificates are being pressed by the Equine veterinarian. The Coalition of Horse Councils meets all day on June 16th. Ilene was thankful for VHC sending her to the convention last year. Ilene recommends we send an officer every year.

Laura Hamilton has a question about Facebook: Would it be appropriate to add American Horse Council information onto the VHC facebook? Patricia will call Washington to make sure it is OK to put their information on our facebook.

Is it allowable to share AHC on VHC? Proposed by Betsy, Seconded by Heidi

Tunbridge Ride: No update from Karen Blow. Patricia mentioned the website version has an issue: when you pull up the form to print it, the print version format it messed up. Vickie Smith has a clean copy if anyone wants them.

Farm Bureau: Brenda read for Bev McMullin: "Vermont Farm Bureau has closely followed legislation pertaining to agriculture this session such as Current Use, GMO labeling and shoreline restrictions. We do not have a paid lobbyist this year, but our president Clark Hinsdale and the Executive Director, Tim Buskey, testify on appropriate legislation. Joining Farm Bureau has many benefits besides supporting Vermont

agriculture. Discounts from Nationwide Insurance, propane and fuel oil with Pyrofax and many others are available. Go to www.vtfb.org to learn more or contact Bev McMullin or Betsy Greene.

Betsy reported that Chittenden County actions on Bill H202. the key to this bill is to have an equal definition, across the board, on the word 'agriculture'. The tax department will not recognize equine businesses for current use measures. Now there is a bill to handle this as horses are a part of agriculture.

Groton: No news

Communication: We as a group are going to train each other to communicate. When receiving an email, at least acknowledge you got it. We discussed using Mail Chimp to send mass emails so personal email information is not distributed. Heidi and Laura will set up an account for VHC and "cc" Charlotte Mills.

Newsletter: Charlotte Mills is the new editor and was unable to make the meeting. Morris spoke for Charlotte apologizing for her absence. Vickie spoke about outbreak alerts were to be included in the newsletter. There are currently 4 cases of rabies in Vermont. Rabies was found in a horse, a bobcat, a skunk and a raccoon. Vickie reminded us that if you think your horse has rabies do not put your hand in your horse's mouth. Betsy suggested we read the equine journal booklet on vaccines to use in the area (http://issuu.com/hypmagazine1/docs/ee_2013). Discussion ensued regarding our part in enforcing health certificates and what was 'law' and what was 'suggested'. Our Tunbridge ride forms should state that Vermont requires proof of negative coggins. VHC requires rabies certificate. All out of state horses require a health certificate within 30 days. Meg stated that it is not unreasonable for VHC to ask for health certificates at the ride as a proactive measure and an example for the industry. Heidi stated as a State organization we should set the bar high on any of our forms. Box or highlight somewhere on the registration forms as an education effort that they must show proof of negative coggins, rabies certificate, and health certificate, if traveling from out of state.

Betsy mentioned there is a 180 day health certificate in the works and Vickie mentioned there may be a 90 day health certificate for use when horses are being brought to a fair.

NEKET: Martha Benoit reported that a new map with GPS way points is being worked on. Mike said as part of the 10 year plan with the state, the state wants to get the equine industry involved. Within the year the fish and wildlife department will have a map to review. We will get involved and at that time the NEKET map will be updated as well. Discussion about Plum Creek came up and Martha said she will follow up on it later. Plum Creek is East of us, across from Winlock where the NEKET lands are. There is no signage at Plum Creek so we can't ride there. Plum Creek is a lumber holding company and is part of NEKET.

Parade Group: the Montpelier 4th of July parade route has changed

Ride & Drive: Brenda reported that Judy Davis has added 127 1/4 hours, making total hours 3,010 1/4 hrs. Brenda would like to send her a 2014 membership and \$50 gift card. Ilene made the motion, seconded by Heidi.

Scholarship (youth): Morris reported that he had requested \$400 from the general fund at a directors meeting. And UVM has asked for a donation again this year. The money from security at Everything Equine should go to the Youth/4-H fund and Morris suggested we change the name on both of the scholarship funds. We would have a Clif Murray Memorial Fund and a Floyd Fuller Youth Memorial Fund. We should all think about it and discuss it at the next meeting. Morris would like to help send more people to horse camps. Courtney and Kendra Stearns and their mother, Sharon, helped collect money for raffle tickets at Everything Equine. They need to be thanked. Courtney Stearns sent a thank you to VHC for sending her to the National 4-H Horse Roundup competition in Louisville, KY. Terry Rose read the thank you card. Heidi suggested stories of kids who went to camp should be shared and Morris is going to work on the wording in the scholarship application to make that more clear. Rick suggested we should do a survey.

Scholarship (college): Morris said that Courtney Stearns is going to apply. Laura Hamilton said that an on-line student applied to VHC and was denied. Was being on-line course the reason? Now that student cannot afford lessons because she has to pay more for her course. Morris said he would talk to Sue and get back to Laura on that.

Trail Maintenance Fund: Information on this grant needs to get to local clubs so that clubs can apply. Clubs can get up to \$350 to help repair trails. Greg Western was going to apply. He is an across Vermont Trail member.

Safety: Morris said he needs help. Phyllis Civitello is interested. Phyllis brought to the meeting a safety vest she purchased from Double Dan Horsemanship. She would like to have VHC order some and resell them at membership booths. The vests have "please pass wide and slowly – thank you" printed on the back. Heidi will look into ordering vests and more bumper stickers. A flyer about tractor safety was brought in as an example of what VHC could make and hand out at the Department of Motor Vehicles. Perhaps the Cooperative Insurance would help pay for it.

GMHA would like to give out "horses have the right of way" bumper sticker to everyone that attends their events. GMHA approached Laura Hamilton at Everything Equine to see if we would be interested in coordinating that and take a 50/50 split with them. Some asked if GMHA would join VHC. Heidi will look into printing companies for bumper stickers. One suggestion was that GMHA will get the bumper stickers and a VHC membership application to give to people who attend their events. Ilene said we need to have a closer relationship with GMHA and we need to bring the bumper stickers to meetings to hand out to members. We also need a brochure to hand out at GMHA so people know what we do for the state.

Ken said he approached the Department of Motor Vehicles about a Vermont Horse Council license plate. The start up cost is \$2,000. So that idea got dropped.

Website: Glitches are being worked on.

Facebook: Laura asked if members can put things on facebook. Can we post clinics, etc. If we start the post with "I'm a member of VHC, etc." Doug and Carmel and Patricia are the facebook committee. People should run their ad by one of them and go from there. Laura will work with Doug as a moderator.

Old Business:

Fish and Wildlife is a work in progress. Patricia would like to see them come to a meeting at NEKET.

Ilene said if trying to keep lands open is an objective, there is a woman in Kentucky that has written a book on how to do that. Patricia said she is assuming 100% good intent and 100% positivity with F&W. The legislation is done. Policy for F&W should be passed. State lands specifically mentioned in the policy was not worded well, admittedly. But Pilman Robertson Funding stresses the lands are open and available.

Lunenburg Trail Ride: Eight rigs have signed up. Trails are marked. Hors d'oeuvres will be served in the tent and flowers will be on the table. There will be music, corn hole and horse shoe games. There is no minimum number of riders to be profitable. The entry form is on line. Vickie asked why it was a mandatory 3 day event on Memorial Day weekend. She thought it should be priced for day riders as well. Patricia said they would take it under advisement for next time.

Public Service Announcement: reported by Patricia is a huge success. Molly Smith from WCAX wants to do more interviews. Patricia and Doug's interview is on DVD. We all gave a hand to Ken and Suzanne Hoepfner, suggested by Brenda because they started the process. Ken spoke and said it's important to say that the message is out. Betsy reported that youtube has received 12,000 hits. Now Meg is drafting a PSA on multi-use trails and trail safety. Meg will email the committee for additional ideas. Vickie suggested Meg check the practices of the Eastern Competitive Trail Ride Association. Heidi said she would find the picture she took of multi-use land out West. It was of a sign with arrows showing the order of rights of way for users.

Betsy spoke about the continued excitement of the road safety PSA and told of the avenues taken to get it to "go national". There have been 12,712 views since 2/24/13 and it has been sent to 11 states, 23-30 stations, promoted at the Farm Bureau's Horsin Around on Saturday Night and the Extreme Trail Challenge and was promoted on Across the Fence and Pre-Equine Shows.

For the Ag Agent's competition, Betsy submitted the PSA in a write up "share the road" abstract for UVM Extension nation wide. In September the National Count of Extension agents will announce the national winner for the video section. This PSA has won a National award. That's when Ilene's enthusiastic announcement that VHC has gone

National could be official. Ilene stressed again that somebody should go to the National Horse Council seminar in June. "We're not nobody no more" Ilene said.

Ken asked if an 'accreditation' of the PSA could be created by the Directors Betsy, she representing the Farm Bureau and UVM. He thinks we need to tweak the video to put the VHC logo on the front and back. Ken would like a written policy so we can say that VHC has agreed to include the accreditation after the PSA as a collaboration of UVM/Farm Bureau and VHC. Then the DVD can be copied and a link of the PSA can be put in the newsletter, website, and facebook. Betsy and Patricia offered to work on this.

Everything Equine Update by Doug Smith: the Extreme Trail Challenge went well. He says thank you to everyone involved. Next year the to-do list will include: Starting earlier and ask for a lot more help. There were so many little details that were dealt with 'on the fly'. We need someone to take entries, we need a representative to CVE (Champlain Valley Expo) and we need to design the course, get sponsors, judges and prizes.

We need to improve the quality and grouping of prizes and get gifts for the judges. Thank you cards and gift cards were sent to the judges later. Also, we would like to have a photographer on site.

Betsy reported that the Program made up by VHC did not get printed because there was a communication glitch. Susan Petrie from CVE had agreed to print the program but VHC thought she agreed to write it. Next year we'll get the information to Susan and she'll print it.

Laura Hamilton said she is a photographer and would be happy to take photos at any event she is asked to.

Doug said Roger and Marta did a great job organizing and dealing a lot of the details we never even thought of. There was mention that Jane Thompson's "in memory of" announcement could have been read better. Vickie Smith said she has the results of the race and the 'life stories' submitted by the contestants.

Betsy's report about Everything Equine: 4100 people attended, total. There was a good crowd for the Extreme Trail Event. There were 3 Across the Fence shows (2 before the event and 1 after) and CVE had commercials on TV. She thought the weekend went really well and having Dan James was great.

Meg asked if there was a time and place at the Everything Equine event to have people pay to run their horses through the course with an instructor on-site. A noncompetitive situation where you can introduce your horse under safe conditions. At this time there is not enough time to and that situation is not ideal to do that. But, there are clinics throughout the year that Vickie Smith could help you find.

New Business:

Ken Hoepfner would like to see VHC have a 'Governance' committee. As we become more visible, we should be pro-active. We are reaching out to different avenues of communication and it's important that we stay within the rules of our 501© 3 classification and within the Roberts Rules of Order. We need to create another committee with one or two Directors and study copy write rules, and maybe perform an internal audit. Ilene suggested we look into locating an Equine Lawyer. Some avenues to search for equine law is 'Law for Food' and the Vermont Law School. This will be discussed at the next Board meeting.

This meeting was hard to find. The building at VTC was not visible from the road. There were no signs pointing to the Green Building and it took officers an hour to find the room. So, it was suggested by Doug Smith that we have signs made up that say 'VHC meeting' so they can be put out at the road sides and at the building sites at every meeting. Nobody has offered or was delegated to do that at this time.

Next meeting will be September 7th at the NEKET ride. 9:00 am

Meeting Adjourned, Proposed by Brenda, seconded by Ken

Meeting end at 4:00 pm

19 IN ATTENDANCE

MARTHA BENOIT
TERRY ROSE
PATRICIA BRANON
MEG COSTELLO
BRENDA LASELL
MORRIS CIVITELLY
PHYLLIS CIVITELLO
MIKE BENOIT
RICK VANDERPLOEG
KEN HOEPPNER
SUZANNE HOEPPNER
HEIDI KRANTZ
BELINDA BROWN
ILENE DOUGLAS
MIKE BENOIT
VICKIE SMITH
DOUG SMITH
BETSY GREEN
LAURA HAMILTON