

**Secretary Report of the Vermont Horse Council's
September 7, 2013 Meeting
Held at the NEKET camp field in Victory, VT**

Meeting called to order by President Patricia Branon at 9:13 am

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Secretary's report was accepted as printed in the newsletter with the following corrections: spelling correction under NEKET - "weight" points corrected to "way" points and under the Safety part - "GMHA would like to give out "caution horses" bumper sticker" should be the "horses have the right of way" bumper sticker with the VSA #. Phyllis Civitello made the motion to accept. 2nd by Karen Blow

TREASURER'S REPORT: Martha Benoit read the 9-7-13 treasurer's report as follows:
VHC Checking: \$ 3131.51
Savings: \$ 17,422.64
Total Balance: \$ 20,554.15

Total Pledges: \$ 12,663.41
Available Funds: \$ 7890.74
Martha noted the Parade Group Fund was a negative (\$145.00)
Penny Finnegan made the motion to accept as read. 2nd by Phyllis Civitello

MEMBERSHIP: Martha Benoit reported a total of 227 members, including children. 210 with voting rights.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

American Horse Council: Ilene Douglas had not arrived yet so this was presented later in the minutes.

Tunbridge Annual Trail Ride: Karen Blow reported she currently has 90 people signed up. The deadline was September 1st but she would like more attendance so she will try to get out to more people that there is still time to sign up. There will be a band this year on Saturday night. Something new to try.

Equine Emergency Fund: Currently there has been no request for assistance.

Farm Bureau: No Report

Groton State Park: No Report

Newsletter: No Report

Northeast Kingdom Equestrian Trails (NEKET): Mike Benoit reported that the VHC Quarter Plan Management agreement has expired and we need to do a new 10 year plan. Lou Bushey and Chuck Fergus are working together about remapping the trails and using GPS coordinates. They would like us to start working on a new area that is available to horse use. It is time to do this now. On September 18, 2013 there is a meeting with Lou Bushey, Chuck Fergus, VAST, NEKET Association and VHC on a new trail plan.

It was noted there was a lot of tree downfall this year that had to be cleared. Trail maintenance can be done with ATV's by permit only. Melissa Abbott wants to help put up more markers on the current trails. Many

riders are having difficulty following the current markers due to the lack of them.

Parade Group: No Report.

Riding & Driving Program: Brenda Lasell reported one new horse & rider team member on 5-11-13 : Ilene Douglas with “Steele” and on 7-21-13 Individual rider, Diane Kane reported 104 ½ hours.

Scholarship (general / 4/H): Melissa Abbott talked about the 2 week horse camp at River of Life Horse Camp and told how much this scholarship program helps some of the children that attend because their parents/guardians are financially challenged. Three recipients were at the meeting and thanked the Council and told about what they did and learned at camp. There were two other recipients that also received scholarships. Morris Lasell mentioned he has some other applications that he will require money from the general fund this fall.

Scholarship (Cliff/Floyd): Morris Lasell mentioned he would like to rename this scholarship and the general / 4/H scholarship fund. This will be discussed at a BOD meeting in the near future. No other report.

Trail Maintenance Fund: No Report.

Safety: Patricia Branon said the safety vest are currently being imprinted with the VHC logo and we should have them in time to sell at the Tunbridge Ride in two weeks. No other report.

Web Site: No report.

Facebook: Doug Smith noted that it is FREE and we can post what VHC wants put out to the public. Karen Blow asked if he could post that there are still openings available for the Tunbridge Ride. It was noted that Doug, Carmel and Patricia are the contacts for posting information.

American Horse Council: Ilene Douglas said she mailed out reports on the annual meeting to all of the officers and directors. The AHC lobbies for all horse owners. DEA is trying to remove all drugs from mobile veterinarians. This would include drugs used for euthanasia also. The Immigration Bill isn't perfect and the US needs them for farm workers. She mentioned the soring bill that still allows the owners to sore their horses at home just not at a show. She also said it is very important that VHC has a lawyer on board for our members to reach and keep us updated on legal advice. She talked about animal rights groups not all working for the same things and some are more against anything doing with pets. Ilene thanked the Council for an amazing experience at the AHC annual meeting!!

Patricia Branon said communications with other members should be acknowledged that you have received it.

Tim Davis thanked Martha Benoit for calling or emailing everyone that there would be no water available at the NEKET ride this year.

OLD BUSINESS:

Patricia Branon asked the VT Fish & Wildlife to speak today but they were unavailable.

Chuck Fergus spoke about the Victory Management Area that we are riding in today.

PSA : Ilene Douglas said that Meg Costello asked if she would talk about the use of common signage with other groups such as VAST. The bicycles groups don't seem to work as well with horse groups discussing a uniform signage.

NEW BUSINESS:

Next Meeting will be sometime in January. Vickie Smith would like to see it return to the Vermont Farm Show in Essex during the day time in January. Many people said it would not be a good time for them to attend.

Doug Smith discussed the Extreme Trail Challenge for the 2014 Everything Equine. He needs volunteers for the planning of the event and working at the event. The theme this year will be "Pony Express". He wants help for the course design, sponsors for the obstacles and other advertising around the ring, advertising the event, coordinator with CVE, judges, photographer, prizes for the exhibitors prior to the day of the event and 50/50 raffle help. Please contact him if you are interested in helping in any way. Ilene Douglas would like to do the photography.

Karen Blow said Roger Morin needs someone to take over the Everything Equine Fair security as he is working in too many other aspects the day of the fair. The Council makes \$400.00 for the weekend security position. Patricia Branon wants to visit this at the January meeting. There are too many of the same members volunteering for working at the trail challenge, VHC booth and security. We need more / new people to help support the Council at this event.

Plum Creek is an area the Council needs to check out since we have access to this area and with Lou Bushey we have a commitment to mark out the trails in that area (identify the trails).

There was no new news on the Lamoille Valley Trail.

Vickie Smith made the motion to adjourn at 10:30 am. 2nd by Ilene Douglas.

Respectfully Submitted for Terry Rose, Secretary by Brenda Lasell