

Vermont Horse Council
Meeting held 1/18/15
At Stone Grill Restaurant in Morrisville, VT

The meeting was called to order by President Patricia Branon at 12:20 pm with 19 members attending. Motion was made by Martha Benoit, seconded by Ilene Douglas to approve the agenda as printed.

The secretary's report, submitted by Terry Rose, was approved as printed in the newsletter, motion made by Heidi Krantz, seconded by Tim Stone, all approved. The treasurer's report, submitted by Martha Benoit, was approved as provided, motion made by Heidi Krantz, seconded by Morris Lasell. Martha reported negative cash flow for 2014 was because we ordered safety vests for \$1,133.55, that money will be made back when we sell those vests. Accounts currently have \$17,263.34 with \$5,973.77 available after allocations.

Committee reports:

Membership: Doug Smith reported that we have 17 lifetime members and so far 16 members have renewed.

Safety: Morris Lasell reported that he needs 2 more volunteers for this committee. The radio PSA about horse safety on roads needs some final touches and he needs help distributing it to radio stations. Carmel Stone and Ilene Douglas volunteered to join the Safety committee.

Carmel reported that the horse safety posters are updated with new wording and better coloring. The Department of Drivers Education distributed the PSA and safety brochures Driver's Ed teachers in the state. There was a conference in Rutland where our information was very well received. Carmel is working with the local Sheriff's department and other law enforcement departments to get the word out about horse safety and equine law as it pertains to horse safety on the road.

Tunbridge Trail Ride: The date for this year is September 24 & 25.

Equine Emergency: Martha Benoit reported that VHC gave money to Spring Hill Rescue in 2014 and got a thank you letter back from them. Morris Lasell reported there was a barn fire in Corinth and the owner lost everything. He is going to have Brenda Lasell send information and a donation request to the Board. Karen Rosemark mentioned that Safe Haven Rescue is in need of supplies and financial support as well.

NEKET: Patricia Branon reported that the 10 year contract with Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife is up for renewal. She has been working on the final draft and distributed that version to the Board as well as to Ilene Douglas, who lives in that area and is very interested in that committee.

Patricia has offered to take Doug Morin, our contact at VT Dept. of F&W, on a horse to ride the trails and GPS some loops for our new NEKET map he is working on.

NEKET has a new sub-group called NEKET Trail Troopers. This new group consists of Mike Benoit, Lynn Knight, Sharon Paton, Sally Knecht, Missy Abbott and Karen Rosemark. They will be responsible for hosting trail rides and finding shorter trail loops, and reporting back to the Board.

The NEKET ride is September 11, 12, & 13, 2015 this year at Walt Neborsky's field.

American Horse Council: Ilene Douglas reported that the annual meeting is June 14-17, 2015 in Washington DC. The Coalition of State Horse Councils' annual meeting is the 1st weekend in November every year. Ilene encourages us all to go to the American Horse Council website to see what they are working on. Heidi Krantz suggested VHC should send someone to the State Horse Council meeting in November. Ilene will have a budget brought to the March meeting. Ilene's estimation is that it will cost between \$1500-\$1600 per person to attend. The Board will make a decision as to whether or not we want to send somebody in 2015.

Website: Lynn Knight reported that she is working on the calendar of events. Anyone who has anything should send them to her, with a "cc" to Patricia. Lynn requested more people join her committee and Karen Rosemark offered to join. Karen suggested a classified section be added to the website. The committee plans to meet very soon and have the site finished by the annual meeting in March. Patricia emphasized once again that everything website related is to go through Lynn.

Ride & Drive: Brenda Lasell submitted a written report indicating that Karen Rosemark has completed 407 1/2 hours. Brenda also had one member who requested to remain anonymous.

Scholarship: Morris Lasell reported that money from the general fund may be requested as monies may run short. The Tunbridge ride monies were not included in the treasurer's report so Martha will let Patricia know when that happens and how much it was. Heidi Krantz reported that she talked with the UVM extension contact, reminding them that VHC has 4-H scholarship money available.

Trail Maintenance: Morris Lasell reported that Lamoille Valley Ride & Drive has received the \$500 VHC sent them. That money will go toward bridge work and hitching posts. Sharon Paton reported that the Kirby trail on Bennett Road needs work. She was lead to believe VAST would fix that trail but will know for sure in the spring. There are 2 more loops she is working on in the NEKET area. Heidi Krantz volunteered to help when VAST is doing their work.

In the Willoughby region, Sharon and Karen have been working to increase trails at the Catholic Retreat Center. Patricia, as President, walked the trails and attended a Select Board meeting. She was thanked and recognized for her hard work by Karen and Sharon. There will be a Willoughby ride sometime this summer. Information including contact, location, directions, etc. will be posted on the VHC website.

Martha Benoit mentioned there is a landowner packet with information about sponsored rides and insurance which NEKET used years ago. She'll look for that and get it to Karen and Sharon.

Facebook: Doug Smith reported that we have over 200 likes on the page. Current meeting dates, events, etc. are posted to this page.

Side note regarding meeting reminders: Carmel was concerned about the process of getting the newsletter out. She is currently getting a copy from Charlotte and sending the newsletter out to members. She does not want to continue to do this. Patricia will find someone to take that on. Also, reminder that the by-laws and annual meeting announcement has to be in the mail and delivered 20 days prior to that meeting. Charlotte will warn the meeting in the next newsletter. Patricia will get the meeting date and agenda to Charlotte.

Groton State Forest: Phyllis Civitello reported that she and Brenda Lasell have been working with Lou Bushy and Jack Brooks and this is an on going project. Susan Bloomer emailed Phyllis saying that the horse pens which riders are unsatisfied with ,were the product of VHC's team. VHC disagrees. Karen Rosemark and Sharon Paton agreed to help Phyllis with new trails in Groton. Phyllis will respond to Susan Bloomer's email regarding the pens at New Discovery State Park.

Farm Bureau: No Report

PSA Update: Meg Costello reported that she is interested in getting universal signage for multi-use trails purchased to put at the heads of multi-use trails. It was suggested she contact Ken Hoeppner as he may have contact names to help Meg. Tech Centers in the area were also recommended. Meg will put together a budget for the next meeting.

New Business:

By-Laws: Lynn Knight reported that the committee will meet at Morris Lasell's house January 31st from noon to 3 pm. If VHC members have any changes they would like to make, please let Lynn know as soon as possible. The current version of the by-laws can be seen on the website.

Nominating Committee: This committee will have a report by the annual meeting.

Everything Equine & Canine's Extreme Trail challenge: Doug Smith reported that the theme this year is Medieval Times meets the Old West. There will be jousting, swords flailing, throwing rocks, crossing bridges and dragging trees. The disbursement of money will be different this year. There will be 6 places instead of 3, with first placing receiving \$1,000. This committee is looking for volunteers for that day as well as getting set up, taking down, checking coggins, soliciting gifts, sponsors, etc. Patricia Branon offered to run the stop watch, Tim Stone and Morris Lasell offered to check coggins papers.

Discussion about last year's event ensued. Last year the Fair Grounds reviewed the entries for the event. This year it will be VHC. Last year one girl was clearly way over her head. The entry forms should have a statement requesting riders to have their coggins papers ready at the entry to the fair grounds. Belinda Brown recommended we require helmets be worn. A 2015 membership to VHC will be given to all riders

for insurance purposes. In 2013 we had 14 riders, in 2014 we had 17 riders, we're hoping for 25 riders this year. VHC will increase advertising to help with this. The event time has moved up an hour so we have to start at 9 am sharp and be done cleaning up by 1 pm.

Heidi Krantz is collecting names of sponsors. Please ask your local feed stores, horse businesses, veterinarians, etc. to sponsor an obstacle for this event. There are 15 obstacles at \$125 each or you can be an individual sponsor for \$50. Deadline for entries will be April 11th. The date of the Trail Challenge is April 26th from 9 am to 1 pm.

CVExpo is creating and will print up a brochure listing judges, and sponsors.

Annual meeting will be March 22nd at Stone Grill & Restaurant from 10 am (Brunch) to 2 pm. Karen Rosemark made the motion, Terry Rose seconded

Meeting Adjourned 1:57, motion made by Ilene Douglas, seconded by Terry Rose

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Rose, Secretary