

Vermont Horse Council  
Membership Meeting  
April 23, 2016 at Marshfield Town Office

Attendance

Chelle Grald, GMHA Trail Chair  
Belinda Brown  
Mary Gilman  
Mike Civitello  
Phyllis Civitello  
Helen Hipp  
Monica Muller  
Jean Audet  
Gloria Bruce, Treasurer  
Brenda Lasell  
Morris Lasell, Vice President  
Bev McMullin  
Ilene Douglas  
Lucinda Newman  
Fay Ferris  
Terry Rose, Secretary  
Karen Blow  
Heidi Krantz, President

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The meeting was called to order by President, Heidi Krantz at 11:31 am followed by greetings and introductions.

Treasurer report as presented by Gloria Bruce was discussed and approved. The new accounting system, Quikbooks, is working well. Plans to use information from the membership applications as recorded in QuickBooks, specifically to write thank you's and renewal reminders.

Brenda questioned the Trail Maintenance Fund. Wondered if expenses accrued from each fund would be tracked as well as the bottom line. This information is tracked and Gloria would be happy to work with project managers to see what information they would like for their committee reports.

Helen Hipp questioned the scholarship names and needed clarity on what each fund is used for.

Morris spoke about the scholarship funds. He suggested VHC put Jane Thompson into the college scholarship as he talked to Jane's daughter and she thought Jane would want the money to be used for scholarships. Morris also suggested if we do change the name of the Clif Murray/Floyd Fuller scholarship fund, that name change should be voted on at a meeting as that was how it was originally set up.

Goals for the treasurer are to ensure membership date is correct and she will bring a break down of each account to the next meeting. We will consider closing some funds such as Parade Group or reallocating funds back into the general fund if they have not been used.

Phyllis made the motion to accept the treasurer's report, seconded by Morris. All approved.

#### Membership: Heidi

In Doug Smith's absence, Heidi spoke about membership. Ten or more people have joined VHC at the First Aid Clinic which was held in Marshfield at Water Tower Farm April 16th in which 28 people attended. We expect a few more to join for the Tunbridge ride. Heidi encouraged each person at the meeting to take a membership form. She said if everyone got just one person to join, that would increase our numbers pretty easily. It was noted that the southern section of the state is becoming more involved.

Lucinda and Gloria are working on the new break down of VHC's membership and are still hashing out the details. There is no longer a Farm/Club level. The options have change changed to TROT/CANTER/GALLOP levels. The goal is to get equine businesses to become involved financially with VHC. Chelle Grald, representing GMHA, offered to work with Lucinda on this to help define what a business would get from their contribution. Karen Blow asked if this would all be in the newsletter.

Promotions Committee: Terry Rose and Lucinda Newman

Newsletter:

The deadline for the next newsletter is May 15th with mailing to go out the 31st. Discussion ensued regarding the cumbersome way the hard copies were getting distributed. How it needs to be more stream lined. Some people only received 3 pages of the 12 page newsletter, if at all. Some that did not get the newsletter did get the Tunbridge ride forms. It was put onto the Promotions committee to set up a time to figure out how to get the 6 newsletters per year to everyone in a timely, cost effective manner.

Facebook:

Chelle has offered to cross-share our facebook information with their GMHA's members. Advertising through facebook seems cheap and easy. Helen suggested VHC take out a \$2.00 ad to test it first.

Website:

Brenda mentioned that Phyllis' email is still incorrect on our website.

Phyllis mentioned that Martha's name is still on the Groton pledge sheet as Treasurer

Heidi has been working with Michelle, our website manager, as there are two versions of VHC's website on google's search engine. It is on Google's end and we have to be careful which one we choose as one is very out dated.

Pictures are needed for the website. Michelle and Heidi like to change the photos on a regular basis. Please send what you have to Michelle.

Equine Activities: Phyllis

Willoughby ride is August 26th through the 28th

The committee is working on trail relocation around a duck pond. They are also working on marking and mapping trails.

Tunbridge ride is September 23-25th. A silent auction (donations requested) and a 50/50 raffle will be the entertainment.

Someone will need to take over the trails part of this ride. Karen has a lot to do and the work needs to be spread out. She asked if doing the same trail every year would be OK.?.

A list of challenges for that committee:

Travel to Tunbridge (several times) to go to the Town Clerk's office for trail ideas or talk to the locals for trail ideas as riders like new trails

A lot of people who come to this ride are from out of state

The locals hate the ribbons in the trees and they hate manure in the street

The question was asked if there were any members in that area who could help. Deb Fisk's name was mentioned. Chelle offered to give Karen some names in that area.

Helen asked if a ride fee waive would be incentive for someone to help out?

Groton's New Discovery:

Phyllis reported that Jack Brooks is putting gravel around the bridge that Morris fixed and gravel is being put in on the telephone line trail. This committee is looking for volunteers.

Bridge work discussion ensued. Morris' horse had stepped through the decking on a bridge that needs repair. Buckaroos's 302 Snowmachine club, as well as Jack Brooks, gave permission to VHC to make the repairs. He has an estimate, including his free labor, at \$240.00. He needs 4 or 5 volunteers as well.

Phyllis reported that trail marking materials have been ordered. Marking towards the Seyon Ranch camp ground is expected as well.

Craig Whipple from Parks and Recreation joined the group to talk about Groton's New Discovery camp ground.

There is a 10 year plan to increase horse trails in the Ascutney area, on Jim Jefford's State Forest and in the Robinson Springs Project in Rochester.

The US Forest Service Management review equestrian opportunities. There are 3 possible trails which Jean is very excited about. Holly Knox is the new forest ranger and she is very interested in having horses there. One concern is parking. Angus McCusker is the President of the Rochester Area Sports Trail Alliance (RASTA) who has been very helpful as well.

Dates of interest:

VT Trails & Greenways meeting May 10th (Jean will attend)

NEKET ride is September 10th & 11th weekend

Competitive Trail Ride is August 21st, sanctioned by ECTHA (for more information contact Vickie and Doug Smith)

Another First Aid Clinic in November with Matt Rose, DMV was also suggested.

There are five major things he get calls about. He would address those as there is prep work owners can do in certain situations while they wait for the vet to arrive.

Ilene mentioned that a clinic on laminitis/founder/colic and spring care for horses would all be good topics for a demonstration.

Services Committee: Ilene and Bev

Bev spoke about the Farm Bureau. Some topics of interest are the newly drafted AAP's to improve water quality in Lake Champlain and the definition of a small farm. Go to the state's website under Agency of Agriculture for more information. If you have a lot of horses or a lot of land, this might affect you.

Equine Equity is another committee of the Farm Bureau. They would like horse buildings exempt for taxation purposes. At the time the Ag committee is not interested that changing.

To view rewards of joining the Farm Bureau at the individual level visit [www.vtfb@org](http://www.vtfb@org)

Heidi mentioned that VHC is interested in continuing to work with the Farm Bureau.

Ilene spoke about the American Horse Council. The new industry directory is available. AHC is a lobbying organization based in Washington DC. There is a Fast Act in which \$85 Million per year is available for trails. There is a Recreational Trails Program. The new President, replacing James Hickey, is Julie Broadway has been a Vermont Citizen. Her term starts July 1st. June 12th through 15th is the Annual meeting. Ilene encourages everyone to go. She also said there is a wonderful grant program which takes money from the American Horse Council and gives to the state Forest Parks and Recreation.

The next meeting is June 18th at the Center for America's First Horse, owned by Stephanie Lockhardt. Since VHC had contributed to a Go Fund Me Account for their well water issue, they agreed to host a meeting. A tour of the facility and a demonstration by the students is expected. If we are lucky, Tim Hayes, author and natural horsemanship speaker will be there as well.

Equine Industry Summit: Heidi

October 26th is the date of the Equine Industry Summit at VTC. An invitation has been created for industry and organization leadership and business owners to attend. Some key points are:

- 1) To have Vermont as a State for horses to come to
- 2) Have this summit expand into something bigger later on
- 3) GMHA has offered to assist
- 4) 50 organizations and names of attendees have been gathered so far

2018 Word Equestrian Games: Mary

Mary Gilman was invited to attend the Equestrian games and has extended her welcome to the Vermont Horse Council. She reports that hotel rooms in Burlington and Montreal are already taking bookings for this event. It is expected that 250,000 spectators will attend. The rail service from Montreal to Vermont is being put back into service. The date is mid-August, 2018.

There is a meeting on the 27th of April. She'll see how it goes. Some things being requested at this time are list of bed & breakfasts and a list of all aspects of businesses in the horse industry.

Lucinda thought this would be a great opportunity to conduct an economic impact study. Chelle said that GMHA had done one through Dartmouth.

Scholarship: Morris

Morris reported that we now have 2 applications for college scholarships. This is down from 20 or so that we had last year. There are no applications for educational clinics at this time.

Groton: Jean Audet questioned whether there was a contract for purchasing round pen panels? Or would it be possible to use good, used panels? After discussion, it was decided good, used panels would be OK.

Introduction of Craig Whipple was done by Phyllis. He was our tour guide to New Discovery and the current Director of Vermont Parks & Recreation.

Craig spoke:

The state has plans to step up recreational use of all kinds. Any lands purchased by the state or donated to the state are for conservation. They are trying to balance the two. The Parks & Recreation organization are managers of the land that belongs to everybody.

The state is laying the foundation for better communication with the recreational users and our relationship with them is very important. It is crucial we all work together. They are working with other organizations as well. Specifically VAST and VASA.

Vermont is a small state with high expectations. There is a contract that is in the process of being created that would allow use of the lands and protect it at the same time.

Jean asked it was possible to get funding for Trail Head Parking. Craig said yes, that is done all the time.

Discussion ensued and he suggested we get a plan and strategies to propose to them for this new contract.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm and we cleaned up and drove to New Discovery for an on-site look at the new and old panels already in place.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Rose