



VQHA General Membership Meeting
Williamsburg, VA
Saturday, January 29, 2022

ATTENDANCE

Suzanne Gonzales	Tim Cohill	Laura Boardwine
Loretta Tozer	Carolyn Merritt	Beth Smith
Matt Guthro	Steve Meadows	Becky Meadows
Clearance Green	Sandra Green	Corey Balsis
Jeanenne Griffin	Cathette Plumer	Kevin Babcock
Charlotte Phelix	Todd Hulings	Jessica Hendrickson
Rachel Beuhren	Sue Bittner	Debby Steiner
Shay Nicely	Marc Vignerot	Lisa Vignerot
Christy Morton	Krista Jacobs	Collen English
	Rhonda Fischer	

The meeting was called to order at 216pm by VQHA President Suzanne Gonzales who welcomed everyone to the VQHA General Membership Meeting. Suzanne commented on the numerous meetings that have occurred already over the weekend and stated how pleased she was at all the progress that has been made thus far. She introduced the Executive Board of Directors and thanked everyone again for being in attendance, and asked that everyone please sign in on the roster that was being passed around. Also membership forms are being passed out.

Suzanne stated that she is thrilled with what has been accomplished in a very short amount of time by the new Board of Directors. There have been scheduled meetings monthly since June 2021, the youth had a profitable auction raising a little over \$5,000, the amateurs have raised approximately \$4,000 through their fundraising efforts, Shay Nicely who serves as the Webmaster has put together a fantastic new website for the organizations, VQHA put on a very successful show in November, and this is all thanks to the members that have stepped up and pitched in to help. This all goes to show what we can do when we work together towards the common good of VQHA. Suzanne went on to comment on how well attended the Novice Show was and how she hopes they continue to gain momentum. VQHA received 3 grants from the Virginia Horse Industry Board in 2021 – one to help cover the costs associated with upgrading

the VQHA website, one for the clinic, and one for the Virginia Bred Classes, in all totaling approximately \$15,000. The VQHA Queen program has a new director and a newly crowned Queen who will be attending the awards banquet. There will be VA Bred classes held at the Spring Breakout Show in Lexington in March. Suzanne stated that she hopes to continue to with this new found momentum within the organization.

Carolyn Merritt, VQHA Secretary, was asked to read and review the previous VQHA General Membership meeting minutes. Suzanne stated however, since there was no meeting in 2021 or 2020, so there were no minutes to be read, and due to the passing of the previous secretary, there are no other documents to share or report on. A motion was made by Cathette Plumer to table the reading of the previous meeting minutes until they can be located. This motion was seconded by Steve Meadows.

Lisa Vignerot began the reports of the standing committees by commenting on the Virginia Bred Program. The program received a \$5,000 grant from the Virginia Horse Council for prizes to be given out for VA Bred Classes. Lisa states she will be starting to publicize heavily for VA Bred classes at the Spring Breakout. She thanked Caroline Vessley for donating a \$5,000 saddle to be given away through a drawing at the Spring Breakout. Each entry into a VA Bred class will be given a chance to win in the drawing.

Loretta Tozer Chair of the Banquet committee thanked her committee for their superior efforts towards making this weekend a fantastic one. She thanked everyone for attending, even in the middle of a snow storm, and hoped that everyone would enjoy the banquet weekend. Suzanne asked everyone to give a big round of applause to the Banquet committee for all their hard work to make this a memorable weekend.

Todd Hulings of the Ways and Means Committee discussed future fundraising ideas, auctions and need for more sponsorships. He asked that anyone with ideas or businesses interested in sponsorship opportunities to please reach out to him.

Jessica Hendrickson of the Awards Committee stated that she hoped everyone would be pleased with their year end awards for 2021. She hopes that next year they might be able to try a catalog style format for picking awards. Jessica asked that if anyone had any suggestions for awards in the future to please let her know.

Shay Nicely, the Webmaster, discussed the newly updated website and features that he made this fall with the help of a grant from the Virginia Horse Industry Board. Shay hopes that everyone is pleased with how it turned out and asks that if anyone has any questions or concerns or ideas about the website to please reach out to him.

Cathette Plumer, in charge of the Recreation Committee, encouraged participation in the program and discussed the benefits and great year end awards offered for participants. She would really like to see more folks participate in 2022 in all three divisions. She mentioned the great historic ride in partnership with the Bull Run Hunt and the Virginia Horse Council which raised close to \$10,000, of which VQHA received \$500.

Cory Balsis, the Membership/Points Director reported that there are 72 member, 60 amateur members, and approximately 50 senior/lifetime members. Multiyear memberships were added to the membership application this year so several memberships were rolled over. Cory spoke to the fact that the Show and Contest Rules document has been around for ages and is very outdated. It has been modified and changed over the years which has caused some issues with verbiage in the rules. Updates have been made to include the addition of the VRH Division and the walk/trot/jog classes to the glossary of terms. The high Point Halter awards have been removed, and instead extra points have been added to the classes for standing grand or reserve. A handout was provided noting the changes and the updates have been posted to the website.

Lisa Vignerot spoke again for the Auditing Committee. She states there will be a new 3rd party auditing system to go over the taxes once they are done. A local university will perform the audit as part of a class project. She states this is all being done for transparency.

Suzanne Gonzales gave her report on behalf of the Show Committee which met earlier this morning. During that meeting they discussed the Virginia Stock Horse Show to be held again in May in Doswell. This will be a VQHA run show for 2021 and will very much resemble the November Doswell Show. There is a plan in place to add walk/trot/jog classes and have more non-pro classes as well. The showbill is under review, and ways to make the show better were discussed. The May Show will include a VRH Special Event on Friday this year. In addition, ideas were bounced around as to how to get improvements made to the Doswell facility to better suit VQHA's needs. There is a plan to reach out to the Farm Bureau to try and purchase more stalls to have at the facility. There was a discussion about possibly moving the show to another location, however for the time being it was decided that Doswell was the most central, and we need at least 200-250 stalls sold to make a show work financially. Steve Meadows mentioned having a Ranch Versatility Show partnering with the Cutting Horse Association and holding it at Doswell. He stated that the Harriman TN show back in December had huge increases in their numbers over previous years and is definitely a growing area to tap. Steve noted that Pam Scott would be a good resource. Lisa Vignerot asked about having a show at Herndon. Suzanne mentioned that the facilities are similar in rental fees but that Herndon does not have as many practice pens or camper slots as Doswell. Tim discussed wanting to organize an open show in combination with a novice show in the future. Tim asked for individuals to bring forward ideas. Suzanne mentioned that the Virginia State Fair will be the second week of the fair at lacks good horse stuff and may be a potential opportunity for VQHA to step in and have a small show.

Michelle Might the Queen Mum was unable to attend the meeting but Suzanne stated that our new Queen Sierra Lucks has her new VQHA Queen Sash at the ready for the Awards Banquet. Sierra has been showing with VQHA for the past 4 years under the guidance of Connie Christopher.

Beth Guthro the VQHA Youth Directors was unable to attend due to the conflicting VQHVA Meeting and Pool Party, but husband Matt states the youth have lots planned.

Beth Smith spoke on behalf of the VQHA Amateurs and announced that a new Amateur Association President and Vice President were elected earlier in the day at the Amateur meeting and there will be some bylaw revisions coming up in the future to help keep them up to date.

Shay Nicely, head of the Bylaws Committee passed out information pertaining to necessary updates to the current VQHA bylaws and asked everyone to discuss the proposed changes with him once the meeting moved into New Business.

Laura Boardwine passed out copies of the Treasurer's Report and Balance Sheets. She stated that all the accounts look to be in good order. A motion was made by Carolyn Merritt to accept the Treasurer's report as given and it was seconded by Shay Nicely, and the motion carried.

Suzanne opened up the meeting to New Business and invited Shay Nicely of the Bylaws Committee to present his report on the recommended changes to the current VQHA Bylaws. Shay again asked everyone to refer to the handouts he passed around to everyone which highlights the current phrasing and the recommended changes to each. Shay states that most of the changes being recommended are things that VQHA already does but that it needs to be spelled out more clearly to align more closely with what is currently in practice. Several of the VQHA positions were renamed for clarity and rank, and to combine roles. Individuals with voting rights will be known as Officers and Committee Chairs will be known as Directors. The Board felt it offered more clarity and transparency of the roles and responsibilities. For example the webmaster, IT subscriptions manager and social media account holder will become the Chief Information Officer. There is a proposed change to allow more voting positions to the Board of Directors, etc. Article 2 Sections 4 Revocation of Membership was recommended to be changed to Code of Conduct, and the verbiage be modified to align with AQHA's rules in regards to acting courteous and showing professionalism at all times. The motion to make the changes was made by Carolyn Merritt and seconded by Steve Meadows and the motion carried. The next bylaw change pertained to Article 4 Section 1b, the modification would be to add more voting positions to the board to include the Chief Information Officer, the Ways and Means Officer, the Points Officer, the Membership Officer, and the Youth Officer. Which then leads into the changes needed to Article 5 which defines and describes the name and role of each position. Shay went through each of the names, roles, and responsibilities and highlighted the proposed changes. Lisa Vignerot requested that an amendment be made to ensure that regardless of how many voting positions an individual may hold, that they may only have one vote. Clearance Green made a motion to accept the proposed changes to Article 4 sections 1b and the changes to Article 5, including the proposed amendment made by Lisa Vignerot. The motion was seconded by Coleen English and the motion carried unanimously. Article 4 section 13 as it pertains to hiring practices was recommended to be changed to "possible paid positions" and the remainder of the section be eliminated. Cory attested that although she has not been paid for her work as points secretary she has been happy to volunteer her time. She mentioned the possibility of adding some kind of software to help the points officer compile points. Shay thanked Cory for her dedication to her post. Laura mentioned that having software to help might make it easier to make transitions between officers when a new one is elected. Carolyn Merritt agreed that having

something in place to ease transitions between turnover of officers would be very helpful. She elaborated to say that the majority of the board has only been in office for 6 months and in that small span of time has accomplished a lot of major tasks to help keep the organization from folding, and while things like electronic voting and new points calculating software is definitely important, there are more pressing things the organization has had to handle. Todd Hulings made a motion to accept the proposed changes and Steve Meadows seconded and the motion carried. Article 6 required verbiage updates to realign new position names and edit redundancies. Coleen English made a motion to accept the proposed changes and Cathette Plummer seconded and the motion carried. Shay then went on to discuss the necessary changes to Article 4 section 2 as it pertains to the VQHA Election process. Shay stated that the current bylaws are very limiting as to how elections are conducted and are extremely outdated and not in practice. It was the recommendation of the Bylaws committee and the Board to change the election process to allow the elections to occur in conjunction with the annual meeting. Shay mentioned Lisa's idea to allow for some sort of electronic voting as well to help with transparency. Carolyn Merritt stated that she supported the idea to change the election process to be less limiting as the bylaws currently state, and to move elections from October when everyone is more focused on The Congress to the same time as the annual meeting and banquet in the first quarter. Having elections coincide with the meetings will also encourage member participation in the meetings. Lisa agreed that having elections at the same time as the general membership meeting will also encourage members to keep their memberships current so they can vote. There was considerable discussion as to how elections would proceed going forward, the staggering of positions, etc. Clarence Green described how elections were staggered in the past, and stated that his wife surely had a copy of the old bylaws from way back that she could dig out. Suzanne pointed out that if the elections remain in October, then that does not give the oncoming board much time at all to prepare for the annual meeting, that it would make sense for the current officers to hold their positions through the annual meeting, at which time the elections are held, and the new and old officers are both present for the transition. Then effective after the annual meeting the new Board Members would take over. Steve Meadows stated that 30 years ago in Clarence's time there were lots of people running for all of the offices and now a days he is just happy that there is someone that wants to be in charge because this organization in general lacks members and members that want to volunteer. Clarence complained that there are no meeting minutes mailed out anymore like the old secretaries used to do and the lack of communication is disappointing to him. Tim states that there has been more communication than before in his opinion and mailings are difficult and expensive in this day and age. Shay stated that he cannot speak for the communication officer but that he could ask for Cathy to look into compiling a list of people that want a hard copy. Jeanenne Griffin asked if there was a way when you signed up for your membership for you to check a box to elect to receive a paper copy of any publications that are sent out digitally. Coleen English stated that if someone gave her a list that she would volunteer to print out and snail mail meeting minutes or newsletters out to people like Clarence who are not in the digital age. Suzanne and Shay asked that we please get back on track with the motion Todd was making in regards to the elections. After much back and forth and debate, Todd Hulings made a motion that the VQHA Board revise the bylaws to move the elections to the first quarter to align with the annual meeting/banquet, and then present the exact changes back to the general

membership. The motion was seconded by Lisa Vignerot and the motion carried. Suzanne stated there will be a special meeting called once the bylaw changes are available for review so the new election process can be presented to the membership. Shay thanked everyone for their time and patience in getting the VQHA bylaws back up to date and consistent with current practice.

Suzanne asked if there was any new or unfinished business that needed to be discussed. Having no response, Suzanne thanked everyone for attending the meeting. The next board meeting will be held at the Spring Breakout Show, date, time, and location to be announced closer to then, and the next General Membership meeting will coincide with next year's awards banquet. A motion was made by Kevin Badcock to adjourn the meeting, and was seconded by Cathette Plumer and the meeting adjourned at 407pm.