

Minutes of the AHS Board of Directors
WebEx Conference Call
August 22/23, 2020

Present: Edgar Schutte (president), Barb Schmidt, Nancy Connolly, Cathy Tucker-Slaterbeck, Meg Williams, Joanne Hodges (executive director), Rachel Erlich, Rick Toering, Kate Palmquist, Volker Ehlers, Natalie Diberardinis, and Doug Langer

The President called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. PST.

Motion: To approve May 6th, and July 1st meeting notes-Motion Approved Unanimously

Presidents Report:

- Inspection tour off to a slower start due to pandemic, several judges still flying. Pictures and results continue to be posted on FB. Strange year, and people slow to respond. Should we adjust the late fee? We will extend the deadline for one additional week. Also recommend sending an email blast to the membership reminding them the tour is ongoing and to register, in addition to FB updates. Recommend three email blasts a week apart, announcing inspections and FB boosts. Sandy, Meg, Suzanne, Dory, Volker, Vanessa, George all stepping up to drive, some-Sandy Meg, George willing to fly.
- Hanoverian Verband unresponsive right now and chaotic. Resigning of the Director, inspections delayed.
- Magazine came out nicely. And design changes noticed.
- Thank you to Louise Leatherdale for sponsoring the futurity this year, greatly appreciated and Barb thank you for facilitating.

Executive Director's Report,

- A YouTube channel has been set up for the new video inspections. Participants can now upload to AHS channel and then the videos are put in a playlist and the link is sent to two judges. The upload link is sent to the owner once they've signed up and paid. Judges' scoresheets are returned to the office and an email with the score is sent to the mare owner. A sample video done by Oakwood Farm is on the channel and a link is on the same webpage as the guidelines and rules.
- Rachel is working on a new form for nominations that has questions about experience and future plans.
- Stallion dues and stallion directory paperwork will go out together this year.
- The stallion vet forms have been combined into one and were used this year for all stallions that have not already been performance tested.
- The new website forms have been developed and the editorial is being worked on.
- NASST cancelled this year due to Covid concerns, those monies kept in the account.
- The Society did get a PPE loan of 35k for this year. It is a forgivable loan. Joanne pursued this through a different local bank, Wesbanco. The loan is forgivable as long as we don't lay any personnel off.

- The Equitana event was cancelled.
- The inspections seem to be going well despite pandemic challenges. Although sites continue to be volatile with last minute cancelations, site changes, participant uncertainty, and an increase in private inspections, we are one of few registries doing inspections this year. One benefit is that we are increasing our visibility by going to remote inspection sites, e.g. Iron Springs and River's Edge.
- The charters received from chairs by the Annual Meeting were re-sent along with the by-laws. Board members should review what's been written and determine whether or not the committee mix is what the association needs: Should some be sunset and others be developed? Approved charters can begin a manual for committee members and new chairs. The chairs put together the charters. New committee chairs asked to have time to review with their committees.

Strategic Plan

- The strategic plan was reviewed with Barb Schmidt- short term goals reviewed.

Change of ByLaws for BOD terms

By-law change to change terms. See Proposed Bylaw change-

Right now on an every other year cycle. Changing 6 yr term to 4yr term.

Options:

1. Have back to back elections and then 3 yr without elections-not great option
2. Election this time for a single year term
3. Or third option, People elected to five year term, and then every other year after that

Whatever the board decides, it still needs to be a bylaw change-

Clarity- what is Natalie's (who took on Anne Spark's term).

Look at Natalie's term---for three years---

Discussion- of the interpretation of current By-Laws, have Natalie on the ballot for election end of Nov., or serving Anne Sparks term.

- Recommendation the election this fall would be for the balance of the term. The way we interpreted the By-laws: The position being held, we do have an election this fall-that term would be for the balance of Anne Sparks...and she would be in Group B....so we would still have a balance of number of seats being filled each election cycle, this election would be the balance of Anne's Term.
- By-law change needs to be sent to the membership, we will send only one option

Motion: we use the language of: "At the upcoming election this fall, membership elects someone to fill the vacancy of Anne Sparks, but only for the remainder of Anne Sparks' original term, so three years, Jan. 2024. (All other members elected this fall will have 4 year

terms (if the bylaws change is passed) or 6 year terms (if the bylaws change is not passed).”
This will be put forward to the membership to be voted on this fall.

Natalie abstained; Motion passed unanimously

Doug Langer Financial Updates:

Financial updates-

Financial numbers similar to last year.

- Assets 215k, with 207k operating, and additional money in acct and cash. Looked and compared where we were at in July 15, we are about 31K less than last time. Now have an additional 35k with the PPE loan which minimizes an impact
- Previous annuity money---Leaving it parked right now in account, in times of uncertainty better to have it parked than try to project where to put it.
- On the budget- it is hard to interpret at this time what affect Covid has had with things being delayed, but the numbers seem in line. Things seem to Joanne to be moving along quite nicely even compared to last year. We only had three inspections public this year so far, more private inspections, last year we had had 8 or 9.
- The expense side is very similar, a little less salary wise because Hugh’s salary was still in there. Right now we don’t have an idea of what foal numbers will be next year.
- Laptop for the ED owned by the AHS at the moment Sandy, is using at home due to all still sheltering in place. It is the office one and it can go to the annual meeting and it can be used on square. And anything on Joanne’s laptop is backed up. When are we going to look at bonuses and salary’s?

Motion to move into executive session: now in executive session.

Motion: Joanne to receive a xx bonus and an additional xx for the office staff for Joanne to distribute, where a recommendation of minimum \$xxxx to go to Sandy with the additional xxx discretionary

Motion seconded approved unanimously.

Moving out of exec. Session-

Recommend the winter meeting be a discussion of how to do staff salaries/bonus going forward with something more formalized.

Fundraising:

Silent auction

SSA both bring in quite a bit of money

What do we need sponsors for? Where should we reach out to sponsors?

Impact on the silent auction without a live meeting. What about a fundraiser that does it for a percentage? There are people that do this for a living? Could we tie the SSA to the futurity and they get monies for the prize yearling /2yr old. the stallion owners would get more exposure with the top foals.

Other registry does \$250.00 prize for top dressage, hunter, etc. from foals bred from the SSA, and you get a credit 50.00 discount on your stallion dues if in the SSA?

The ATA you can donate SSA and annual meeting silent auction, and then their Stallion service fee Is waived?

Would need to evaluate the impact on revenue risk/benefit of discounts etc.

Sponsorships:

- Is there a member that would enjoy looking for sponsors? We need someone who can drive it forward, not just through the office, maybe someone who can do the individual activities vs. the whole thing? For example: the award newly gotten for eventing, is provided for, for 20yrs. e.g. material-donated a couple years and then we sponsored, also the 3,4,5 FEI award.
When awards brought up try and get folks to pre-fund, and then let the membership know there is a sponsorship opportunity,
- Do a reach out via the newsletter, maybe a corner in the newsletter where we thank a sponsor and what sponsorships are available, and then constantly update, and be able to thank our sponsors on the newsletter and also, give a shout out on social media occasionally when it is a slower news week. Have to give our sponsors more recognition than a passing thank you.
- Is there opportunity for grants? This goes into the idea of a fundraiser committee. If you want grants it would be easier for a foundation and grants. Tim to look into a foundation status again. In the past we did not meet the standards, but now we may. Natalie would take a fresh look at the status. Barb and Natalie will look into.

Funding the Futurity

- For funding it, since we have raised the price, putting \$15.00 in the pot is possible? Or still look for a sponsor.

The futurity award is the only award that actually makes money, this year people are paying \$45 per class so \$15 could go into the pot per entry. We change the title, call it the “Jackpot Futurity” and seek a sponsor. If we get a sponsor, then there will be additional prize money. We could offer them a free web add.

Motion: Change the current \$3,000 allocation for futurity awards. Beginning in 2021, the futurity prize money will consist of an allocation of \$15 per futurity entry to the year-end prize money.

Other awards should be funded, e.g. the MPT high score award. Cathy will make a list of awards that need to be sponsored.

Expanding directory Acceptance of foreign sires.

Canadian stallion owners are allowed to activate their stallions with the AHS even though they are registered with the HV. This gives them a page in the AHS Stallion Directory. Can we open this to stallions outside of this country if the owner is a member. Then we would not have to have a foreign sire fee.

In 2019, approximately 75 members paid the foreign sire fee for their foals at \$150 per foal. In 2019, 7 inactive stallions had 3 or more foals registered with the AHS and 11 inactive stallions has 2. In 2020, 5 inactive stallions had 3 or more foals registered with the AHS; 6 inactive stallions had 2.

Currently, mare owners are allowed to “activate” a stallion. The note is made in the database but the stallion does not appear on the website or in the directory. A change in policy may allow more foals with the AHS, but there is a little concern over losing the foreign sire fee. Kate and Natalie will put consider all comments and put together a new proposal.

Annual meeting update

We do need to have a business meeting of a virtual kind or some type. By-law requirement is that 20 members need to participate.

Could we still do a virtual meeting. Do any of us have the expertise. There is software out there for this but do not know cost etc. Edgar will research. USEF is probably doing this as well, and have more resources? Could they host it for us? USEF has been doing webinars since COVID. We will probably have to do the silent auction via online as well.

Nancy will reach out to Tim Jennings, or the guy that did the auction this year.

Financial contract for meeting:

The AHS contract with the Embassy Suites hotel says that we owe the hotel \$8,000 if we don't honor the contract. If change the contract to 2022, the hotel will waive the fee. There is also a “force majeure” clause, but it is nebulous. We are waiting for Embassy Suites to clarify. We have until the end of September before we have to make a decision. Within the travel industry the force majeure issue is huge. Joanne will get an answer and let us know.

Cathy presented a chart of current awards and sponsors along with recommendations for which awards could be eliminated. One recommendation for elimination was the Young Dressage Horse Awards. Natalie DiBerardinis suggested combining the 4, 5, and 6 year old classes and the FEI Young Horse classes and then offered to have Hilltop sponsor this award for the next five years.

The sponsors need to be tracked along with the years that each award is sponsored for. Edgar will check with someone who might do this coordination.

Stallion scoring being eliminated by Germany,

- everyone in Germany is going with the no minimum score.
- The stallion test here what happens, currently with the test if the judges wanted the stallion in, there was a benefit of the doubt, with adjustment of the score. If we don't take the stallions, for borderline stallions, they are around 7.5, a 7.5 stallion might be closer to an 8?? No pressure from the judges.
- Every time we have tried to maintain standards that Germany has done away with, we have lost breeders,
- Still considered by the US Board a disturbing decision. Possibly we deal with it in the stallion titles. We can encourage the behavior we are looking for without turning people away
- We see the stallions. And look at our stallion judging, and they still have to go for our licensing. In this country the testing is still a filter and our judges attend the entire stallion testing with an eye toward who to invite into the AHS.
- Disappointment with the stance the registries have taken was expressed. If we hold the line, choosing to hold to it, it becomes a viability of survival. One member suggested using the "Elite Stallion" designation to signify a "passing" score. The title indicates not only they attended the licensing but achieved the scores to be entered into the studbook as a stallion by the old standards. How can you recognize premium mares and not stallions. In Germany with the old system the stallions could be class 1 in the old days. Could use class I or class 2. Somehow recognize the stallion.
- Stallion minimum score, with Rick's proposal, some recognition. Elite stallion designation, 7.5 minimum score...recommend the scores be listed in the stallion directory? This could be a way to maintain our standards.
- Is the ARS score different than the AHS? Rhineland stallions are the same minimum score now.

Would there have to be a minimum score for outside stallions?

- If we recognized those stallions somehow differently it helps but not a great substitute
- Use the stallion discussion with Germany as a way of getting our stallions to join the databases for the hengst studbook.
- Two schools of thought: keep the minimum score to continue the quality and as info for our new breeders, or get rid of the minimum score, as we may lose breeders by remaining with the scores. And trying to be seen as the only registry with the minimum. Should we do more to educate the mare base ?

Motion: Propose to follow the Verband guidelines and no longer require a minimum passing score from the stallion sport test as one of the requirements of lifetime approval Motion passed. This change is not retroactive.

Amendment: Stallions that do not meet the minimum 7.5 score for the stallion sport test. Will not receive an Elite Stallion designation.

Board polled: amendment passed unanimously

New Business:

Drug Testing

Are drug test necessary for all stallions? Older stallions with a performance record have been drug tested at the FEI level. New Policy: Only test those stallions without a qualifying performance record.

Inspection Judges:

Mainly driving to inspections.

Office transformation to remote due to Covid restrictions:

- Has worked well remotely, bringing up transition post COVID of remote offices. Working quite well. Working remotely is the registrar. The part timers and the ED are in the office. To become a fully remote organization would need a reconfiguration of the back office: servers would need to “live” somewhere; a storage unit would be needed; some systems/processes would need to change. The office is currently trying to scan as much as possible so there is less paper. The new website will also help automate many of the current processes. Filing cabinets could be gotten rid of
- if the office was remote, would the members be OK? When someone comes by it is exciting although quite rare.
- Remotely, how do you train? Is it not an advantage to be in the office?
- The current rent is approximate \$950-\$1000./mo. And about \$100 for utilities,

VIT-

- Covid delayed the uploading of data into vit. Once it was done, adjustments must be made to ensure the fields match in both systems. The office is currently reviewing those fields and trying to assign the German codes to the American data.
- Covid has delayed the timeline, plus just new problems.
- The office staff is now able to use vit. Although it is a robust system, it is all in German. That said, staff is learning how to do basic navigation, which is saving time with pedigree research.

Book 2

- If implemented, it could possibly allow the inclusion of horses we have been sending to other registries.
- Passports being produced by Oldenburg and Westphalen-they look like regular passports, horses getting the passports.
- Full passports being issued by others. There would have to be guidelines for studbook two. The Oldenburg society in book 2, they are accepting them. Could we do giving a passport piece of paper for a fee. When we can print the passports, we would have to power to make them look different.

- The GOV has a studbook two, and they can have foal papers from these mares later on, they have to get a 7 for mares. They then protect the registry quality by the mare having to have a 7 or better vs. 6.

Meeting adjourned.