

**Northeast Reining Horse Association, Board of Directors Meeting  
Conference Call  
Wednesday, May 5, 2010**

**Board Members in Attendance:** Dirk Winkelhake, Michele Whitney, Cathy Nevitt, Dan Whitney, Sheli Senecal, Michelle Robertson, Geri Wasylak, Candy Conway, Jennifer Johnson

**Board Members in Absence:** Dennis Tito, Karen Black-Clark, Kristin McKeon

- I. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by NERHA President, Dirk Winkelhake, at 7:06 pm.
- II. **Approval of Minutes:** The meeting minutes from the April 6<sup>th</sup> and April 17<sup>th</sup> meetings were sent out via email. An "in favor" vote to approve the minutes was asked for by the President and was accepted unanimously.
- III. **Financial & Budget Report:** The NERHA Board of Directors receives and reviews detailed financial reports monthly and at all Board Meetings; this information is considered confidential. If you are a member and would like more information, please contact the NERHA Treasurer.
- IV. **Topsfield Show Management Meeting** – Dirk Winkelhake, Dan Whitney, Karen Black-Clark, Geri Wasylak and Michelle Robertson attended a meeting on Saturday, April 24<sup>th</sup> with the management of the Topsfield Fairgrounds, Henry and Curt. Following are the minutes taken from that meeting and presented by Dirk Winkelhake to the Board.

"Henry and Curt showed the NERHA representatives the new warm up pen. The pen is 200x100 and it's on the previous parking lot and has been fenced off with a temporary fence. They leveled it and put a rubber silicate mix on top. The ground is good for looping around but is not stopping ground. There were some concerns about the size and the NERHA offered to increase the width by 50'. The work will be donated to the club by Whitney trucking as a sponsorship. The NERHA would expect a reimbursement back to the club for this work. Henry and Curt are going to clarify this with their superior.

The arena ground which was in there at that time was compacted and leveled for the trade show. For a horse show they would normally go in and drag up the top couple of inches down to the old base. The problem we have with the old base is that it is not leveled very well. We would prefer to use the compacted footing and leveled base as it was prepared for the trade show and bring in a couple of inches of mortar sand on top which we would work with the Dragmaster to keep it leveled and control the dust/moisture level. Again the work of bringing in the additional sand would be donated to the club by Whitney trucking in a form of a sponsorship. After the show we offered to stock pile the mortar sand that was added so that we can use it for the Independence Classic. Henry and Curt will also clarify this with their superior.

The additional barns we need to rent and fill with temporary stalls for the Independence Classic look very good and there is no problem for Topsfield to accommodate 300 + stalls as they have done this before. They also can accommodate 100 + campers.

Our main concern was regarding the custodial fee being charged to the NERHA during a show. Henry and Curt didn't think it was likely that they could reduce this cost for us even though we could do our own dragging. It is required by the owners that a custodian is present at the Fairgrounds during the entire show; any dragging done is at no additional cost. However, they will still check whether it is possible to reduce the hourly rate.

Also discussed was the possibility of moving more of our shows to Topsfield, if they could support the items being discussed."

All three points of discussion had to be cleared by the owner of the Fairgrounds and Henry spoke with Dirk prior to the conference call to let him know the decisions.

1. The owner was fine with having the NERHA expand the width of the outdoor warm-up ring but had not specified how much would be donated back to us for costs. The Board was in agreement that until a specific amount could be agreed upon we would not do any additional work to the Topsfield warm-up ring.
2. The owner did not agree to our recommendation of using the compacted footing there and adding top sand to it. He felt that in doing this they would not be able to compact it properly for their trade shows. Dan Whitney agreed that this would be the case. However, they will use our drag which should improve the base leveling for us. If this still does not work for us we will have to renegotiate this for future shows.
3. As for the custodial fee; the rate will not be reduced. However, because the Prelude is a smaller show, we will have reduced show hours thereby reducing the overall custodial cost by \$240.

Dirk has asked that Michelle Robertson and Candy Conway work on a comparison between the Northampton Fairgrounds and Topsfield Fairgrounds. This will be done for 1 slate vs. 2 slate shows across 2, 3, and 4 days. This will help us to determine if we want to pursue Topsfield as a main venue for our shows or not.

In addition Dan Whitney has volunteered to spread the sand in the arena in lieu of sponsorship for the Slide-In which has a potential savings of \$1,500 to the NERHA. This will be taken into account for the comparison.

Michele Whitney and Candy Conway will also meet with the Northampton Fairgrounds rep to discuss how much they will be able to sponsor the Slide-In along with any additional cost savings.

- V. **Summer Prelude** (Michelle Robertson) – Everything is all set for the show; vendors, judges, insurance, and show schedule.

We will be having another General Membership meeting on Saturday, May 22<sup>nd</sup> after the Freestyle class. We will be announcing this throughout the show.

In an effort to see a profit for the Summer Prelude, camper fees were increased to \$100, the day fee was increased to \$50 and the stall fee has been increased to \$135. All permanent stalls must be utilized first before putting in temporary stalls. We will have to watch this very carefully to make sure we don't get stuck paying for temporary stalls that aren't used.

With these changes we are estimating a profit of \$1,200.

- VI. **Sponsorships** (Jennifer Johnson) – We've had a great response in sponsorships since the Spring Spin. In addition to our members donating back their winning (both from the 50/50 and their class earnings), we've had several division sponsorships and additional banners purchased. Toby Tyler donated a box of plaques; Whitney Trucking has really stepped up with the goods and services they are providing in lieu of sponsorship. Potential sponsors are Dave Hodges for the Derby and Rob Reynolds for the Futurity. Terri Sanborn will be donating a piece of jewelry to be raffled off at each show with all proceeds going back to the NERHA. Jenny is also negotiating with a company called Dac's (much like SmartPak) for sponsorships. In addition to the 50/50 raffle that Fran Simmons is coordinating for every show, there will be some additional fundraisers for the coming shows;

Summer Prelude – Michele Whitney is coordinating baskets.

Independence Classic – Jenny is working with Lisa Thompson on an ice cream social. Lisa is donating all of the ice cream, bowls and spoons.

Slide-In – The youth will be helping with the Chuck-A-Duck

Reiner's Rendezvous – Sit-A-Buck and Egg & Spoon

Banners will be hung at all the shows in the arena. This is for the benefit of our sponsors so their product or services are viewable to everyone. We will make an effort that all banners will be put up as early as possible so horse and rider can become accustomed to them.

VII. **Old Business –**

**Plaques, Ribbons & Buckles for Non-Approved Classes** – It was brought to the Boards attention that several people approached other members of the Board regarding not having any ribbons, plaques or year-end buckles for the non-approved classes. The Board discussed this again and we're all in agreement that the original motion will stand; no ribbons, plaques or year-end buckles for the non-approved classes (except Green Reiner), this would not be fair to those who made the decision not to ride in a non-approved class at the first show.

**Newsletter** – The newsletter still remains on hold at this time. The primary issue is the cost of the newsletter. Michele Whitney recommended putting the newsletter into a pdf format and emailing it to our members. Another idea is to put advertisements on our website.

VIII. **New Business –**

**Communications** (Sheli Senecal) – Sheli recommended that the NERHA setup Facebook and Twitter accounts. This will allow us to draw a large fan community and communicate with them more effectively. We will continue to utilize the Tailgate as a newsletter source. Since both Facebook and Twitter are free the Board agreed to these new venues of communication.

**NERHA October Show** – During the General Membership meeting in April, there was a general consensus that the October show should be cancelled. The Board will revisit this issue after the Summer Prelude.

IX. **Next Meeting Date** – General Membership Meeting Saturday, May 22, 2010 at Topsfield, MA after the last Freestyle class of the Summer Prelude.

X. **Adjournment** – Candy Conway made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Geri Wasylak seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 9:05 pm.