

March SWVHJA Board Meeting

CALL TO ORDER:

- Phillip Williamson called the meeting to order at 7:36

FEBRUARY 2024 MEETING MINUTES: Review and Approval

- Jamison Strasser made a motion to approve, Robin Wood seconded

SWVHJA TREASURER'S REPORT:

February Highlights Prepared by Annie Shawver, Treasurer

Statement of Net Position (“Balance Sheet”)

- SWVHJA has a strong balance sheet with total assets of nearly \$25k, little in the way of liabilities and total net position also nearly \$25k
- Cash balances in FY24 are higher than they were the same time last year by nearly \$7,000
- Total assets are higher as well
- In FY23, the Association was due a grant of \$5,000 reflected in accounts receivable
- Very small liability balances existed both years
- Net position (“equity”) is therefore close to the total asset amount for both years and is again higher in FY24 – by approximately \$2,000

Statement of Changes in Net Position (“Profit and Loss Statement”)

- Through February (3 months) in FY24, net income is over \$30,000 while for the same three months of FY23, the Association experienced a loss of approximately \$1,300
- This YTD net income is twice the \$15,000 target for the year but is likely to decline as expenses in coming months are likely to be higher than revenues
- Major causes for this stronger performance in FY24:
 - The Benefit show which netted nearly \$13,000
 - Lower Costs On The Year-end awards, about \$1,500 less in FY24
 - Banquet net income in 2024 vs a loss in 2023 (approximate \$4,400 swing)
 - Increased Member Dues And Emphasis On Renewing Early- up over \$6,000, member dues now 76% of budget
 - Fundraising/donations FY24: \$5,150 (none FY23)
 - Less Spent To date on salary and office space- about \$2,000 savings
 - Other expenses FY24 about half those of FY23
- The one item in FY23 that was a strength not seen in FY24 is the \$5,000 grant. It is part of the annual show, net, category

Changes to Process

- Annie Shawver discussed changing the way the board “Approves the report” as the board does not have the information in front of them to, and suggested replacing it with a “review and submit” process.

- Account Suggestions:
 - Annie Shawver suggested setting up an investment account of some type so we can use some of the funds there, and will work on that more before next month's meeting.
 - Annie Shawver suggested setting up a separate bank account (tied with the Truist account) so that we can hold junior monies in its own account which would best facilitate rolling the money from year to year
 - This would be an incentive for the juniors to do fundraising and be able to see what they directly have been able to do, and we don't have to worry about tracking what the juniors have raised on the secretary's end.
 - Ex: Mayes Foundation sponsored the junior scholarships this year, so we could use that bank account to roll over other junior fundraising
 - Junior committee could also move the money over to the SWVHJA primary account
 - This would allow us to identify at any point at time in the year what we have specifically for juniors
 - Holly Morris agreed and mentioned that the committee has discussed setting up a venmo for the junior committee
 - The board notes that there are potential fees associated with this
 - Britni noted that the education committee has discussed that we need to make donating as easy as possible, rather than checks in the mail or the current online donation system.
- Taxes
 - 5017 status- Annie Shawver notes that our current status is *not* tax exempt, so she is looking into how to change our status to 501c3
 - It will be easier to us to get donations if we can make them tax deductible to the donor
- Miscellaneous
 - Annie Shawver notes that she has online access to the Truist bank account

OLD BUSINESS:

Annual Show Date

- 10/23/24-10/27/24

Items from annual meeting to be discussed:

- Bylaws/rule change process
 - Jamison Strasser will do a deep dive into the bylaws and current rules, Gordon Reistrup and Anne Lesko will assist
 - Jamison Strasser and Robin Wood will work on creating a process for rule changes, Anne Lesko and Gordon Reistrup will assist
 - Gordon notes that what is presented needs to pass with the board and then can be refined by a smaller group
 - Board needs to establish a rule change process given the discussion at the annual meeting
- Thoroughbred and greens combination

- Ashley Holsinger notes that while on its surface this sounds like it shouldn't make sense, we do need to acknowledge that we need to have a solution for when divisions do not fill, and this change is in accordance with what the VHSA does.
- Gordon notes that we need to continue the discussion; it is too late to change the rule this year, and more time to make a decision for next year will allow us to inform the membership and receive feedback.
- The rules committee will evaluate these "gray areas" on division combining and work out a solution to create some specifications for what currently gets combined and why.
- Governance/procedures
 - This will be looped in by the committee who is working on the rule change processes
- Derby points
 - Board decides to save this discussion for when we have working rule change process in place
 - We have already surpassed the deadline to put a new rule into effect for the 2024 year, so the board has time to put this rule in effect and inform the membership.

NEW BUSINESS:

Committee reports

Education – Ashley Holsinger (Chair), Katie Gardner (Co-chair), Gordon Reistrup, Sarah Vagnoni

- SWVHJA Mini clinic, example list presented by Ashley Holsinger
 - The education committee plans to do one "mini clinic" a month, alternating between in-person and virtual to keep good balance
 - Listed potential topics, places, hosts, clinicians, and dates
 - Committee notes that they intend to video them (in person and virtual) and put them on the website so there is a "log" of the clinics the association has done and educational opportunities are readily available for those who may have missed the clinic.
- Annual clinic
 - Education Committee intends to approach the Virginia Horse Center board about inquire about if, in return for moving our annual show dates, they would be willing to partner with us or make a deal about use of facility
 - Haven't looked at a set date yet, Gordon is asking the horse center to let us know what dates are open or available and we will move forward from there
 - Committee intends to have a fully sponsored clinic and looking for a top or "gold" sponsor which Ashley is working on
- Committee intends to host education activities at the annual horse show
 - Annie Shawver inquired about the success of Ellen Shevella's judging clinic, which took place at the annual show in 2023. It was successful and she is planning to return.
 - Ashley notes that the educational activities at the annual show are intended to be mini clinic style, something that people could do in between showing with many opportunities so it doesn't take away from competition
 - Example: Mike Morris potentially discussing horse shoeing, etc.

Junior Committee: Holly Flory (Co-chair), Britni Cash (Co-chair), Megan Heffernan, Tara Deckel, Caroline Light

- The Junior Committee run bake sale (held at the Virginia Horse Center/Spring Welcome Horse Show) raised \$375 from cash and \$150 on Venmo.
 - Juniors Chloe Keplinger, Sydney Remington, Charlie Cambell worked the sale
- Committee intends to approach House Mountain about holding a “Trainer’s Medal”
 - The trainers do the equitation class and the students teach them
 - Class entries will go back to the junior fund
 - Ashley Holsinger recommends doing it on Friday afternoon/evening at the annual show
 - It has previously been involved with the SWVHJA annual with the hunt night activities
 - It has previously been done at the Virginia Horse Center A-shows as a benefit class with success
- Junior Committee has discussed having a Juniors only education mini horse show
 - The show would be tailored only to juniors, but would use the day before the horse show as an education day about running a horse show
 - Ie: course designing, horse show management, judging information possibly after the horse show
 - Britni Cash will donate her facility as the location for this event
 - Potentially June 15-16th- currently open on the calendar
 - The committee intends to have some level of participation in the education day required for juniors planning to compete
 - **Discussion from the board:**
 - According to the rule book, we can offer a smaller number of divisions, but we cannot offer the 3ft children’s hunter without also offering the 3ft adults. The board also considers that some of the specifications for lower level or typically “junior” divisions also include adults (ie: Pre-beginner, Beginner, Hopeful). This would limit the show mostly to Pony Hunters.
 - Phillip suggested rather than making it a limited horse show, it can be a SWVHJA run show that offers incentive to juniors and maybe splits the junior and adults on two seperate days so we can still have a junior day and participation.
 - This will prevent exhibitors from feeling like the board giving only juniors an extra chance at points on an open show weekend.
 - Phillip notes that this also should be held as SWVHJA Benefit show for the Juniors - specifically for them and all funds go to the potential junior bank account
 - This would encourage adult exhibitors and a potential wider net of trainers to also participate and show.
 - Phillip notes that the participation aspect might be hard to enforce, but suggested waiving an office fee or other show fee in return for participation from a management perspective
 - Ie: participate in the education day, juniors could get a \$25 credit.

- Annie Shawver suggested having some in hand classes and Robin Wood suggested having the in hand mini clinic prior
- With this feedback, Holly notes that she will take this back to the committee and discuss. The committee originally wanted to have it be a one day show, so the committee will work on a schedule that includes adult divisions but still a potentially limited schedule

Fundraising – Ashley Holsinger, Annie Shawver, Crissy Elliott, Aly Black, Catherine Daniel

- Committee intends to have a “swag” fundraiser
 - Aly Black has been working on an online store can be set up to put the SWVHJA logo on a large variety of items with a kickback directly to the organization
 - Board agreed and Aly Black will initiate the campaign.
- Committee intends to create a sponsor log, initiated by Annie Shawver
 - Log will show who/what has been donated, who has received thank yous, etc
 - 130 people on the list of donors currently
 - Only 8 people have donated every year in the past 5 years, so the committee has noted that we need to cultivate long standing repeat donations.
 - This will address **stewardship** and help organize how to reach out to donors and sponsors and thank them.
 - Crissy Elliott has ordered some generic thank you notes as a start, but the committee plans to expand and create a more firm system.
- Local day
 - Ashley has been in contact with Alan Lohman in an effort to reinstate “Local Day” at the Virginia Horse Center A- Shows.
 - Ashley has been in contact with Alan Lohman and Alan Reinheimer about a partnership with SWVHJA and their VHC A-shows that would generate some kickback to the organization
- Ways to Donate:
 - Committee has discussed a better way to let donors make “recurring donations” rather than just donating once online
 - Ie: autopay for donations which can help keep that consistency
- Committee is working on sorting out the 501 status
- Committee is working on getting annual show sponsorship letter early
- Anne Johnson notes that association got a check from Vineyard Farm for sponsorship
 - Since Vineyard Farm (Kelsey Neil) couldn’t attend the benefit show, the Vineyard Farm barn moms and Kelsey went to local businesses for item donations to host a raffle with all the donated items
 - 2,235\$ raised for the association, and \$375 of it were straight donations rather than just raffle tickets purchases
 - Ashley Holsinger notes that this is a great idea and loves when barns can individually do it and wants to keep that rolling throughout the year

Review – Gordon Reistrup, Anne Lesko, Jamison Strasser

- Points Inquiries

- Benefit show, “Chief”
 - Not recorded as Chief but entered and showed as Chief, and put in the notes that show name was different, but still neither name was what he was in the database as
 - Anne Johnston and Gordon Reistrup was not involved in either conversation
 - Sue Tallon (show secretary at the benefit show) doesn’t have any comments, just that neither name was the horse’s recorded name and it was not fixed at that time
 - Trainer mistake, but we’ve set a precedent
 - Board cannot make a decision at this time, this will go back to the committee for further discussion
- Green Reinstatement request
 - Horse in question has not been shown since 2022, has shown twice at the 2’6
 - To resolve, the committee is planning to refer to USEF as backing/governing body as typical in these circumstances
 - Time frame for has surpassed current rules of eligibility
 - Board decided to move forward with not reinstating the horse as it still is eligible for second year and reinstatement request passed the timeline outlined in SWVHJA rulebook
- Bylaw and rule changes are different
 - Bylaw changes are board only decisions, rule changes are shaped by the membership

Annual Show Team Report- Ashley Holsinger, Phillip Williamson, Robin Wood

- Ashley Holsinger and Phillip Williamson and Robin Wood have begun to connect about the annual show
- Staff:
 - Management intends to keep up with some level of loyalty for past annual show employees
 - So far the group has secured Matt Shepard to work the footing, and Sue Tallon and Jenn Hicks as secretary
 - The group is considering having board members course design
 - This would help keep staff expenses down
 - Gordon Reistrup volunteered his time and recommended doing some courses as a group in order to counter negative feedback (esp Medal Finals)
 - Whatever the group decides, we want to stay transparent with the membership about our decisions and the roles that board members will take on for the show
 - The board discussed having a judge that course designs medal finals and then also judges it, which happens at larger medal finals
 - The board discussed someone like Jean Marie- someone who is familiar to us who might know our association members well enough to serve them in that capacity.
- Judges:
 - Ann Wheeler (4 days) and Jessi Lohman (3 days) are secured
 - Considering Leslie Brown if possible
 - Board is in agreement
 - The group prefers anyone we don’t have to fly in to keep down expenses and keep the horse show local

- Schedule
 - The group intends to use the coliseum the least as it is the most expensive ring to use
 - The group intends to use the main hunter ring as wiley, second ring as the dee dee, jumpers in the coliseum, and medal finals will be a jumper/equitation course rather than just hunter equitation
 - This is going to be communicated the members early so they have time with it and hopefully will be excited
 - Closer to the “real” equitation without threatening the participant’s success
 - Invitational derby still on thursday but open to creative ways to make those things more marketable/sponsorable/better attendance
 - The group is considering holding the pony medal sunday morning in the dee dee rather than with the medals in the evening
 - Hold the rest of the rings
 - Hold a breakfast on the porch there
 - Trying to make the jumps flow, trying to make it special for the kids doing it, give them their own space, fix the mistakes that we made the last time
 - Colleges were trying to connect about putting all the equitation medals together
 - The group wants to move the first round of the classic go on the first day so we know who is participating in the second round on Sunday.

Closing:

- The board plans to reconvene in Executive Session on Tuesday the 19th of March at 7:30
- Anne Lesko makes a motion to adjourn, Robin Wood seconds, the meeting ends at 9:47