

AHR Board Meeting  
October 29-30, 2007

Attending: Paul Sutton, Andrew Yoder, Theo Hug, Gary Leisure, Bill Jameson, Art Winder, Mike Bobal, Bob Duvall, Michael Levasseur, Dave Kraus  
Ruth Schwab

Absent with notice: Willie Lehman

I. Paul Sutton called the meeting to order at 8:10 AM.

II. Introductions of Directors

III. Elections of Officers

Nominations:

President: Paul Sutton

Moved and Seconded nominations be closed

First Vice President: Theo Hug, Emily Gibson

Moved and Seconded nominations be closed

Theo Hug elected.

Second Vice President: Bob Duvall

Moved and Seconded nominations be closed

Clerk: Emily Gibson

Moved and Seconded nominations be closed

Treasurer: Andrew Yoder

Moved and Seconded nominations be closed

IV. Committee Reports

- A. **AHR Youth**—81 members, 2 clinics at National Show, Raffles at the AHR Sales, quarterly newsletters, \$500 grant from the Dept of Agriculture (Michigan) for prizes and youth medals. Awarded two scholarships and contests in creative writing, photography and coloring/drawing.

Discussion regarding the timeline to replace the original seed money of \$10,000 from Dave Wilson in honor of his son, Lee to start the Youth Scholarship program as it has been used over the years to pay out scholarship awards. \$6000 from the Youth Fund bank account has already been donated to the AHR Fund for ongoing scholarship support and additional funds are available in the Youth account to transfer to the AHR Fund, still allowing for adequate operating expenses for the Youth.

**Motion by Kraus to move up to \$6000 from the AHR Youth account to the AHR Fund**

**Seconded by Winder**

**Approved without objection**

**B. AHR Fund**—Currently there is a CD for \$30,000 with additional Money Market Account of over \$5000. There are plans to promote the Fund with a specific website linked from the AHR website and to create a tri-fold brochure to be mailed out to the AHR members.

**C. Bylaws Committee**—the membership approved the suggested sentence deletions to the Bylaws

1. There was discussion about a proposed change in the Bylaws to allow the annual BOD meeting to be scheduled as established by the Board rather than tied to the week after the Membership meeting. Wording of a proposed bylaw change will be considered by the committee.

2. Discussion about changing Article IV, Directors, Section 2. No member that has been convicted of or has pleaded guilty to a felony is eligible to run for Director in the AHR. This also will be discussed in the Bylaws Committee.

3. There will be an entire bylaws review in 2008.

**D. Pedigree Committee**

1. There have been 5 cases referred to the committee this year for review and decision about registration and transfer.

2. Discussion about the concerns that arise about legal transfer paperwork of ownership of AHR registered Haflingers when all pertinent signatures for AHR to make the transfer to the new owner are not provided, including in cases of deceased owners of transferred horses, or in cases of divorce or improperly transferred ownership paperwork. These are transfer rule issues, not a pedigree issue and not strictly under the purview of the Pedigree Committee. In the future, the office staff will do their best to obtain the necessary signatures for the transfer to take place, and in cases where a review of the case is requested by the buyer/seller, it will be sent by office staff to the Board of Directors for review and a decision.

**E. Futurity/Stallion Incentive Program committee**

There is potentially a new 2008 chairperson (Brian Mitteer from New York) identified as this year was a relatively inactive year for the program a smaller number of bred mares and need for increased promotional effort for participation.

## **F. Nominating Committee**

There will be continued effort to recruit good quality candidates for AHR Board of Directors positions.

## **G. Judges Program Committee**

1. Discussion about revised AHR Judges Accreditation Rules which the Committee proposed. There are only 4 currently active Senior C carded judges and demand for additional judges for regional inspections/classifications and in-hand classes.

**Motion by Winder that the BOD approve the revised Accreditation Rules as amended:**

**Under Senior C Judge Card Requirements—strike “no less than 100” and replace with “an additional 50”. Bobal seconded.** Discussion about the clarity of the current language about the number of Haflingers needed to be judged in order to fulfill the requirement for Senior “C” status, so **Winder tables his motion** and it is sent back to Committee for clarification.

## **H. Finance Committee**

1. Starting in 2007, DNA profit is listed as DNA income, which is a new income item on the Income budget. This is done on advice of our accounting firm consultants, who felt we needed to address the growing liability costs of DNA kits.
2. USDA 12 month CD account held in trust for sale bonding—no longer have to purchase a bond for the sale so this is now in a higher interest bearing account.
3. Proposed 2008 budget projections will be revised as the Sale and National Show expenses come in for 2007.
4. Discussion about Stallion License Renewal fees being split 50-50 between the advertising line item, and breed promotion line item. Almost all regional support requests were granted this year as well.

## **I. Membership Committee**

1. There is a question about whether there should be a limit of number of Haflingers an AHR youth member can have registered in their name. The bylaws currently state that youth owners can own “a” Haflinger. Since a youth under 18 cannot transfer the Haflinger if sold, the non-member transfer rates would apply if the youth’s family does not have a full AHR membership.
2. Discussion about prorating a new membership if joining after the first quarter in the year—it can be sold as an extended membership, including a full year membership for the following year with \$17 per quarter of the current remaining year.
3. Discussion about multiyear membership discounts with \$5 discount per year up to 3 years at a time.

**Motion by Duvall starting effective now for a prorated quarterly membership rate for first time members only to include the following year membership as part of the plan. Seconded by Winder. No objections.**

**Motion by Duvall starting effective 2008 new and renewal of memberships to offer a multiyear rate of \$180 for a 3 year membership option. Seconded by Winder. No objections.**

#### **J. Disposition and Trainability Assessment**

Lou Sutton and Robert Eicher presented:

First formal test was held the day before the Fall Sale with Peg Brown as the judge and seven learner judges. 12 horses went through in hand. 5 were ridden and 4 were driven. Feedback from the participants for the most part was good. There were some questions about what the judge was looking for and how the assessment was being done. The expenses exceeded revenue this first year. There are a number of areas of improvement, including providing a scribe for the judge so there is no delay in the process of the test.

Suggestion from Eicher about considering a private treaty sale in association with the Disposition and Trainability Assessment, possibly in conjunction with the National Show. There is also an interest in promoting this program to general horse media to show what is being developed by the Haflinger community in assessing disposition and trainability.

A website will be created on [www.haflingerhorse.com](http://www.haflingerhorse.com) with an explanation of the program with photos.

Sutton and Eicher are thanked for their efforts in their leadership in developing this program.

#### **K. National Show Committee**

Lou Sutton presented:

1. Financial bottom line is yet undetermined as some sponsorship money and fun auction income has not yet come in. It will likely break even or be a small net profit. About 10% increase participation in terms of number of horses.

The 2008 National Show will take place Sept 10-13 in Danville, Indiana near Indianapolis, coinciding with the Belgian Congress Show at the Indiana State Fairgrounds, so hotel rooms may need to be reserved as a block to provide enough space for AHR members to stay.

**Motion by Kraus to hold the 2008 AHR National Show Sept. 10-13 in Danville, Indiana at the Hendricks County Fairgrounds 4H Complex. Seconded by Jameson. No objections**

2. Concern forwarded to the Board from an exhibitor about a crossover of a mare shown in halter pleasure mare and her filly shown in draft weanling filly class, the mare and her filly were then shown in mare/filly pleasure class. A complaint from the exhibitor was placed by phone to Lou Sutton as chair of the committee, the committee was queried individually and the preliminary review of the show rules was that it is not permitted to cross-enter the same individual in both draft

and pleasure in hand classes but that the rule does not pertain to group classes. Further research will be done to determine the intent of the original rule, the committee will review the complaint again and get back to the exhibitor who has expressed the concern. The committee will also need to review the lack of clarity of the current rules so there is no future misinterpretation.

3. Discussion about the AHR Board of Directors' appreciation of the H.O.P.E organization and their promotion of the breed, including their presence at a variety of equine events, including the National Show.

4. Soliciting sponsorship financial support for the National Show is an onerous task that is repeated annually. Seed money is needed for advertising and adding some classier elements to the show. The Show Committee will consider ways to try to raise money for this purpose.

#### **L. Inspection and Classification Committee**

Co-chair Robert Eicher presented:

1. Committee summary information was provided for average scores by year and site since the start of the program in 1999.

2. There was feedback received from some participants that the site coordination and handling of logistics was problematic at some sites. More prep information needs to be provided to the site coordinators and the participants ahead of time so they know the schedule and logistics of the day.

3. Discussion about access to the searchable database that is being created by the committee for purposes of being able to search for sires and dams passing on desirable characteristics of the breed standard.

4. Discussion about averaging judge scores as was done in the past vs the current system of judge discussion to come up with the final score with individual judge scoresheets not being turned in for historical record.

5. Scribes must remain silent during the process and not provide verbal input during or after the judging process.

6. Concern was expressed by Sutton about the Board micromanaging the committee's tasks.

7. There was discussion about the influence of the mandatory Austrian system over our voluntary system—the differences are many and don't clearly translate.

8. Rates per horse need to be raised and the rental costs may need to be transferred to the regional sites.

9. Consider planning I&C sites at least two years in advance for planning purposes.

**Motion by Kraus to allow only one judge on the I&C Committee, seconded by Yoder. After extended discussion, Kraus rescinds his motion to allow the process of identifying chairpersons to unfold and recruit committee membership.**

#### **M. Personnel Committee**

1. There has been stability in the current office staff (4 positions) for the past 3-4 years and the personnel issues are non-existent.

2. Concern expressed about the decrease in paper transactions may be resulting in less work load for the office staff. There is no volunteer labor in the office at all any more, and rare need for overtime for the hourly employees. Ruth Schwab regularly has responsibilities that require overtime. The staff have also taken on many duties that were previously done by volunteers for I&C Committee, Sales Committee and Show Committee.
3. Discussion about how Personnel Committee needs to communicate more effectively to the Board and the membership about the many responsibilities office staff have, even in light of decreasing paper transaction numbers, primarily in providing support to the committees and answering non-member questions that come in by phone and email.
4. Upgrade to phone system has been discussed for several years. Purchasing headsets for the staff will be helpful but headsets are not compatible with the current system. The office is down to only 4 operating phones, all of which are old. Gary Leisure will investigate the lease/purchase options and get back to the Board about his recommendations.
5. Sutton would like to look at partitions for the office so there are some sound barriers because of the open nature of the current space.

#### **N. Planning Committee**

Discussion about reactivating the committee to come up with a long range plan for the organization, and work with the AHR Fund Board for future needs that may attract specific donations.

#### **O. World Haflinger Federation**

This year's report was written by Joel Greenisen and published in the Aug/Sept 2007 magazine. There is a possibility of hosting the 2009 WHF meeting due to the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the importation of the Haflinger to North America and AHR will explore this with the committee as this would be an excellent opportunity to showcase our members' Haflingers.

#### **P. Points and Awards Committee**

This has been a low key program with little promotion in the past. Levasseur has created a software program with the capability of creating a life long points systems for the Haflinger's performance history. Recreational points should also be considered to be cumulative rather than giving the participant the same award annually. Other breeds have model programs we can review and consider adopting. Art Winder will do some further research into programs and get back to the Board about his findings.

#### **R. Promotions, Advertising and Regional Support Committee**

1. A variety of advertising, class and event sponsorships was funded from stallion license renewal income.
2. There was extensive discussion about how to facilitate more magazine coverage of breed achievements (this year there are breed features in the USDF

Connection and Young Rider magazine) and working in conjunction with Haflinger H.O.P.E.'s promotional and advertising efforts.

3. We will have an AHR booth at the 2007 USDF convention.

4. A new AHR Farm directory will be self-supporting in 2008 to promote member farms. This full color multi-page 8 ½ by 11 size brochure will be distributed at breed events, expos and conventions.

5. There will also be continued presence at Equine Affair and the Fantasia presentation and continue to support newer regional associations and clubs who have few resources to draw from and need some seed money to start up.

#### **S. Publications Committee**

1. According to figures for the last six issues, the inclusion of inserts in the magazine mailers, over \$13,000 is saved in postage and envelope costs. Allowing for \$10 per year from each member's dues allocated to the magazine budget, as well as the savings from using inserts rather than separate mailings, the magazine has been essentially break even for the past 6 issues.

2. Printing and paper costs are not thought to be going up significantly in the next year.

3. Our advertising costs are quite reasonable compared to other magazines, and still allow for some profit for us.

#### **T. Sales Committee**

1. Preliminary fall sales results are not available yet. The number of Haflingers sold at the sale last week was down but it was a well attended one day sale with a good size audience and prices were somewhat stronger than previous sales. Showing the sale Haflingers riding and driving really enhanced the sale. There will be a continued Preview opportunity for sale horses prior to the sale. There were a number of Haflingers sold into Canada due to the stronger Canadian dollar.

2. There were compliments on the auctioneering team this fall.

3. The timing of the tack sale was debated and possibly moving the Membership meeting to Friday evening. The Fun Auction will now be chaired by Ian Wengerd who will bring new enthusiasm to the event.

4. There were many compliments about the peanut butter pie.

#### **U. Website Committee**

1. We are getting over 6000 hits per month to the home page with the classified ads and member farms pages getting the next greatest hits.

2. We plan to have short video clips on the website

3. A searchable database will be created for the website due to some software created by Michael Levasseur which will be tested before being released on the web.

**Motion by Bobal to investigate the possibility of putting a free searchable pedigree database on the AHR website for use by members and non-members. Seconded by Winder. No objections.**

**V. Video Committee**

Mike Levasseur will solicit digital quality video to update the current AHR promotional video.

Meeting adjourned at 5:15 PM on Tuesday, October 30, 2007. Next meeting December 5