

The annual Board of Directors Meeting was called to order by President Bill Jameson at 8:15 am on Monday, October 26th, 2009.

In Attendance: Bill Jameson, Gary Leisure, Brian Mitteer, Paul Sutton, Bob Duvall, Don Jackson, Andrew Yoder, Dean Baker, Theo Hug and Ruth Schwab. Carolyn Sutton took minutes. Absent with notice: Emily Gibson, Dave Kraus. Mike LeVasseur not in attendance - Going off the board.

Paul Sutton moved to go into executive session. Bob Duvall seconded.
Don Jackson moved to go out of executive session. Andrew Yoder seconded.

2010 Officers:

President: Bill Jameson
1st Vice President: Paul Sutton
2nd: Vice President: Bob Duvall
Clerk: Don Jackson
Treasurer: Brian Mitteer

Youth Committee: Membership down in the Youth. Expenses not in yet for this year's prizes and plaques.

The AHR Youth account still has \$6000 that is designated for scholarships. This money needs to be transferred to the AHF.

By-law Committee: Discussion of the limiting directors from each region. This last election we could have had a problem since there were four directors running from the Northeast region. The directors looked at the map and the numbers of members. Should the requirement for signatures be done away with or reduced? Signatures can be faxed or emailed to the office. The number of consecutive terms permitted was discussed. It was suggested that the by-law committee look at the three to four directors from each region and the term limits and make recommendations back to the board.

D & T Committee: Seven horses participated in the D & T at this fall sale. People who have participated in the program are convinced that the scores have helped the sale of their horse. Advertising in the sale catalogue of the D & T explaining the program might help promote it. It was suggested that possibly having the D & T on Thursday would make the results available on Friday when talking to customers.

Finance Committee: The board was given the Financial Statement for 2008 from The 415 Group Accounting Firm. The accounting firm reported no irregularities. We comply with the by-laws which states either "review or audit is to be done yearly." The registry is at a deficit at this time, but half of our registration income arrives in the last two months of the year. We have expenses of the stallion catalogue, calendar, last magazine, sale catalogue. The proposed budget was offered from the office for a budget to be reviewed and revised by the new treasurer and then presented to the board for approval.

Futurity Committee: It was noticed that there was a nice crowd for the futurity. The order will be changed for next year to begin with the weanlings. The starting time and order was discussed. Stallion liberty might be changed to Stallion Demo for the participant to decide whether to ride, drive, or show at liberty within the allotted time. It was hoped that the schedule could be worked to benefit the flow of each event. The exhibitors had requested that the draft and pleasure futurity not be scheduled at the same time as some exhibitors had horses in both draft and pleasure classes.

Membership Committee: Membership is down from last year by 12.5%. Two directors brought an article from the Western Horseman to share with the board about the trends in the horse market and other registries. The discussion led to what do our members need and want from the registry. We discussed several ideas including lowering the price of membership. Affiliate Membership was discussed. We are in line with other horse breed registries. Our pro-rate membership fee for first time members is very popular. It was suggested that we devise a program where the sellers could receive a small incentive discount on their membership if they sell a membership to their horse buyers. It was suggested that the directors be notified when a new owner buys a horse in their area, so they can make a phone call to personally develop a relationship with that owner and invite them to join the organization.

Nominating Committee: There were several names submitted for the Western Region Director spot and Chair Paul Sutton has already spoken with most of those people to determine their interest in the position. Interested candidates have been requested to send in bios for review by the Board. There was discussion of ideas on how to get members involved and get them to run for available director positions.

Pedigree Committee: Bill Jameson has emailed the owner of the Haflinger that was advertising a Haflinger for sale with the pedigree available from the previous owner for an additional \$500. Bill has not received an answer. The committee has also been in discussion regarding the issue with frozen semen. If a buyer keeps the semen frozen for several years and then the farm that issued the frozen semen goes out of business, then how is the buyer protected? There is no secondary market for the frozen semen. The longevity of frozen semen is many years. The pedigree committee would like a form which would cover situations when the semen is not used immediately. A three copy form - one for the stallion owner, the mare owner and the AHR office. Renewal fee for stallions would be at the time that the frozen semen was sold for AHR stallions and foreign stallions would be at the time of the collection. A form will be drawn up by the committee. The committee does not want to come into the agreement between the two parties, but we need to protect both stallion owner and mare owner to make sure resulting foals are able to be registered. There will be no fee for the form at this time. Rules for Registration will need to be updated to include the new procedure. An article should be included in an upcoming issue of Haflinger Horse explaining the new procedure and the few stallion owners that are currently holding frozen semen should be contacted. This should be implemented before the next breeding season.

Next issue is skipped transfers. This is an on going problem and horses are continually being lost to the Registry. It was suggested that we could send a letter to the last recorded owner if a skipped transfer occurs although that holds little clout if the owner no longer owns Haflingers. Hardship cases will be considered by the Board on an individual basis.

The question was brought up of an enhanced pedigree which would include classification scores and show record. At the present time we can only add at the description portion of the pedigree. An alternate sheet with record of achievement is another possibility. Changing the way a pedigree prints would require a re-write of our database software.

Personnel Committee: Insurance issues were discussed. Should AHR require that helmets be worn at AHR events? Currently only youth riders are required to wear protective headgear. The Ashland County Fairgrounds does not have Ohio Equine Law Liability Posters up. They will be contacted and asked to post the signs in the horse areas. The office is running smoothly with two employees and two occasional volunteers.

National Show: The Champions Center in Springfield Ohio has been contracted for the 2010 National Show. The show committee is working on the schedule and they suggested a return to a four-day show. The request has been made to the facility to be on the wait-list in case the week earlier September date becomes available.

Points and Awards Committee: Each year participation is increasing for both the recreational and performance side. The recreation side has been modified to allow hours to accumulate year to year. There is committee work in process to enhance the performance side, however, with reduced office staff, this may not be realistic at this time.

Promotion and Advertising Committee: There was discussion about where our advertising dollars would be best spent. Should ads in existing magazines be reduced in size in order to place some ads in more "sport horse" areas? Most big time horse magazines are cost prohibitive for AHR.

Magazine Committee: Our advertising income is down as the economy is sluggish. The magazine has no paid writers and sometimes article submission is light. Most of the ads are still placed by our members. Discussion ensued on ideas that could help increase circulation and advertiser appeal. Enhancing the magazine page on our website might catch the eye of people searching the web for Haflinger magazines. Is there a marketing person that could figure out a plan to help sell advertising and generate a little income for themselves as well? Should a tier system of advertising rates be considered? It was suggested that putting our magazine ads on the website as well might increase advertising appeal. Sending out sample magazines to waiting rooms in horse clinics, horse expo centers and other horse places might be a way to increase subscribers.

Sale Committee: The number of consignments was considerably less than in prior years. Eleven horses went to Canada at the Fall sale even though the required paperwork is getting more difficult to track. The Spring Sale is May 21-22, 2010 and The Fall Sale is Oct. 22-23, 2010. The sale committee has received a request that the sale be moved up to earlier in October. Andrew Yoder will investigate this with the Fairgrounds. There were also complaints about the PA system during the sale. Andrew will check with Terry at the Fairgrounds to see if there is a way to adjust it. The sale committee is working on the purchase of a digital system to display the lot numbers.

Video Committee: Very few video clips have been submitted to the committee. Everyone was very impressed with the Highlights from the National Show.

Web Site Committee: We have had 52,000 hits to our web site this year. This is a good advertising tool. The pedigree search, farm list, and classified are the most visited.

World Federation Committee: We have completed the wire transfer for the WHF dues in Euro, but have not received the bank statement showing the exact dollar amount. We thank the New York Classic for hosting the event and so wonderfully entertaining the guests. The WHF members complimented the quality of the horses that they were seeing in the USA since their last visit. Additional individuals have asked to be AHR representative to the WHF. Options will be investigated including creating an "application" that can be submitted by interested individuals.

Old Business: Spotted Haflinger Issue

Discussion on whether there is any legal restriction on the name "Haflinger". Should AHR openly fight or would this just give them additional advertising? There is currently wording on the AHR website homepage that Haflingers are NOT spotted.

Classification/Inspection Committee: Paul Sutton brought his three concerns to the board. First the education of the participations as to the value and details of the program is needed. The second concern is the whole numbers involved in the scoring. And the third is the huddle for judges, rather than each judge evaluate separately and be averaged by another person. Several members of the I&C Committee were on hand to answer questions. In order to educate, a handbook is being designed that will help participants understand the process and procedures during inspection. The score card has been designed to give the participations as much information as possible. Jennifer Rousseau gave a history of the program and how it has been developed. The committee believes the value is in the discussion to come up with a single score rather than three scores. Each judge must be willing to defend his score to the other judges. The judges present explained the benefit of multiple sets of eyes. What one judge might miss, another sees. I/C did average the scores for two years (2000-2001), and found it unacceptable theoretically giving one judge the power to elevate or decrease any score. There was discussion on the possibility of changing the scoring system to include half points. The committee feels strongly that changing this now would invalidate previous scores and may artificially inflate current scores. Half points could allow a score 5 points higher than if no half points were permitted. The question was asked to the committee about the three letters that came in regarding the 2009 inspections. The committee chair advised that each of the persons involved have already been contacted in person or via phone and that formal written responses are being formulated which will be submitted to the Board for review. The issues raised will also be the subject of future articles in Haflinger Horse.

Judges Committee: The judges committee has been in close contact with the I&C committee for the last two years. There are six C carded judges. It was suggested by the Chair that the process might be too intense which may scare off prospective applicants. Lack of judges is an on going problem. It was suggested that anyone seeing a competent judge write down their name submit it to the committee who will then contact the person to try to get them interested in our judges program. A complaint about how the judges were dressed at the Futurity Show was discussed. A suggestion was made to include a "Business Casual, no blue jeans" clause in our judge contracts.

Theo Hug moved that the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Dean Baker. Meeting adjourned Tuesday October 27th at 3:45 PM.