

Minutes, TASHA Board Meeting, February 28, 2011

Respectfully submitted by Secretary, Nancy Moreno

The meeting was called to order by President Barbara Simpson at 7:15 pm. In attendance were: Barbara Simpson, Chris Tresten, Katie Park, Steve Chadick, Nancy Moreno, Jean Huffstickler and Bill Marple (by teleconference).

The first item of business was a discussion about an appropriate time of year to hold the general membership meeting. In 2010, the general meeting was held at the December horse show. However, attendance at that meeting was light, presumably because many members were occupied with the horse show. It was brought up that the general meeting usually is held in September. After discussion, the group agreed that September is an appropriate and convenient month for most members.

Jean Huffstickler gave the financial report, which was approved. The profit and loss statement showed a \$3,700 profit after both shows. However, with memberships still coming in, this amount will change slightly, and a contribution to Pin Oak also was still pending. The TASHA table sales were profitable overall. Almost all classes were sponsored (\$3,600) at the horse shows. Memberships were at about the same level. Currently, TASHA is ahead of the forecasted budget for this year. After considering all expenses, the January show showed a net loss of \$271 and the December show had a profit of \$3,640. These positive numbers are due partially to the many volunteers who help keep TASHA expenses low. It was noted during the discussion that if TASHA could continue to have judges for the February or spring show who are willing to work for expenses only, it would help keep costs down.

In the interest of keeping expenses down, other horse show venues were discussed. Steve Chadick reported on the Equestrian Center in Brenham. That facility is \$350 per day, and bedded stalls are \$25. The facility has a total of 85 stalls. Great Southwest Equestrian Center is \$650 per day, with similar costs for stalls. Jean Huffstickler pointed out that there only is one small hotel in Brenham, which could be an inconvenience for exhibitors. In addition, the warm-up ring set-up and footing would need to be evaluated. Steve Chadick will investigate further, so that TASHA has more options. Bill Marple brought up the Rockwall Facility and another venue south of Dallas, which had been used by NTASHA, and noted that the volunteers all had to stay in hotels overnight to be available for the show when those facilities were used. This need for hotel space added to the overall cost of the shows. Barbara Simpson also mentioned that TASHA has a good working relationship with Great Southwest, and that management of the facility provides discounts on tables, chairs etc. Bill Marple congratulated the group and TASHA volunteers for bringing show costs down, especially given the current economic climate.

A change of 2012 dates for the TASHA winter horse show was discussed. As was noted by Barbara Simpson, rescheduling the January/February horse show has been discussed many times in the past. The rationale for changing to a month later in the show season with better weather has been to encourage more barns (both from within and out of state) to attend the show.

As reported by Barbara Simpson, during the January horse show, a date during the third week in May became available at the Great Southwest Equestrian Center. This new date represented an opportunity to move the winter/spring TASHA show to a more favorable date, as had been discussed in the past. Barbara reported that she consulted with representatives from all barns present at the January show about reserving the May date for the 2012 show. Based on the response received at the show, the May date was reserved. A speedy decision was necessary because dates disappear quickly at Great Southwest. The possibility of sharing the May date in 2012 with a Welsh horse group also exists, which would reduce expenses.

However, the discussion about whether to keep the May dates or return to the January dates was reopened at the Board meeting, because not all trainers had had an opportunity to provide feedback about the change of dates. As acknowledged by all present, the May dates conflicted with other potential shows in our area. In 2011, Paul Cates will use the possible May dates for a show in Seguin. These dates also were used in previous years by Vantage Point Farm for a one-day show.

Prior to the Board meeting, Steve Chadick spoke with all of the trainers who usually attend TASHA shows. Barbara Simpson noted that January is a difficult month financially for many exhibitors, because of post-holiday bills. As described by Steve Chadick, the January show is economically important for trainers. However, Paul Cates and Michael Beasom usually do not attend the January show. As reported by Barbara Simpson and Steve Chadick, Dan Flowers and Sandy Currier said that they would come to either or both shows, regardless of dates. Milo Jones and Koren Mercer also were supportive of a May show. Katie Park pointed out that the amateur owners prefer the May date.

Since TASHA has limited options regarding dates, the option to do a January show (put on by one or more barns), with seed money to cover up front costs, as a loan, from TASHA, also was discussed as a strategy to maintain a show on those dates.

Jean Huffstickler pointed out that a May show might pull more groups from Louisiana, and throughout Texas. Nancy Moreno moved that TASHA support further exploration of a Jan/Feb show, and, if such a show develops, to provide support to the show. Bill Marple suggested that a maximum amount of loaned seed money be defined. After discussion, it was decided that TASHA would be willing to sponsor the facility in Brenham (or equivalent) and sponsor the ribbons for a one-day show, and provide seed money for other up-front expenses. The total commitment would be up to \$700 in sponsorship and \$2000 as a loan. This new show could be conducted as winter co-op show by any combination of trainers who might want to participate. The board unanimously agreed to offer this support for a potential February show. Bill Marple pointed out that Paul Cates and Steve and May Chadick are very good at putting on one-day shows.

Next, the group discussed whether to continue mandatory TASHA membership for exhibitors at TASHA shows, or to charge an alternative non-member fee (\$20). Bill Marple suggested that TASHA have a required administrative fee that is waived for TASHA members at the shows, instead of a non-member fee. The group favorably discussed Bill Marple's suggestion.

Barbara Simpson distributed a ballot for board members to use to vote on future show dates and on the administrative fee for non-members at TASHA horse show. The ballots were collected by Secretary Nancy Moreno. Regarding the May, 2012, show date, six members voted in favor of the new date, and one member voted to keep the January date. On the membership issue, six members voted to make membership in TASHA non-mandatory at TASHA shows, but to designate an administrative fee that is waived for members. One board member voted in favor of mandatory TASHA membership.

Barbara Simpson brought up marketing challenges for TASHA and American Saddlebred horses, in general. If TASHA nets sufficient funds from a May show, it would be possible to fund ASB marketing, which would be benefit all local trainers. She presented several marketing ideas: mini-billboards around the arena at Great SW; local equestrian magazines; and a Gloss Magazine (Houston Chronicle) advertisement. She shared an idea from Milo Jones to establish a new trainer fund (with UPHA) to bring more trainers to Texas, and raised the possibility of conducting a structured brainstorming session involving trainers and the TASHA board meeting to come up with ways to promote ASB trainers, TASHA and ASB horses in our local area. Bill Marple suggested that we have a booth or exhibition at a local horse fair. Barbara Simpson mentioned that she and Jean Huffstickler had discussed working with the Great Southwest Equestrian Center to conduct a horse fair. Chris Tresten described how the Pin Oak Symphony of Horses had been successful as a fundraiser. Nancy Moreno mentioned that TASHA needs a Facebook page. Katie Park volunteered to set up Facebook and Twitter accounts for TASHA.

Barbara Simpson discussed updating the TASHA website. Melissa Cole was sent samples for new designs for the TASHA website. The possibility of formatted emails also was discussed to improve communication among members, and with other clubs.

The meeting was adjourned at 9 pm.