

**Minutes of the Montana Cutting Horse Association (MCHA)
Board of Directors' Meeting**

*January 2nd, 2021
Via Zoom*

President Will Nuttall called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

Directors Present: President Will Nuttall, Vice President Cindy Garoutte, Nancy LaCounte, Kelsey Fraser, Wylie Fraser, Kathy Foote, and Michelle Van Dyke

Directors Represented by Proxy: Roy Oliver and Alison Anderson (both through Kelsey Fraser)

Others Present: Secretary/Treasurer Kelly Fraser

The minutes of the November 23rd, 2020 Board of Directors' meeting had been distributed to the Board members prior to the meeting. Minutes were approved on a voice vote.

OLD OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

MCHA License Plate

President Will Nuttall asked Secretary/Treasurer Kelly Fraser to update the Board on the status of the License Plate. Secretary/Treasurer Kelly Fraser said that the plate design, which was chosen by the Board, had been sent to the Department of Corrections for production and would be ready for release at the end of January. She told the Board that Lee Wirthlin wants to do a release campaign at that time. Lee had not yet spoken to the State regarding how the funds generated from the sale of the plate may be used (such as for awards), but she will be working on clarification as soon as the plate launch is finished.

NCHA Circuit Program

President Will Nuttall told the Board that he had been in contact with NCHA to express his concern over the current regions that constitute the Circuits. He said that he was concerned the current Circuits cover too vast of an area. There had been discussion about splitting the state of Montana, so western Montana may join the Redwood Circuit. The Board felt that splitting the state would ultimately be detrimental to cutting in Montana. Kelly Fraser told the Board that she understood NCHA will allow shows to get dual Circuit approval from adjoining Circuits and that should help with some of the concerns. The main point the Board wanted to address is not limiting attendance at Montana shows. Will Nuttall is concerned with shows in surrounding states putting on shows over the top of Montana shows. Cindy Garoutte said that as of right now, there are no shows scheduled over the top of one and other. It was decided by the Board that this discussion should continue at a later date and as new developments in the Program arise.

Election By Laws

Kathy Foote said that the committee had drafted the proposed By Law changes and Tanya Dvarishkis is in the process of reviewing it. They should have a draft by the end of the month to distribute to the Board.

MCHA Audit

Secretary/Treasurer Kelly Fraser told the Board she had spoken more in depth with the MCHA's accounting firm Fagan & Cook, and they would not be able to do the audit as requested. They had originally thought they would be able to run an internal audit/review of the MCHA books but after more thought, they felt they would be opening themselves up to an issue of liability. They explained that to do an actual audit, an accounting firm must be certified to do so. Once an audit has been completed by a firm, the findings must then be sent to two additional firms for review. An audit would cost no less than \$14,000.00 to complete. The accountant feels that for a company as small as MCHA, it would be ridiculous to have a formal audit. A formal audit is mostly used by companies that receive large sums of government grants (\$1 Million), school districts, colleges, or Tribes. Their suggestion is to have the bank reconciliations done by them each month; this process would catch any discrepancies in the books. The cost would be under \$100 per month. They noted as of right now, when they do the taxes the entire QuickBooks file is sent to them not simply a printout of expenses and income. As they do the taxes, they in essence, are doing an internal review of the books currently. Wylie Fraser made the motion to have the MCHA accounting firm do the end of month bank reconciliations. Motion was seconded by Nancy LaCounte and passed on a voice vote.

Savings or Interest Account

Secretary/Treasurer Kelly Fraser asked the Board if they were still interested in moving money from the checking account to some form of interest-bearing account. The Board felt at this time, not knowing how 2021 would progress, it would be best to table this for a later date.

NEW BUSINESS:

2021 Show Schedule

Vice President Cindy Garoutte had previously provided the Board with the shows and dates that were under consideration for approval. She noted that there may be a possible addition of a Wyoming show, Saratoga, but she was waiting to hear on that date. She also noted that there is currently discussion on several additional shows such as: Lewistown, Great Falls and Corvallis. Kelsey Fraser also noted that Rob Fraser is working on possible shows in Glasgow, Miles City and Baker.

There was discussion by the Board for approval of Nampa, ID and Rapid City, SD. The Board felt that it should support as many area shows as possible, so both shows should be on the schedule and approved. Wylie Fraser made the motion to approve both Nampa, ID and Rapid City, SD. Motion was seconded by Nancy LaCounte and carried on a voice vote.

Based on the past reciprocal approval of the Big Piney show and one Utah show, the board decided on the April 21-24 Ogden UT show. Because the October Utah show is after the 2021 MCHA Year End, that show was not considered for approval.

Vice President Cindy Garoutte said that she had been in contact with Andi James regarding the Big Piney show. The James family would be interested in becoming the show management with compensation. President Will Nuttall thought that they should be paid the same as a show judge at \$500 per day as well as pre- and post-show days at \$125-\$150 per day. Wylie made the motion for the James family to be the Big Piney show management. Motion was seconded by Kelsey Fraser and passed on a voice vote. There was discussion by the Board of having two judges at the show along with two show pens. The second barn at the fairgrounds was discussed as a loping area and possibly for a practice pen to be added. Kelly Fraser said that as she understood from Andi James, as long as the second arena was available there was a possibility for MCHA to use it for those purposes. Will Nuttall felt that if Big Piney was to grow this may be the year for that push. Cindy Garoutte will follow up with Andi James regarding the Boards decision and possible ideas.

The Board felt that because of the success of past years shows, it would be important this year to offer fresh cattle in ALL classes whenever possible. The Board will be cognizant of the financial implications with additional cattle cost, but they felt it is most important to give back to those just starting in the sport of cutting.

The following shows were unanimously approved by the MCHA Board of Directors:

January 18-20: Rapid City, SD (Black Hills Stock Show)

March 24-28: Nampa, Idaho

April 16-18: Laurel, MT

April 21-24: Ogden, UT

April 30-May 2: Gillette, WY

May 26-30: Livingston, MT (MCHA Produced)

June 10-13: Dillon, MT (MCHA Produced)

June 19-26: Western Nationals Denver, CO (NCHA show listed for information only)

August 11-15: Big Piney, WY (MCHA Produced)

September TBD: Livingston, MT (MCHA Produced)

September 17-19: Laurel, MT

October 1-3: Circuit Finals – Gillette, WY

Never Won A Buckle Class (NWAB)

President Will Nuttall asked the Board for some input as to offering the NWAB class at shows. The Board discussed the pros of offering the class and encouraging new participation in cutting. It was decided that the show producer will decide if the NWAB Class will be held at a show and MCHA will provide the buckles. Nancy LaCounte will order 6 additional buckles with no year engraved.

2021 Approved Classes

President Will Nuttall asked the Board if they felt there was a need to change the list of approved classes for the 2021 show year. The Board felt there was no need to change the class list for 2021. Our MCHA 2021 Approved Classes will be as follows:

Open

Non-Pro

\$50,000 Amateur

\$25,000 Novice Horse

\$25,000 Novice Horse Non-Pro

Junior Youth

Senior Youth

\$35,000 Non-Pro

\$15,000 Amateur

\$5,000 Novice Horse

\$5,000 Novice Horse Non-Pro

\$2,000 Limit Rider

**Open Derby

**Non-Pro Derby

**Open Classic

**Non-Pro Classic

**It will be up to the show producer whether to offer these classes. All other approved classes must be offered in order for a show to receive MCHA approval.

**1,500 Novice Horse may be offered by the show producer; however, it is not an approved MCHA class and will not be eligible for year-end awards.

**The Board discussed the possibility of a 2-handed or Rancher class to be offered. They decided that if a show producer feels there would be interest it would be up to them to offer the class/classes.

2021 Year End Awards

Minimum Participation

President Will Nuttall opened the floor to discussion regarding having a minimum show attendance rule in order to be eligible for year-end awards. Kelsey Fraser noted that some people attending the awards banquet were disappointed that year-end awards were leaving the state. She felt that it may be important to the Non-Pro and Amateur riders to indeed implement a minimum participation rule. The Board noted that this is not as important to the Open riders as it will be to the Non-Pro/Amateurs. Kelsey Fraser made the motion that in order to qualify for year-end awards in the Non-Pro Classes, Amateur Classes, \$2000 Limit Rider and Youth; you must attend 50% of the MCHA approved shows. Open rider classes and all LAE classes will be excluded from the rule. Motion was seconded by Wylie Fraser and carried on a voice vote. Kelly Fraser will keep the standings and Cindy Garoutte will audit.

Membership Deadline

President Will Nuttall said he felt that in order for your earnings to count you would need to purchase your MCHA membership on that show date. He did not feel that a retroactive membership was warranted. The Board agreed.

Re-Run Cattle Shootout

President Will Nuttall said the 2020 Re-Run Cattle Shootout was very encouraging to membership and should be continued. The Board agreed that the \$2000 saddle voucher was a hit and should be done again for 2021. Will Nuttall said that since the Board agreed that fresh cattle will be offered at MCHA shows, as allowed, he would like to see the Re-Run Shoot-out renamed the “Jack Pot Cattle Class Shoot-Out”. The Board agreed that this name change would have a more positive context.

Placing to Give Awards To

The Board was in agreement that giving Year-End Awards to three places would be in the best interest of MCHA for 2021, as was done in 2020.

Special Awards

President Will Nuttall asked the Board if there needed to be any changes to the Special Awards offered, the Board felt that the awards should stand.

The Special Awards for 2021 will be as follows:

- MCHA Open Horse of the Year – Top 3 horses in each Open class excluding LAE classes, to be voted on by the membership.
- MCHA Non-Pro / Amateur Horse of the Year – Top 3 horses in each Non-Pro or Amateur class excluding LAE classes, to be voted on by the membership.

- Adult Rookie of the Year (Voted on by the Board of Directors). Eligible candidates include adult MCHA members in good standing, having \$0 NCHA lifetime earnings at the beginning of the show year.
- Kim Asay/Most Inspirational (Voted on by the Board of Directors). The award goes to someone thought to be a fierce competitor, showing great sportsmanship both in and out of the arena, while continuing to place a high value on family, friends, and faith.

MCHA Approval Fees

President Will Nuttall noted to the Board that approval fees have become a thing of the past. He said right now it is more important to encourage cutting instead of exchanging money between affiliates. Kelly Fraser noted that in 2020 MCHA only received approval fees from one show and it was only at \$2 per run (approved by 2020 Board) as opposed to the \$4 currently required by MCHA. Will Nuttall said he does not want to see MCHA hurt a show producer by requiring approval fees be paid. He said instead we should be thanking producers. The motion was made by Nancy LaCounte to eliminate the \$4/run approval fee for 2021 shows. Seconded by Wylie Fraser; motion carried 7-approved 2-opposed.

2021 Operating Budget

Secretary/Treasure Kelly Fraser had provided to the Board several financial documents including the 2020 final P & L as well as a proposed 2021 budget. She asked the Board if they had any questions on the finances, none were asked.

The Board agreed to continue offering sponsors of \$400 or higher a free MCHA membership.

The Board agreed to continue the \$2000 saddle voucher for the class champions drawing at the awards banquet.

The Board agreed that the Jack Pot Cattle Class Shoot-Out would have no charges to the participants in 2021, as was in 2020. Kelly Fraser asked the Board if they would consider rolling over GFK Trailer Sales Shoot-Out sponsorship for 2021. She said that because of the turmoil of 2020 they did not receive the recognition that was promised, they also were sponsoring the fresh cattle for the Shoot-Out and we did not have a full set of fresh cattle available. The Board agreed it would be a show of good will to carryover their sponsorship for 2021.

The Board agreed that the Awards budget would remain at \$15,000.00 for 2021. Those individuals receiving awards that are not in attendance during the banquet will be responsible for postage or pickup. Nancy LaCounte noted that there are 2-Headstalls, 2-Blankets and 2-Cowhide Bags left over from the 2020 awards. It was decided by the Board to use those as circuit awards or hard luck awards at shows throughout the year.

Annual Review of Secretary/Treasurer Compensation – Closed Session

Following discussion by the Board, it was decided that the 2021 Compensation for the MCHA Secretary/Treasurer position would be increased to \$885/month with a year-end bonus dependent upon a successful show year and to be decided by the Board.

2021 Committee Assignments

President Will Nuttall told the Board that each Committee Chairperson Appointee would be responsible for creating their own Committee Board. He chose the following Committee Chairs:

Show Committee: Cindy Garoutte (per Constitution, Vice President is Chairman)

Year End Awards: Nancy LaCounte

Year End Banquet: Alison Anderson

Sponsorship: Kelsey Fraser

Nominating: Roy Oliver

Rules Committee: Shall be the entire MCHA BOD

President Will Nuttall said he would like to see a “Task Force” put together for all MCHA shows. He noted that in all possible situations MCHA would utilize local members to help with shows. The Task Force would be responsible for major decisions regarding shows such as dates for shows to be held and cattle procurement. Motion was made by Wylie Fraser that Will Nuttall would create a Task Force and be Chairperson of said Task Force. Will Nuttall would be responsible for asking individuals to be on the Task Force. Seconded by Nancy LaCounte and carried on a voice vote.

Encouragement of New Membership

President Will Nuttall said he would like to see a clinic held, free of charge, to those interested in the sport of cutting. He said one possible option would be for several trainers to get together to put on a clinic at a designated location. The Board discussed possibly having a clinic for High School cutters and Youth cutters. Kathy Foote offered to host a clinic at her barn. Kelly Fraser noted that Clayton Miller would offer his arena free of charge, there may only be a cattle fee to those interested in attending.

Signatory on MCHA Wells Fargo Checking Account

Kathy Foote said she would be in Arizona this month and would get together with Will Nuttall to add him to the checking account and remove herself.

Angela Bauer Scholarship

Kathy Foote said that Jessica Lee had indeed agreed to take over the Angela Bauer Scholarship account. The Board would like to have a scholarship cutting at the Livingston and Big Piney shows and is open to having other summer shows offer it as well.

Clarification of Memberships

Secretary/Treasurer Kelly Fraser told the Board that the membership application may need to be re-worded to clarify what constitutes a family membership. She said in 2020 there were issues with children over the age of 18 on a membership with their parents. The Board agreed that a family membership would not include children over the age of 18. Those individuals over 18 would be required to have their own individual membership. Kelly Fraser will change the membership application so that it is clearly noted, as well as noting that a family membership is only entitled to one vote and a youth membership has no vote. Kelsey Fraser said she would like to see a new membership survey go out to better reflect the current MCHA demographic. President Will Nuttall said Kelsey Fraser would oversee putting out a survey to the membership similar to the one sent out in 2016.

Other New Business

Secretary/Treasurer Kelly Fraser asked the Board if they liked the Zoom format, which they did. She suggested that going forward they use Zoom and cancel the current CenturyLink account. This will save money for the association going forward. The Board agreed.

President Will Nuttall adjourn the meeting at 4:44 p.m.