

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

*April 19th, 2022
Via Zoom*

President Cindy Garoutte called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

Directors Present: President Cindy Garoutte, Vice President Peri Suenram, Kelsey Fraser, Wylie Fraser, Rob Fraser, Darrell Lee, Tanya Dvarishkis, and Doug Pearce

Others Present: Secretary/Treasurer Kelly Fraser

The minutes of the January 8th, January 16th, and January 24th Board of Directors' meetings had been distributed to the Board members prior to the meeting. The January 8th meeting minutes were approved with the understanding that the language regarding the year end award participation would be corrected to note eligibility shall be determined by contestants attending three Montana IN STATE shows. The minutes of the January 16th meeting are approved but would be held as an executive session due to the nature of the discussions. The January 24th meeting minutes were approved as written.

OLD OR UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Update on MCHA Shows

President Cindy Garoutte asked Vice President Peri Suenram to update the Board on the MCHA produced shows. Peri said that after the postponement of Miller's April show she had been in contact with Clayton to get a date rescheduled. The best option for Miller's was May 14-15, and it would be limited to a Saturday – Sunday show. The Board agreed that to fit the current schedule this would be the best option for the membership and for Miller's. Rob Fraser made the motion to approve the May 14-15 dates for the rescheduled Miller's show, seconded by Darrell Lee, passed unanimously on a voice vote. Peri reminded everyone that there would be a NWAB class at Miller's and it would count towards the Shoot-Out in Big Piney.

Vice President Peri Suenram said that the Deer Lodge show is looking very promising and has been very well organized by Darrell Lee. She said that stalls are about 70% to 80% full as of now. Peri said as well as Deer Lodge has come together, conversely there are struggles with Big Piney. Andi James still has not found portable stalls for the show, as the vendor that was used last year is not available for 2022. Peri said both she and Theresa Nelson had given Andi several options of vendors or individuals to contact. She said there is a possibility to get stalls from Miller's, Nampa, or Kristen York and truck them in. Peri has told Andi that there needs to be a definitive answer in the next two weeks on the stalling so the Board can move forward accordingly. Rob Fraser cautioned the Board on getting too hung up on the stalls. With fuel prices high and some of the shows across the country having lower entries he feels it may be in the best interest of MCHA to not commit to a large number of stalls that we may not be able to fill. Peri did note that there are already 120 stalls spoken for and there are around 171 stalls

available on site. Cindy wanted to reiterate the importance of people booking their stalls and paying for them in advance. Peri said that Kelly Fraser and Theresa Nelson have been working on stall forms and they will be required for all MCHA produced shows. This should provide a safety net for MCHA if people attempt to back out of their commitment under short notice.

Vice President Peri Suenram said that the Vaughn show is looking like may indeed come together. The only concern there is of course stalls. The 406 Arena is supposed to get back to Peri in the next two weeks to confirm they will be building additional stalls and what that count may be. Darrell Lee said there may be a possibility of using stalls at the Fairgrounds in Great Falls. It was noted that it is a bit of a drive but could work if needed. Peri and Darrell both noted that the 406 Arena is looking forward to working with MCHA and possibly doing multiple shows in the future. They are working on major remodels to the barn and the Board feels that there are a lot of cattle options in that area.

Kelly Fraser asked the Board if they had set up a photographer for Deer Lodge or either of the two Dillon shows. Peri said they had not yet spoke to a photographer. The Board discussed the feasibility of providing a hotel room at shows. They decided it would depend on the bottom line and of each show and at this time did not want to commit to a room. Darrell Lee said that Ashley Lee would be coming to the Deer Lodge show and would be willing to photograph. This would not cost MCHA and would be a great option for that show. Peri said she would be seeing Laurie Errington in Ogden and would talk with her about the two Dillon shows.

Vice President Peri Suenram gave an update on the Never Won A Buckle Shoot-Out. She said there were some significant sponsorships given for awards. Peri said that at the Utah show there were 8 people entered in the class. This is very encouraging for our upcoming shows. She wanted the Board to remember that they must show at two qualifiers in order to be eligible for the Shoot-Out.

NEW BUSINESS:

Year To Date Profit & Loss

President Cindy Garoutte asked Secretary/Treasurer Kelly Fraser to go over the profit and loss that she had provided the Board. Kelly said that she ran a simple profit and loss as it was the year-to-date quarter. She noted that there had not been much activity so far in the year. She pointed out that there has been sponsorship money coming in which is about \$8350 with more to be expected. Kelly shared there has been some pre-payment on show expenses such as judge's travel and some circuit awards for Dillon. She asked the Board if there were any questions on the accounting so far. Kelsey Fraser asked why the tax preparation was high this year. Kelly said that it was a lump sum of not only the taxes and 1099's but the meeting in January with the accountant and going through each transaction for the year and correcting mistakes.

Back Fence

Darrel Lee asked the Board if there had been any luck in finding a trailer to haul the back fence with. He would like to have the fence available in Deer Lodge. President Cindy Garoutte said she had not yet found a trailer; however, she is planning on hauling the fence herself to Deer Lodge. The fence will then have to be taken to Dillon. Cindy said the Board needs to have a discussion on what to do with the back fence as this is something MCHA will have to deal with every year if we are to find a trailer and find someone to haul it to all the shows. Cindy said she would like to see it used at Big Piney since that is the largest show for MCHA and perhaps that means it should stay in Big Piney. She said that MCHA still has all the arena wraps that were used in the past and those can be used at the other MCHA produced shows. Cindy said she has looked at possible trailers and it would run the association around \$2200.00. Rob Fraser said he has some concerns of purchasing a trailer and then having someone haul the back fence to shows. He feels it is a nuisance to haul around and may be a liability as well. Rob said it may be best to find the fence a permanent home so this doesn't become a problem. Tanya Dvarishkis asked if it would be a problem to leave them in Big Piney. Kelsey Fraser said she would be in favor of finding a permanent home for the fence, she reiterated Rob's concern about liability for whomever would be tasked with hauling it around and the hassle of coordinating pick up and drop off of the fence. Darrell suggested we move them around from Deer Lodge to Dillon and then to Big Piney. Once there we can make a final decision on what to do with the fence. The Board was in agreement that at this time it was best to table the discussion until Big Piney this fall.

Two-Handed Class

Vice President Peri Suenram told the Board that Darrell and she had made the decision to offer the Two-Handed class at both Deer Lodge and a Dillon show. The hope would be to bring in some of the Cowhorse competitors as well as some new interest in MCHA. Peri said with this, the Board would need to discuss some rules to impose on the class. Peri thought the only rule may be to not allow 3-year-old horses in the class. Wylie Fraser said many of the Cowhorse trainers may like the idea of taking their 3-year-old snaffle horse to a show and as a trainer it is your responsibility to know eligibility requirements later in the futurity year. Kelly Fraser asked if there were going to be limits on earnings for horses or riders. The Board discussed having an Open and Non-Pro/Amateur class to allow for some of the Cowhorse trainers as well as accommodate some of the new Amateurs. Kelly would like to make sure the first-time Amateurs do not get intimidated and have their own class to compete in. Peris suggested having the two classes as a "class within a class", with one large herd. Darrell and Rob agreed that the goal is to encourage new membership and with that any new person showing at a MCHA show should receive a free MCHA membership. Cindy noted that NCHA offers free membership for first time members as well. Darrel suggested Peri reach out to Jessica Lee to advertise this class with the Treasure State Cutting Horse Association. Peri said she, Kelly and Darrell would work on some defining rules for the class to have on hand for the Judge and contestants.

Year End Awards

President Cindy Garoutte opened the floor to discussion on the year end awards and the possibility of giving saddles in the Non-Pro and Amateur classes (11 classes in total). Vice President Peri Suenram told the Board that she and John Seymour researched possible vendors to get the best value, and they decided on Stray Star Saddles. The basic saddle would cost \$2100.00 to the association and whomever won would be able to add on options if they desired. Peri did note that as of right now, the saddles that may be given away in 2022 would not be finished/delivered until fall of 2023. Kelsey Fraser expressed concern in people being unhappy with the saddle and not being able to choose a maker of their choice.

Kelsey was also concerned with the \$15,000.00 the Board discussed being earmarked for year end awards. She wanted the Board to revisit how the \$15,000.00 was supposed to be used and if it was over and above what was to be spent on saddles. She asked the Board if it was their intention to give saddles in every class or should MCHA go back to a raffle drawing of perhaps 4 saddles, for a chance to win a saddle voucher to the maker of their choice. Darrel Lee thought the raffle option worked well in the past and added excitement to the banquet.

President Cindy Garoutte said it was her understanding that the \$15,000.00 was to be used for the awards normally given each year and additional sponsorship money would be needed for the saddles. She said the Board, as a whole, was tasked with obtaining additional sponsors so the goal of giving saddles as awards could be reached. Doug Pearce would like the Board to consider doing five saddles and give them out via raffle. Peri expressed her desire to see MCHA go forward with giving away saddles for every class champion, she feels like the raffle is fun in the moment but there is disappointment for those class champions who lose out. She would like to inspire contestants in our sport and encourage members to keep coming to MCHA produced shows. Cindy said giving out championship buckles to all the class winners may help with that. Rob Fraser said he does not feel we have a large enough organization to have the ability to give saddles out in every class. He understands we have a healthy check book but at the same time we should be cautious before we spend upwards of \$30,000.00 on saddles. He would like to see MCHA have 4-5 saddles to give out for a raffle and then spend more money on nicer buckles and more awards for more individuals.

Rick Anderson suggested having three groups of contestants: The Open Riders, The Non-Pro Riders and the Amateur Riders, and then drawing out of those three groups. Tanya Dvarishkis clarified that it would be the first-place contestant in each of those groups that would have their name in the drawing. Kelsey agreed with those ideas and further suggested that MCHA offer two more saddles to the other contestants that did not win in the first round. Wylie Fraser would like to see vouchers give and not actual saddles. He expressed concern with the quality of trophy saddles and felt the winner would be better off to order the saddle they desired. Peri made the motion to give out five (5) vouchers, written to the saddle maker of the winners choice, in the amount of \$2100.00, the total amount being \$10,500.00. She further moved that the additional awards budget would be \$9,500.00 for a total of \$20,000.00 for the 2022 year end awards budget. (For clarification there will be three saddles given via drawing to class winners in the above mentioned categories; the other two saddles will be for a "Last Chance" drawing out of the remaining class champions. All class champions will also receive Championship Buckles) Rob

Fraser seconded the motion, motion passed on a voice vote. Darrell Lee asked if we could have a saddle to take to the shows to advertise the year end awards, Kelsey Fraser offered her Stray Star saddle for a display.

Kelly Fraser asked for some clarification on how the Board would like to see the three groups broke down. The Board decided as follows:

<i>Group 1:</i>	<i>Group 2:</i>	<i>Group 3:</i>
Derby Open	Derby Non Pro	50 Amateur
Classic Open	Classic Non Pro	Unlimited Amateur
Open	Non Pro	35 Non Pro
5 Novice Horse	5 Novice Horse Non Pro	15 Amateur
25 Novice Horse	25 Novice Horse Non Pro	2000 Limit Rider

Kelsey Fraser would like to see the Youth spotlighted with their own individual awards, she liked the idea of a scooter or something similar for their awards. The Board agreed.

Kelsey Fraser said she had asked Esther Peterson to help her and Peri on the awards committee, and they have been looking at options for second and third place awards. Peri noted that with the budget discussed there may be options for additional awards to fourth place. She feels that the awards committee should be able to make that decision, the Board agreed.

Year End Banquet

President Cindy Garoutte would like a committee for the year end banquet. Kelsey Fraser was nominated by Darrell Lee to be on the committee and Tanya Dvarishkis said she would also like to help with the banquet. Kelly Fraser said she would help as much as needed. Cindy said she would like to see the Vaughn show be the year end show but that will be dependent on the show coming together. Peri will get back to the Board in a couple weeks so this committee can plan the banquet.

President Cindy Garoutte adjourned the meeting at 8:29 p.m.