

Approved 12.13.2021

FINAL Minutes  
Virginia Horse Industry Board  
September 20, 2021  
Department of Forestry, Charlottesville

*This meeting included an electronically available connection for the public via WebEx.*

*A recording of the meeting is available:*

<https://covaconf.webex.com/recordingservice/sites/covaconf/recording/playback/209ab0c9fc491039bff20050568cdc45>

*Password: VHIBd2021*

**Board Members Present:**

Debbie Easter  
Janie Ober  
Kelly Foltman  
Oliver Brown  
John Wise  
Suzanne Gonzales  
Dedi Spradlin

**Guests/Staff:**

Bradley Copenhaver, VDACS, Commissioner  
Melissa Ball, VDACS, Special Projects Manager

**WebEx Guests:**

Rob Banner  
Nancy Troutman

**I. Call to Order – 10:12 AM**

The meeting was called to order and introductions were made for all those present and joining through the WebEx line.

**II. Review of Minutes – July 23, 2021 & September 9, 2021**

Minutes from the meetings were reviewed. The July 23, 2021 meeting was a meeting of the full board. The September 9, 2021 meeting was a meeting of the Strategic Marketing Subcommittee.

K. Foltom motioned to approve the minutes from the July 23, 2021 and September 9, 2021 meetings, O. Brown seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Ober	Yes
Easter	Yes
Brown	Yes
Wise	Yes
Gonzales	Yes
Spradlin	Yes
Foltman	Yes

**II. Financial Report**

Heather Wheeler reported on the finances for each fund. Income and revenue are listed as follows:

**Coggins – cc 625 (Figures through July 31, 2021)**

Beginning Balance 7/1/2021	\$359,330.06
Revenues YTD	\$13,764.65
Expenditures YTD	\$5,000.00
Cash Balance YTD	\$368,094.71
Uncommitted Balance (Cash bal 7/1/20 + rev - budgeted)	\$13,069.71

**Feed Tonnage – cc 626 (Figures through July 31, 2021)**

Beginning Balance 7/1/2021	\$955,359.02
Revenues YTD	\$56.00
Expenditures YTD	\$0.00
Cash Balance YTD	\$955,415.02
Uncommitted Balance (Cash bal 7/1/20 + rev - budgeted)	\$728,233.14

D. Easter motioned to accept the financial report, O. Brown seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Ober	Yes
Easter	Yes
Brown	Yes
Wise	Yes
Gonzales	Yes
Spradlin	Yes
Foltman	Yes

**III. Old Business**

**A. Program Manager Updates**

Heather Wheeler provided activity updates since the meeting in January. Those updates included: working with the Strategic Marketing Subcommittee to develop plans for the future of VHIB, coordinating a demonstration of Active Campaign for the Strategic Marketing Subcommittee, assisting grant applicants with Cycle 1 applications.

**B. Strategic Marketing Subcommittee Update**

The subcommittee updated the Board on their progress in planning for a redesign of the VHIB website. The subcommittee is working on a website plan that includes and industry-inclusive directory, calendar of events, integration of a client relations management platform, the ability to promote the industry within and outside of the state. The subcommittee’s goal is to see a website that directs individuals to equine venues, events, organizations, and businesses across the state. The subcommittee wants to see a user-friendly, interactive website that VHIB can drive horse enthusiasts to that will connect them with the industry in Virginia.

The subcommittee had proposed a set aside in the budget of \$100,000 to cover the cost of the redesign. However, after further discussion it has been determined that for the launch of the website and the website itself to be successful, they need to incorporate a one-year marketing contract into the Request for Proposal (RFP). The Program Manager suggested to the Board that to ensure success, the Board needs to have a professional marketing agency employed to manage the website, social media, and marketing efforts to ensure consistent and effective messaging. It was shared with the Board, that the primary role of the Program Manager is to manage the logistics of the Board (meeting arrangements, meeting minutes, reports, and communications) and manage their grant program. And with the expansion of the grant program into four cycles managing a marketing effort would be difficult. It would more effective for the Program Manager to serve as the liaison between the Board and the marketing firm.

After discussion, D. Easter made a motion to increase the budget set-aside for the website redesign from \$100,000 to \$150,000 to include a marketing contract for VHIB and the new VHIB website and that the subcommittee will be responsible for working through the RFP process. K. Foltman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ober	Yes
Easter	Yes
Brown	Yes
Wise	Yes
Gonzales	Yes
Spradlin	Yes
Foltman	Yes

**IV. New Business**

**A. FY22 Marketing Grant – Cycle 1**

The Board received thirteen proposals during Cycle 1 and reviewed and discussed each one as follows:

**Commonwealth Dressage and Combined Training Association (CDCTA)**

The Board reviewed and discussed the CDCTA proposal requesting \$5,000 in funding for an incentive program at their shows. The Board discussed the proposal and had questions that were not answered in the proposal. The Board wants to know how CDCTA intends to advertise the program? Is CDCTA connecting with other associations/organizations to promote the program? How do they determine qualification as a Virginia Bred participant? It was also determined in the discussion that the proposal should have been submitted in Cycle 2 as funding for Cycle 1 ends June 30, 2021, six months before CDCTA's grant project concludes. D. Easter made a motion that the Board approve the grant for the full \$5,000 in Cycle 2 and if CDCTA can provide affirmative answers to the above questions. O. Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ober	Yes
Easter	Yes
Brown	Yes
Wise	Yes
Gonzales	Yes
Spradlin	Yes
Foltman	Yes

**Tidewater Equine Club**

The Board reviewed and discussed the Tidewater Equine Club's proposal requesting \$5,000 in funding to market their club. K.F. made a motion that the Board approve the grant for the full \$5,000. O. Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ober	Yes
Easter	Yes
Brown	Yes
Wise	Yes
Gonzales	Yes
Spradlin	Yes
Foltman	Yes

**Shenandoah Blue Ridge Appaloosa Association (SBRAA)**

The Board reviewed and discussed the SBRAA proposal requesting \$1,295 in funding to design a website for their association. K.Foltman made a motion that the Board approve the grant for the full \$1,295. O. Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ober	Yes
Easter	Yes
Brown	Yes

Wise	Yes
Gonzales	Yes
Spradlin	Yes
Foltman	Yes

**Virginia 4-H Ambassador Program**

The Board reviewed and discussed the 4-H Ambassador Program proposal requesting \$2,500 in funding to support the program. D. Easter. made a motion that the Board approve the grant for the full \$2,500. K. Foltman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ober	Yes
Easter	Yes
Brown	Yes
Wise	Yes
Gonzales	Yes
Spradlin	Yes
Foltman	Yes

**Virginia 4-H Equismartz**

The Board reviewed and discussed the Equismartz proposal requesting \$5,000 in funding for the program. K.Foltman made a motion that the Board approve the grant for the full \$5,000. D. Easter seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ober	Yes
Easter	Yes
Brown	Yes
Wise	Yes
Gonzales	Yes
Spradlin	Yes
Foltman	Yes

**East Coast Stock Horse Association (ECSHA)**

The Board reviewed and discussed the ECSHA proposal requesting \$3,900 in funding for a membership campaign. K. Foltman made a motion that the Board approve the grant for the \$4,120 as a match to the ECSHA funding being provided. O. Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ober	Yes
Easter	Yes
Brown	Yes
Wise	Yes
Gonzales	Yes
Spradlin	Yes

Foltman	Yes
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**Virginia Paint Horse Club (VPHC)**

The Board reviewed and discussed the VPHC proposal requesting \$6,000 in funding for an incentive program at their shows. The Board discussed the request that was made above the maximum award available for this grant and determined they would not provide funding above the maximum level stated in the grant guidelines and application. K. Foltman made a motion that the Board approve the grant for \$5,000. O. Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ober	Yes
Easter	Yes
Brown	Yes
Wise	Yes
Gonzales	Yes
Spradlin	Yes
Foltman	Yes

**Virginia Pony Breeders Association (VPBA)**

The Board reviewed and discussed the VPBA proposal requesting \$5,000 in funding to promote the VPBA Directory, Yearbook and membership. D. Easter made a motion that the Board approve the grant for the full \$5,000. K. Foltman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ober	Yes
Easter	Yes
Brown	ABSTAINED
Wise	Yes
Gonzales	Yes
Spradlin	Yes
Foltman	Yes

**Therapeutic Riding Association of Virginia (TRAV)**

The Board reviewed and discussed the TRAV proposal requesting \$2,250 in funding to support their educational conference. The Board was interested in funding the speakers for the event as well. It was determined that one of the speakers at the conference is a VHIB board member so the Board indicated it will not reimburse that fee. K.F. made a motion that the Board approve the grant for \$3,050 to include additional funding of up to \$800 in speaker fees paid by TRAV (speaker fees paid to VHIB board members will not be reimbursed by VHIB). O. Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ober	Yes
Easter	Yes

Brown	Yes
Wise	Yes
Gonzales	Yes
Spradlin	ABSTAINED
Foltman	Yes

**Loudoun County Equine Alliance (LCEA)**

The Board reviewed and discussed the LCEA proposal requesting \$5,000 in funding for marketing efforts and a membership drive. J. Wise made a motion that the Board approve the grant for the full \$5,000. O. Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ober	Yes
Easter	Yes
Brown	Yes
Wise	Yes
Gonzales	Yes
Spradlin	Yes
Foltman	ABSTAINED

**Virginia Quarter Horse Association (VQHA)**

The Board reviewed and discussed the VQHA proposal requesting \$3,898 in funding to redesign the website for their association. K.Foltman made a motion that the Board approve the grant for the full \$3,898. D.Easter seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ober	Yes
Easter	Yes
Brown	Yes
Wise	Yes
Gonzales	ABSTAINED
Spradlin	Yes
Foltman	Yes

**Virginia Quarter Horse Association (VQHA)**

The Board reviewed and discussed the VQHA proposal requesting \$4,800 in funding to support two clinics. K.Foltman made a motion that the Board approve the grant for the full \$4,800. D. Spradlin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ober	Yes
Easter	Yes
Brown	Yes
Wise	Yes
Gonzales	ABSTAINED

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Spradlin	Yes
Foltman	Yes

The Board received an additional grant proposal that they determined needed to be redeveloped and resubmitted in a future cycle.

During the grant review, the Board made a couple of observations that will be applied to this cycle and future cycle applications:

- The Board will not fund requests from grant applicants to purchase saddles as saddles fall under the definition of equipment.
- All ribbons and awards that are paid for by VHIB funding must include the VHIB logo on them.
- All printed materials and websites paid for by VHIB must include the VHIB logo and a statement that recognizes that the publications were supported by VHIB grant funding.

#### **B. Marketing Grant – Cycle 2**

Cycle 2 of the Marketing Grant will open on October 1, 2021 and close on December 1, 2021. The Board reviewed the application and the following changes will be made:

- Line 1 of the current application asks for email. The new application will ask for organization name and email will be moved to the Cover Page section.
- The Amount Requested appears in the Cover Page section and will now appear above the line item budget section in the application.

#### **V. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

#### **VI. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Board will December 13, 2021 at the Virginia Equine Alliance office in Warrenton.

#### **V. Adjourn**

The committee adjourned the meeting at 1:00 PM.