

MAINE EQUINE WELFARE ALLIANCE- August 2010 Minutes

August 18, 2010

Time – 6:30pm

Location – Maine Farm Bureau Office, Augusta

Mission Statement: *"The Maine Equine Welfare Alliance is a grassroots affiliation of horse owners, the equine industry and horse lovers committed to enriching and enhancing the lives of Maine's equines through direct assistance, foster care, emergency intervention and public education."*

21 attending and 1 on phone

- 1) Welcome –
- 2) Volunteer to take August Meeting Minutes – Katie Lisnik
- 3) Introductions by those in attendance and our conference call member
- 4) Acceptance of July Meeting Minutes: Moved, seconded and passed to accept minutes.
- 5) Membership and finances - No concrete membership numbers yet, but we have already collected over \$800.00 into our account through membership dues and donations. Maine Farm Bureau has set up a separate MEWA bank account and has paid for the cost of our own distinct tax ID number. Thank you to Jon and the Maine Farm Bureau for that!
- 6) Discussion of Bylaws – Group identified many changes to be made to the proposed draft bylaws. It was moved, seconded and voted in approval to send the bylaw revision back to the structure Committee that proposed the original MEWA structure. They will meet, revise and present the group with a final bylaw draft for approval. Items of note to modify- the inclusion of legislative action, clarification of term limits and assignments of terms to new Committee chairs.
- 7) Current donations and assistance requests- Thus far we have had two hay fields offered to us, but have not been able to find the hands/equipment to get the fields cut. Some new resources have been identified and Michelle M. will be checking back in on the offers to see if they still stand. We have also had a couple requests for horse assistance, primarily of a medical nature. Michelle and others are in contact with these individuals and will attempt to provide resources that may help. There have also been a couple rescues identified as needing some hay assistance.
- 8) Committee Reports-
 - a) **Temporary Foster and Rescue Homes:** Chair: Jan & Jim Marconi
This Committee had their first meeting and identified a number of actions to begin work on. These include the following: screening process for foster homes, establishment of resources and mentors for foster homes, creation of contracts, surrender forms, medical releases etc..., Determine issues of ownership and adoption protocols, Contact with licensed shelters and rescues, determine length of support for foster homes, long term placement issues, biosecurity issues, domestic violence cases and process for determining medical needs/treatment. The next meeting has not yet been set.
 - b) **Hay and Feed Assistance:** Temporary Chair: Michelle Melaragno
This Committee has not yet met. Michelle will be contacting the members shortly.
 - c) **Veterinary & Farrier Assistance:** Temporary Chair: Janelle Tirrell
Dave Dow reported out in place of Janelle, who is traveling. The Committee has had email conversation but no in person meeting. Dave will be contacting the Maine Farrier's Association to helpfully recruit more Committee members.
 - d) **Resources:** Chair: Donna Hughes

Committee has had 1 in-person meeting. Meeting consisted of a brainstorming session to determine activities of the Committee- These could include a focus on transportation resources, general listings of any and all resources, work on fundraising and events, maintaining lists of the "other stuff" like trainers, mentors, therapeutic riding centers, shelter builders, general helping hands etc...

e) **Public Awareness & Education:** Chair: Melanie Langmeyer

This Committee has had 1 in-person meeting and has been dubbed the EPAC. Issues discussed at the meeting included backyard breeding and hoarding situations, creation of a suggested reading index, the logo for the group, horse ownership costs education and our first brochure. A draft brochure was created and shared with the wider group during the August 18th meeting. Please review and compile edits/suggestions and get to Melanie at langmeyer4@aol.com or 542-7467. Their next meeting is Tuesday, September 14th at 6:30pm, location TBD.

f) **Political Action/Legal:** Chair: Missy Libby

This Committee had 1 in-person meeting and has identified a number of key issues to begin work on. These include identification of MEWA spokesperson or Public Information Officer, which should be the MEWA Chairperson, development of record-keeping standards and documentation of Alliance work, Preparation of testimony and monitoring of general legislation and political scene, a cruelty reporting protocol for MEWA members to follow, work on liability and legal issues (need to identify an attorney willing to help), and general work on issues of credibility, sensitivity to different interests and recognition that MEWA is not a vigilante group, but is instead an educational resource here to help those in need. Next meeting TBD.

9) Nominations for at large Board Members were discussed briefly. Formal appointment is on hold until the permanent chairs are decided by each Committee. Please email Michelle with any other nominations.

Nominations received include:

- i) Peter Wappler
- ii) Maddy Gray
- iii) Don Marean
- iv) Katie Lisnik

10) Website & database development – Estelle Werly and Donna Coffin will work together to identify some potential scenarios for our website

11) It was noted that since MEWA is not a "Committee" but rather a Board, the subcommittees should be more accurately called Committees. These minutes reflect that change in terminology. We also made special note that MEWA will not be forming into our own equine rescue- rather, our work will support current rescues.

12) Schedule next meetings- Wednesday, September 15th 6:30pm at the Farm Bureau Office. At that meeting we will discuss scheduling the quarterly Board Meetings, twice yearly big group meetings and Committee schedules.

13) Adjourn at 8:18pm

Minutes Respectfully Submitted

Katie Lisnik

8/20/2010