

## Connecticut Horse Council

### December 5, 2023 Minutes

Meeting called to order at 7:30pm by President Diane Ciano

**Equine Affaire:** We talked to lots of people. We had 34 individuals, 1 family, 5 businesses, 1 club join.

**Education:** Discussion on CHC & members of the Equine Advisory Council (EAC) setting up programs for ACO, firemen, police, and other first aid responders regarding handling of horses in emergency situations. Danielle Borelli, who was an ACO has offered to help CHC & EAC in getting this project going and has set up a Power Point program she has made. We would like to see this as a classroom PP and hands on events with horses around the state in several locations where there are large populations of horses, (Bethany, Newtown, Fairfield County, Cockaponset, Gilette Castle, Pomfret, Pachaug and Mashamoquet areas. She would like to have trainings for ACO's PD and Firefighters. She and Laurianne will work on it.

For 2024 this will be our goal to work on this:

Need to Get the kids involved with programs. Vo-ag, barns, etc.

Discussion on getting equestrians started on CERT and then to join their district State Animal Response Teams (SART). Looking for volunteers to search the districts and get contact information regarding CERT training (required before a person can volunteer for SART). Meg has a list of people.

Discussion on updating our list of "Connections" and how we can improve it so that if there is an emergency, emergency personnel could access it and contact us. Diane will be contacting a member of the Durham Animal Rescue Team (DART) to speak at our annual Volunteer Horse Patrol meeting in March.

**Health & Welfare:** - Bunny Joseph reported that her and another rider were severely injured at Machimoodus - Sunrise State Park. A dog that was leashed and tied to a picnic table, bolted out in front of their horses that were grazing and spooked them. This is the second injury reported in this area. We will need volunteers to set up a safety program there to educate dog owners.

Discussion with DEEP Kim Bradley and members of the Equine Advisory Council has been to set up an educational Program with mountain bikers in the spring in the Colchester area (Airline). Danielle has also offered to help out with a Presentation to the mountain bike community.

**Legislation:** No report.

**Website:** Rebecca updated the website putting our meeting up on the front page. Diane has contacted Daisy Gmitter, who created the website and will help in cleaning it up and updating. Additional updates needed on links to supporting businesses and organizations website/Facebook. Possibly having a short write up of each individual organization with a link. Also needed is to check to see all links are working and to clean up Equine Links, some no longer exist. Links needed on the Trails Information page. Website needs more information/ links on the legislation page, so that when needed members would be able to know which legislators to contact. Replace or improve the calendar. We also need to re-add add current photos to the page.

Rebecca and Laurianne will work on it without Daisy.

The highlights of the meeting will be put on the website after Diane edits it. 1. Meg Sautter 2. Vevette Greenberg Passed

**Face Book:** Discussion. Need password to update and see if we can change things around. Add about CHC, encourage people to join, link to CHC website, application, manage content, etc. Have "Discussion" as the first thing that comes up instead of "Buy or sell" or rename it to something else. Need volunteer to ask members of the page to support CHC to help increase membership. Under "Featured" – Winter Horse Care needs to be taken off

## **Equine Advisory Council:**

Meeting notes from 12/5/2023

Diane reported that meetings have not been set up yet regarding EAC meeting discussions of 9/19/2023. She has contacted DEP Kim Bradley and meeting dates will be set up at the December 21<sup>st</sup> meeting. We will need to create an agenda of discussion with DEEP officials beforehand.

Diane received a letter from the CT Forest & Park Association regarding usage of their headquarters for the EAC meetings. In 2024, their policy is that in order to use their community room, Corporate and Organizations will need to pay for their membership to CFPA to support their work: price depending on the room usage (\$100 - \$.175). Diane contacted them to remind that CFPA has an appointed member to the Council. Further discussion will take place at the 12/21 meeting.

Diane contacted Senator Bob Duff, Senate Majority Leader for the Fifth District regarding an EAC appointment for Denise Ciano. His Counsel to Senate Majority Leader, Aleandra (Alex) Slaney stated that he is looking at other options regarding the appointment.

Melissa Evarts reported that the Bridle Land Conservancy /Lower CT River Valley Horsemen's Club has pretty much given up on them rebuilding the rotted bridge in the Preserve as there seems to be "politics" involved - the Land is not owned by the state, different towns own different areas, inland wetlands issues, etc. make it way above their paygrade.

### **Trails:**

**Natchaug State Forest:** Diane Contacted Matt Quinn regarding the well that was supposed to be reinstalled at the Lost Silver Mine Horse Camp this spring. Apparently the new company wanted \$6,000 to do it and the DEEP said no, so they are looking to rebuild it themselves.

**Nepaug State Forest:** Diane attended the CT DEEP Division of State Parks and Division of Forestry meeting on October 5<sup>th</sup> at the CT DEEP Pleasant Valley Field Office, Pleasant Valley, CT to review and discuss a trail authorization request for Nepaug State Forest. This was a meeting was to discuss the trail system proposed by the New England Mountain Bike Association (NEMA) and closing some of the unauthorized trails were built that are not sustainable. One component was to ask the CT Forest & Park Association (CFPA) to allow part of the proposed trail system to use a portion of the Blue Blazed trail. CFPA did not make a decision at this meeting, but there will be ongoing meetings in the future. Diane provided a "lost" map of an approved multiple use trail system that CHC had marked over 15 years ago. CHC has not had any patrols in this forest for a number of years and is not aware of any equestrian usage there presently. We would like volunteers to use this forest land and eventually get trail markers up after the final plans of the forest trails are approved. There is a lot of mountain bike use in this forest, and many of the trails used by them are not the best for equestrian safety. Staying on the main road for now is the best. There is a good sizable parking lot that was made off Rte.202 in New Hartford - that can hold at least - 5 rigs (Although this area lot is used by any users to access the forest, so may be filled up on weekends, so plan your ride early if you go there.

**Roraback WMA** took the tree away that was blocking the trails.

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**Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP):** Diane reports that the DRAFT report is up on the DEEP Website :

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DEEP/outdoor\\_recreation/scorp/CT-SCORP-2024-2029-for-Public-Comment.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DEEP/outdoor_recreation/scorp/CT-SCORP-2024-2029-for-Public-Comment.pdf)

***Public comments to the draft must comment must be in by December 15<sup>th</sup>:***

[https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=-nyLEd2juUiwJiH\\_abtzi5qxe\\_gq0qJBvmxBaiATYmBUOUJPQ1hWQzRJVVNaWUgzRE1aQ05TODFVTi4u](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=-nyLEd2juUiwJiH_abtzi5qxe_gq0qJBvmxBaiATYmBUOUJPQ1hWQzRJVVNaWUgzRE1aQ05TODFVTi4u)

**Training and Educational Events:** Dates and locations of events discussed will be announced in 2024

**Old Business:**

**Nonnewaug Vo Ag:** Rebecca Harnish reported that Nonnewaug Vocational Agriscience High School is looking for volunteers to set up an Education Program. Contact is Marrissa Bedron, Equine Science Teacher [Mbedron@ctreg14.org](mailto:Mbedron@ctreg14.org) We will need volunteer to help set up this program. Please contact Diane Ciano if you can help

**CT Greenways Council:** CHC is looking for someone to replace Stacey Stearns as an equestrian representative on The GREENWAYS Council. The council meets at 9:00 am on the 2nd Tuesday of each month

**Cheshire Horse Council:** Need update of outcome regarding usage of acquired land for parking.

**Upcoming Meetings:**

**2024 CHC Meeting Dates: Feb. 6, April 2 , June 4, Oct, 1, Dec. 3.**

**CT Equine Advisory Meeting: Thursday December 21<sup>st</sup> – 6:00pm.**

The EAC meets at the Connecticut Forest & Park Association, 16 Meriden Road, in Rockfall, CT The public is welcomed.

**CT Horse Council Meeting: Tuesday, February 6 at Time: 6:30 pm**

**Other :** Randy Olmstead moved we have an American flag and do the Pledge of Allegiance before every meeting. Denise 2 Passed.

Meg Sautter brought up for discussion to change the time for CHC Meetings to be earlier 6:30 pm instead of 7:30.

1. Meg Sautter, 2. Denise Ciano Passed

Adjourned at 8:57pm 1. Randy Olmstead 2<sup>nd</sup> Meg Sautter

Respectfully submitted

*Carol Birdsey*

Recording Secretary