



Kansas Back Country Horsemen Annual Meeting
Minutes for January 27th, 2024
TJ's 309 Maple St, Overbrook, KS 66524

Meeting Called to Order at 1:05 pm – Standing in for Chair, Laura Smyth, Vice Chair

Nominees for elections were announced:

Kyle Smith for Alt. National Director.

Laura Smyth for Vice Chair.

Diana Skinner up for re-election for National Director

Sheila Watkins up for reelection for Treasurer:

First prize drawing – winner, Cheryl Thomas

Minutes from previous meeting–Secretary, **Pattie Stalder**- Minutes were posted along with agenda on FB page and were emailed to all members in the newsletter.

Moved to Accept by Bill Racy ; Seconded by: Cheryl Thomas - Passed

Treasurer's Report–Treasurer, **Sheila Watkins** provided an update on progress of online membership payments through KHC. The beginning balance was \$7,419.67, ending balance is \$5,244.71. Total expenses were \$3509.96 and total income was \$1,335.00.

Moved to accept by: John Leighty; Seconded by: Jen Stalder - Passed

Second prize drawing - winner, Jamie Studebaker

Vice President Report- Fill the Campground had 6 successful camp/ride events in 2023. There will be 4 rides in 2024, skipping July & August. Kyle Smyth will be chairperson. A new campground w/utilities and pens will be constructed at Lake Scott this year. Grand opening is scheduled for September.

Dillon's Community Rewards is a simple way to raise funds for BCHKS. We received approximately \$300 in 2023. Go to www.dillons.com/communityrewards, click on "Enroll Now", enter BCHKS number HJ302, and click on "Enroll".

Third prize drawing – winner, Randy Sievers

National Committee Reports

National Director Report-Diana Skinner - \$5.00 national increase for 2025. Final vote will be held at National BCHA mtg. in Casper, WY this spring. There was a vote held online which will be factored into today's vote. NC is having huge problems with bicyclists on trails on USFS lands. If problems are encountered between horses and bikers on a trail the primary action to take is getting documentation and contacting rangers and police. Also, use of the national campground incident report form. Follow through with authorities is critical.

Media & Marketing- Pattie Stalder – The committee is in the process of making improvements to the website so it's easier to navigate. Any suggestions can be sent to Pattie Stalder at backdoor@bluevalley.net and she will provide them to the committee.

Public Lands- Jim Thomas and Diana Skinner – Information from states and chapters to improve communication should be sent from states up to the national committee. Any time you post pictures of volunteer workers please be aware of what gets posted regarding safety issues like using PPE. Unsafe practices lead to negative feedback. The Public Lands Committee wants to adopt some of our ideas in regard to campground improvements and benefit rides. The national committee was very impressed with our activities.

Membership Data Coordinator- Sheila Watkins – KHC has a new computer data system that will be helpful in recording memberships. Use of QR codes sends info directly to KHC, then Justine forwards organized data to Sheila. BCHKS members should still go directly to Sheila for any information regarding changes or corrections. You can now join on the KHC website for either the Trails Advocate membership (BCHKS + KHC) or just BCHKS. March 1st is final date to pay 2024 dues. Sheila will send updated member lists to each Chapter prior to the cutoff date. 2024 = 63 family & 90 individuals

Volunteer Hours- Cheryl Thomas - \$200,000 monetary value of 3,200 hours, 11,738 travel miles, 895 equipment hours and 52 stock use days in 2023! BCHKS is distinguished because of this vital data Cheryl collects and assimilates each year to all park managers, KS Dept. of Wildlife & Parks and the Kansas Trails Council.

State Committee Reports

10-year anniversary committee- Our Jamboree Campout will be April 19 – 21st at Eisenhower State Park, call office to make reservations. Donated Saddle Raffle will be awarded then. Mugs will be for sale for \$10.

Fourth prize drawing – winner, Jen Stalder

Chapter Reports

Sunflower – Trails Updates:

- Perry – Jo Turner reported on a list of 2024 objectives developed with Park Manager Tristan LaRocque: Continue decommissioning old lagoon and replace with arena; create additional emergency entrances to trail system; new lime in pens; create reservable camping sites in primitive camp area; plant tree at every campsite; add connecting walking trail between new day parking area and bathroom at Hobie Cove area. Ed Jarvis added that there is a walking path to the Hobie Cove area. It was suggested that a ‘No Horses Beyond this Point’ sign be put up to discourage riding horses to the Hobie Cove area.
- Clinton – Work days will be planned to clear downed trees and to continue rebuilding the Orange Trail. The Clinton Corps of Engineers Park Manager has retired; Diana is not aware of replacement yet.
- Pomona – Rosie Sweeten and Jamie Studebaker reported that trails were in good shape leading up to Thanksgiving. Jamie plans to work on re-opening old Plummer’s Creek trail and the old Sycamore Trail.
- Landon Trail – Kanza Rail-Trails Conservancy board members are keeping the Overbrook to Michigan Valley mowed and maintained. Cheryl reported that for this next year, the board plans to focus on maintenance and upkeep on existing sections of Landon Trail, as they continue to raise funds and seek grants for completing additional sections.
- Eisenhower State Park, Melvern Lake – Jim reported that 2024 goals include providing shade for the middle pens in the West Point Campground. An additional overflow pen will be built near the west end of the horse camp area. Jim has received a lot of positive feedback on the new trails to the north. Park Manager Ted Craig added that this winter has been hard on hydrants and water lines. West Point Campground is usually open all winter; currently 5 campsites in the horse area still have functioning water hydrants. Ted also reported that he will be purchasing 2 ADA bathrooms on trailers; they will be available for special events and on loan to other state parks for events.

Saddle Ridge - Applied for \$67,000 trail grant and got \$19K awarded but money didn't come in because the State Historical Society needs to do an ecological survey to make sure there is nothing historic under the trails.

Tuttle Creek – Will hold annual mtg. in February; annual trail ride will be managed by Jen Stalder. We raised \$800 for Opie Huddleston Memorial which will be built at the head of the Opie Trail this spring.

Big Hill – Endurance ride funds put a freeze-proof hydrant in the campground and part of the horse trail was eroding so they laid some new trail. In the process of installing an outdoor cooker in the private campground to honor member who died in 2023.

Chisholm Trail – Meeting will be next month.

Old Business

National Board meeting - Registration is now open for the BCHA national meeting in Casper, WY, March 24-27. One of our National Directors will be representing us.

Fifth prize drawing – winner, Connie Cummings

New Business –

- Equifest is March 14-17! Volunteers are welcome for shifts in the BCHKS booth on all days. Contact Stephanie Huss. Other volunteers are needed for the actual event. Go to www.equifestofks.com.
- Elections: there were no additional nominations from the floor
Kyle Smith for Alt. National Director.
Laura Smyth for Vice Chair.
Diana Skinner up for re-election for National Director
Sheila Watkins up for reelection for Treasurer; with her position being extended beyond the two term limit due to the new KHC computer program being introduced.

Bill Racy moved to pass a unanimous ballot which was then amended to acknowledge the extension of the treasurer position. Seconded by Catherine Crites Motion passed unanimously.

- BCHA grant program is open through February. Youth grants are also available in the same timeframe.
- BCHKS support grant applications open March 1 – 31, 2024.

Sixth prize drawing – winner, Susan Searles

Workhorse award presentations:

Susan Searles – Big Hill

Jim & Colleen Neely – Big Hill

Jamie Studebaker – Sunflower

Keith and Terri Fayle - Sunflower

Ted Craig – Sunflower Chapter

Jim Pickett – Saddle Ridge

Farley Ratzlaff – Saddle Ridge

John Leighty - Saddle Ridge

Gerry Cummings – Saddle Ridge

Laura Ward-Smyth – Chisholm Trail

Other discussions – none

Sandra Hiller moved to adjourn at 2:09 pm, seconded by Kyle Smyth Passed