**Kansas Back Country Horsemen Board Meeting Minutes**

**April 26th, 2026**

**Facebook video call**

**Call to Order** at 7:01 by President Laura Smyth

**Minutes from previous meeting** – posted on website; Diana moved to approve as submitted, seconded by Monica, motion passed.

**Treasurer's Report –** Sheila Watkins – Donna moved to accept as submitted, Eileen seconded, motion passed.

**National Committee Reports**

National Director Report - Diana

- Sunflower Chapter received a $1,000 Chapter Support Grant.
- National membership is approximately 7,000 as per actual memberships counting as one whether Family or not.
- June 6 is National Trails Day. Register your event on American Hiking Society website.
- BCHA.org has a new event page. Craig Ferdig will personally donate $100 to any chapter that provides proof of local media video coverage of our events and another $100 if state or national political representatives attend.
- BLM makes over 7 billion dollars a year. Their budget is 1 billion dollars.
- The US Forest Service is trying to repeal the Roadless Rule which could open millions of acres to industrialization. CO and ID are the only states that are not affected. Info is in House Bill 3930 or Senate Bill 3042.
- Chapters and individuals should tag all FB posts with US Corps of Engineers and BCHA so they can be seen nationally.
- Electric chainsaws have no clutch so they may not stop running if connecting with your chainsaw chaps or other materials.
- A discrimination policy was passed.
- KS had the largest representation at the national meeting with 14 members present.

Public Lands- Jim Thomas

- There is discussion regarding changing our national public lands sections from 5 to 3.

Membership Data Coordinator- Sheila Watkins

- Currently we have 179 members which counts 2 for every family membership.
- Have not received any money from Justine yet, but weekly notification includes new and renewing member info.
- PayPal takes a fee if dues payment isn't designated as a donation. The fee is split between KHC and BCHKS. Fees so far this year have cost us $120. We should ask that a notation be put on the KHC website to mark it as a donation to avoid being charged a fee.

Volunteer Hours- Cheryl Thomas

- Jotform has been up and running for 2 months and we've recorded 800 hours. There is a Jotform link on our website. We should promote using it at every meeting and also insure it is published in the newsletter.

Youth National Committee Report – Lexi Studebaker

- There are currently 3 active members on the committee. The first meeting will be next Monday. Target audience is young adults. Finding a definition for "youth" will be on the agenda.
- Suggestion was made to create a Youth membership for BCHKS which could match the KHC student membership description.

**State Committee Reports**

Fundraiser/Event Committee - Stephanie Huss – n/a

**Chapter Reports**

Sunflower –

- During the dinner at the April 18 Big Foot Ride Diana was recognized by US Corps of Engineers with the first ever, Superior Stewardship Award.
- There was discussion on having a fundraising event scavenger hunt with online registration and extended event dates. A token would be awarded at the end of the timeframe. Maybe move the Big Foot search from different lakes. In multi-use areas we could include hikers and bikers and advertise thru KS Trails Inc., etc.
- Two workdays were held clearing Pomona, with 4 miles reopened.
- Rockhaven cleanup had 24 volunteers with all 5 of the Corps employees participating. There is still plenty of treefall at Rockhaven.
- There will be a clinic at Pomona at end of June and an event on National Trails Day.

- This weekend, Jaimie and Lexi will be attending the Outdoor Communicators Conference in Manhattan. This is for any communications groups that pertain to outdoor activities. They will be sharing BCHKS info.

Saddle Ridge – Stephanie Huss

- A Clinic was held at the end of March which included: Camping with Your Horse, Human Camping, First Aid, and Trailer Backing. There were 7 attendees.
- John Leighty moved so Stephanie was elected president.
- There will now be bi-monthly meetings.
- NATRC ride scheduled for May.
- Working with land manager to move forward with grant funds. Recently been cleaning up tornado damage. Campground wasn't damaged.
- Obstacle course was to be put in last Sat., but now waiting for dry weather.
- There will be a fund raiser this fall.
- John and Rhonda made it safely to new home in FL.

Tuttle Creek – Pattie Stalder

- Next meeting will be in Wamego Public Library, Sat. 5/2.
- Some light work has been done at Carnahan.

Big Hill - Donna

- Hosted Endurance ride last week.
- Memorial ride coming up this weekend.
- Will have another fundraiser later in the year.
- In regard to their work days, Monica suggested completing a single jot form for all volunteers, rather than individual submissions if volunteers prefer not to do it themselves.

**Old Business**

Insurance – Monica/Sheila

- EquiFest and our Annual meeting are the only activities covered by our general liability insurance. More information will be provided by insurance agent to Sheila tomorrow, April 27, 2026.

**New Business**

- Re-establish the Chisholm Trail Chapter – Cheryl reported that Frank Haas said he was interested in working on it but he hasn't paid dues and hasn't been back in touch.
- Two replies were received from individuals that said they would move to that chapter.

2027 Elections – Diana

- Diana reported that there are lots of people interested in running for office at chapter and state level in 2027.

Better communication for all of us – Diana

- Diana applied for and was awarded a Chapter support Grant for $1000. Cheryl also applied for a $300 grant for Sunflower but did not get one. Since each Chapter can only be awarded one grant there needs to be better communication within Chapters.
- Diana reported there was confusion at the recent national meeting regarding Steph being in attendance. Steph couldn't attend but Lexi was there and filled the position. Need to communicate better.
- Diana suggested holding quarterly BOD meetings in person at different areas in the state to draw in more members who want to be involved. The idea is that we get more done and communicate better in person.
- It was suggested to hold fall BOD meeting at Milford Lake Oct. 23rd/24th.
- Monica suggested having a BOD meeting a week prior to the annual meeting.
- Cheryl suggested having a Chapter Officers meeting annually. Laura will set it up for some time in July.

Re-establishing Orange trail at Clinton Lake –

- Upon completion, Diana will apply for the BCHA Double Diamond Award. Safety gear needs to be used everywhere, and Diana will be purchasing it new.
- Diana shared information regarding the Hard Hat Helmet Auction at the national meeting. A hardhat gets returned to be auctioned annually. It raised over $2000 this year. Diana wants us to collect pledges to buy that hardhat next year at the national meeting. Kansas would possess it for a year, put our sticker on it and put it back in the next year's auction.

**Other discussions**

Trail Warrior Award – Diana

- A writeup on this new award went out in the newsletter last year. The description is now on our website. One outstanding person gets the award each year. The prize awarded could be a donation of safety equipment. Winners should be listed on our website. Winners are not eligible to be nominated again. Jamie suggested posting the nomination letter on the website as an example for new applicants.

Kansas Grants – Cheryl

- Clarification of the dollar amount given via state grants was discussed. Jaimie moved to edit the current wording (*The Back Country Horsemen Kansas Grant awards grants in amounts from $100 to $500*.) to include "with a total payout of $500 annually." Motion was seconded by Monica, motion passed.

KS Trails, Inc. – Monica

- Discussion was held regarding where we stand with our Trail Guardian responsibilities via KS Trails, Inc. This includes our commitment to annually report the status of trails. There was uncertainty as to how to list contact people for each equestrian trail in the state or restrict it to only our chapter trails. More discussion is needed.
- Monica asked if we should become a member of KS Trails, Inc. Pattie moved to join at the $500 level, Monica seconded. Discussion included a comment that we can opt out of receiving the bonus membership gifts and have those extra funds stay with KS Trails, Inc. Pattie adjusted her motion to include not receiving the gifts. Monica seconded. Motion passed.

**Move to adjourn** – Moved by Sheila, seconded by Donna, meeting adjourned at 8:43 pm.