Minutes The Maine Highlands Sled Dog Club Spring Meeting 2015

The Spring Meeting Of TMHSDC was held on April 19th, 2015 at the American Legion Post #105 in Newport, Maine. The meeting was called to order at 1PM by our President Jill Carter.
1. The secretary’s report was read and accepted.
2. The treasurer’s report was read and accepted.
3. The Animal Welfare report was read by Darlene Farr in Lindy's absence. She said that
     there was nothing to report. She said that there are some dog related bills going before
     legislature but nothing that affects our sport or kennels in any way. There will be a
     language change that states that euthanized dogs shall not be disposed of on public
     land. There were 8 cases of this last year. She also said that there is an up rise of a tick
     borne disease called Anaplasmosis; the concern with this disease is that humans can
     get it as well as dogs and that it throws off the white blood cell count.
4.  The Corresponding Secretary was next. Joan stated that she and Gary and Terry and
      Margie had compiled a list of ongoing club responsibilities, she handed a copy out to
      club members in attendance. She said that we need volunteers and that training for
      positions will be available. She stated that many of our loyal long time volunteers are
      getting older and have been doing the same jobs faithfully for years. Joan said that
       teaming up for these jobs would make it fun.
      Joan said that 10 teams had already signed up for this coming October's Basics and Beyond

 weekend and that there are 6 spots left. Julie White will again be taking care
       of our meals and snacks for the weekend. The cost for the weekend will be $75 which
       includes club membership. Joan also said that one of the round-table discussions will

include everyone learning how to time the races. Joan's report was accepted.

       Jill then spoke about her experience timing with Kevin Powers at the Brownville event
        this past season. She said that our events would not take place if not for volunteers
        using the Waterville event as an example where Dave and Darlene procured the food
        and Leslie cooked it and Charlotte picked up after the dogs. She mentioned that we
        should have signup sheets for these volunteer positions at our Fall meeting and that
        no one would be stuck in their chosen job "for life", and that possibly people would like
        to choose a different job the following year. She stated that it doesn't have to be
        complicated and that you could delegate your job to someone else if unable to attend
        an event. Elaine said not to be afraid of the job of timing and that we need teams
        of people willing to do it.

        Elaine questioned whether the club should stop sending out its newsletters by "snail-
        mail" and that maybe posting it on Facebook or the club web-site would be better or
        even to send it to everyone as an e-mail. Terry said that people's e-mail addresses
        change so we would have to somehow keep up with that. Joan said that the most
        important part of the newsletter is to inform people of when the club meetings are.
        Valerie suggested that we could send postcards for that purpose, and if people don't
        use the computer or have one that upon their request the newsletter could be mailed
        to them. Darlene added that she would gladly take on the responsibility of getting
        the newsletter and meeting postcard reminders out to people but that she would need
        physical addresses and e-mail addresses.
        Terry made a motion that the newsletter no longer be mailed out unless requested by

 members but rather posted to club’s website. The motion was seconded and passed by

 the attending members.

### Old Business1.  Terry spoke about the proposed change to the clubs by-laws regarding a Recreation Class at events. A motion was made to accept these changes; it was seconded and passed by the attending members. We will vote on accepting this change into the club by-laws atour Fall meeting. Proposed Change to TMHSDC By-Laws/Recreation Class:

### Add to “XI, Racing Rules”, F. Recreation Class,

 F. Recreation Class

1. The intent of this class is to allow beginners a venue to start racing, in a safe environment. All the type of entries will be run together in the same heat, may or may not be timed. The distance should not exceed 1 mile. Because the different type entries are run simultaneously the placing order will not be recorded.
2. All Local Sprint Rules apply, except a dog may be run in another class.
3. The Race Committee for a particular race, with the Race Marshall having final say may elect to have a Recreation Class. The final determination will not be made until the day of the race, because of trail conditions and amount of entries in other classes.
4. The common type of entries in this class is sled, rig, bike, ski, and canicross. Other type entries may be allowed if acceptable by Race Marshal.
5. The order of entry will determine start position.
6. This class will be limited to 1 dog and 2 dogs.
7. All required equipment for other classes and that which is proper to insure safety shall apply based on conditions and time of year.

2.  A review of the 2015 season was then discussed:
      A) Garland (The Allan Thomas Memorial Race) was cancelled due to lack of snow.
      B) The Milo Race went on as scheduled with the members of the Masonic Hall doing
           a fabulous job of hosting us. It was a cold day with a hard, fast trail.
      C) The Brownville event went on as scheduled. Grooming was a challenge because of
            the snowfall the night before; the groomer did go out right before the race began.
            This event was well attended even though numerous teams couldn't make it
            because of poor driving conditions.
      D)  Exeter went on as planned; it was mostly attended by Maine Highland's members.
      E)  The event at Viles Arboretum was held as planned. There was wonderful publicity
             for this race. It had been advertised in "The Sled-Dogger" on-line magazine. Bill
             Green was there and interviewed Jill. It was written up in the Kennebec Journal
             and Bob Duchesne from a local radio station talked it up on the radio in an interview
             with Jill. All of these interviews and publicity showed the sport of mushing in a good
             light. David Farr mentioned that we should have contact information for the club
             available incase viewers or listeners are interested in finding out more. He also
             added that maybe whoever is going to be in charge of publicity should be the
             person interviewed at our events. Jill was concerned that she might not have been
             the best choice of interviewee because she and her dogs ski-jor only. Joan said it
             was a wonderful interview because it showed the diversity of sled dog sports.

New Business
     1.  Jill mentioned that Laurie had suggested the possibility of the club holding a one-day
          ski-joring clinic. Lindy had said that Quarry Road might be interested in having it there.
          The trails there are groomed for cross-country skiers and there would be instructors
          available. Jill said that we should pick a week-end and advertise.
     2.  Gary then spoke about the possibility of the club getting a new sound system. He
          said that people would like it louder but that we would have to upgrade the equipment
          that we have now or purchase new equipment. He said that a 100 watt amp would do
          the trick. Val said that she had been looking around and we might be able to upgrade
          for $500. Tony said that he would help and that he has parts. A committee was then
          formed for this project. Val and Eddy and Gary and Tony volunteered. Elaine made a
          motion for the club to spend up to $1000 for a new system and to keep the old one for
          back-up. Terry seconded the motion and it was passed by the attending members.
          Jill thanked those people volunteering.
     3.  This year's only Leonard Seppala award nomination was made by Terry. He nominated the Benson family stating that they have to overcome many obstacles to be
           an active mushing family. They exhibit outstanding club participation and have to
           travel from Maryland to do so. They are a very positive image for the sport of
           mushing. Catherine, as a musher sticks to it, is gracious on the trail and even though
           her and her team may not be the fastest she makes sure that everyone who passes
           her can do so safely. You can go to the club web-site and view Terry's full nomination
           write up.
     4.  The subject of helmets for the children participating at club events was then
          discussed. Jill said that she felt that helmets should be offered and encouraged.
          Snowboard helmets could probably be purchased for $50-$60 a piece or $30 if not
          adjustable. Joan said that she had seen them at Mardens. Theresa said maybe
          Goodwill but Elaine said that if they are used and have been crashed just once
          that they are no good. Elaine stated that we might be able to find a company that
          gives discounts to organizations. Julie questioned as to whether it would be a
          liability for the club to provide helmets. Elaine said that if they were "required" and
          not just offered that it would be more of a liability. Dave Farr said that we should just
          offer helmets to the parents for their children. Terry then made a motion to spend
          $150 on helmets. The motion was seconded and passed. Elaine said that we should
          amend the motion and up the cost of the helmets to $200-$250. Elaine's motion was
          seconded and passed. Tony said that maybe we could get a donation from Wal-Mart
          and Julie said that some manufacturers might give discounts to organizations who
          want to use their products, like free advertising for the companies.

          5.  The 2015-2016 proposed event schedule was then discussed:
         a. The club's annual BBQ and auction will be on 7/11/15 in Brownville at
              Margie's and Terry's home.
         b.  Basics and Beyond Training weekend will be 10/10-10/12/15 in Brownville
              at Joan's and Gary's home.
         c.  The Fall meeting and rig race will be held at Viles Arboretum in Augusta on
              11/8/15.
         d.  The Milo Race will be held on 1/16/16.
         e.  Brownville could now be a 2-day event and will be held on 1/30-1/31/16.
              Saturday will feature a 30 mile and a 20 mile race, and Sunday there will
              be a 20 mile untimed fun run. There will be no awards given for the Sunday
              20.
              Terry mentioned that there were 47 volunteers that helped at the last
              Brownville event. Terry also said that at our Fall meeting we need to know
              how many volunteers we will have for this event. If he isn't comfortable
              with the safety of the trail the event will not be a go.
              The 30 mile race will not be an open class. There will be a 6 dog minimum and
              8 dog maximum. The 20 mile race will be a 5 dog minimum and a 6 dog
              maximum.
          f.  The Allan Thomas Memorial Race will be held in Garland on 2/13/16 or
              2/20/16. The date is unsure because the Down East club might be holding
              their Newport race on the 20th.
             Jill said that hopefully we can avoid future scheduling conflicts with the Down-
             East club. Kevin Quist is the newly elected President of the Down East club
             and Lindy will be involved. Jill has already sent our proposed event schedule
             to her.
        g.  There will be no Exeter race this coming season.
        h.  Our Spring meeting will be held on 4/17/16.
             Don Banker asked whether cancelled races could be rescheduled. Gary
             said that it is hard to do because other clubs have events and the days
             picked would probably conflict..
6.  The Election of Club Officers was then held:
             Jill will remain as club President
             Valerie will remain as Vice-President
             Julie will remain as Treasurer
             Jan will remain as Secretary
Joan Chapman said that now that the newsletter will no longer be in print that she
will give up the Corresponding Secretaries position. Terry stated that Joan might want to give the new Corresponding Secretary some advice and training if need be.
             Darlene Farr will be our new Corresponding Secretary.
             Chris Mitchell, Lindy Howe, David Farr, George Buswell and Gary Chapman
             will remain on the Board of Directors. Joan Farnham will be replacing Nova
             Watson on the Board.

Before the meeting was brought to a close Terry mentioned how nice it was to see
ski-jorers in Fort Kent this past season. Jill and Neil participated there.

Tony mentioned getting pamphlets about our club out to the public, Joan said
that there are volunteer positions for publicity that need to be filled. Terry volunteered
Margie to create a pamphlet and he said he would bring them to our Fall meeting. Julie
mentioned that printing is reasonable at VistaPrint and that maybe we should consider
doing business cards instead because they are less likely to get thrown away. Leslie displayed her business card from Boston Snow Dogs for us to see.

Jill mentioned and welcomed our newest member Gene Goodine who is the proprietor of Ashes to Ashes Pet Crematorium in LaGrange.

The Spring Meeting of TMHSDC was called to a close at 2:20PM.

Jan McCannon   Secretary