**Belgian Draft Horse Alliance**

**Board of Directors Meeting- November 30, 2023**

The Alliance board meeting was called to order at 8:08 am by Alliance President Scott Seymour at the Farmstead Inn in Shipshewana, Indiana. The following were present for the meeting: Justin Berry, Jim Carey, Lisa Eller, Michelle Keaffaber, David Moser, Corbly Orndorff, Larry Piergallini, Walter Schaefer Jr., Jade Seaman, and Scott Seymour.

**Minutes:**

Minutes were presented for approval for the May 5, 2023 Spring board meeting.

Justin Berry moved to approve the minutes.

David Moser seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously.

Minutes were presented for approval for the October 24, 2023 conference call.

David Moser moved to approve the minutes.

Lisa Eller seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously.

**Financial Report:**

Larry Piergallini presented the Alliance Financials. The Belgian Futurity payouts were done after the report was generated. Michelle will work on reflecting the correct amount in the Belgian Futurity restricted account for the year end financials.

The CD through Edward Jones matures on December 15, 2023. The board will table this until we get through budgets for all the committees.

Corbly Orndorff moved to accept the financial report.

Walter Schaefer, Jr. seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously.

**President’s Report:**

Scott Seymour thanked everyone for attending the meeting. The Belgian horse and Alliance continue to move in a positive direction. This Fall has brought some uncertainty around the Belgian horse. There have been many reduction sales, dispersal sales, etc. The industry runs in cycles, and the Alliance has prepared itself for another cycle. Change is important to continue to be successful. The board of directors continue to strive towards what the membership and public want.

**Secretary’s Report:**

Michelle thanked everyone for attending the meeting. This year has brought a lot of changes to programs within the Alliance. This upcoming year will be a busy year for the Alliance- the NABC X and launching the Belgian Alliance hitch program. Michelle thanked everyone for all their hard work this past year.

**Old Business:**

Scott Seymour presented on the banquet that will be held during the NABC X. Mark Hochstetler is organizing the banquet for Saturday evening to recognize the winners for the show. The committee will be charging a fee of $10 per ticket for the banquet- it will be included on the entry form. Exhibitors will be able to purchase more tickets at check in. There will be a small banquet for the Breeders Challenge and Halter winners half way through the week.

**Committee Reports:**

**Personnel:**

Walter Schaefer Jr. reported on the personnel committee. Discussed performance of office staff and Chief Operating Officer.

**Raffle:**

David Moser reported on the raffle. The Alliance has sold approximately $3,400 in raffle tickets. Tickets can be purchased up until the drawing of the cart at the Annual Meeting.

The board discussed different marketing avenues to sell tickets at in the future. There will be no raffle item next year.

**Publications:**

Michelle Keaffaber presented on the Belgian Review. This year we are down on advertisers and preorders for the book. Anticipate more advertisers next year due to the NABC X. This year’s book will include an updated format to the sales report. The committee will order 1,250 books this year vs. the 1,500 we have done in the past.

**Marketing:**

Justin Berry reported on the marketing committee. The new booth set up was rolled out at the Mid America Draft Horse Sale. A new trailer was purchased. The committee is working on a proposal for a backdrop upgrade that will be presented in the Spring.

**National Belgian Show:**

Scott Seymour presented on the National Belgian Show. The National Belgian Show will remain at the Indiana State Fair until 2026. The committee consist of Scott Seymour, Lew Biddle, and Steve Mrozinski. The committee is working through judge representatives. The 2023 National Belgian Show had new awards that were received positively. The trophy sponsorship will remain at $100.

**Futurity:**

Larry Piergallini presented on the Futurity. No rule changes have been suggested for this year. A formula was created to create better clarity on the payouts for the program. Payouts were sent out after the financials closed and will be reflected on the yearend financial report. There were more entries this year compared to last year.

**NABC X:**

Justin Berry and Scott Seymour presented on the NABC X. The committee is still looking for sponsorships for the event. There will be an auction at the upcoming Mid America Draft Horse Sale. A carriage has been donated by Corbly Orndorff, a work sled has been donated by Terry Pierce, and the committee will auction off the last 6 horse hitch class. Other items include farrier services, and stallion service fees for other breeds. The committee has selected judges and all contracts have been signed. Judges will be announced during the annual meeting. Summit Professional Services will be doing photography, livestream and program for the event. Jarron Miller will be the Announcer and Justin Carey will be the Ring steward.

Laura Wangler continues to do a great job on the merchandise. The committee hopes she will be able to attend the Mid America Draft Horse Sale. She will have a booth at the NABC X and will be the exclusive apparel vendor at the event.

Lisa Eller presented on the NABC X Awards. The committee continues to work through ordering awards. Exhibitor gifts have been ordered. A mock up of the hitch awards is being created. Once created, it will be approved by the NABC X committee. Lisa passed around photos of the awards to the board of directors. Lisa requested feedback on wording for the class awards.

Justin Berry reported on marketing. Justin and Michelle continue to put ads on the NABC X Facebook page. A 2-page ad will be in the upcoming Canadian Banner and Belgian Review. The committee will work on putting an ad in all of the upcoming sale catalogues. Justin will work on marketing in local newspapers, radio ag report, etc.

Illinois State Fairgrounds continues to work on upgrades to the venue.

The board discussed the next NABC, which will be held in 2028. Scott Seymour has been in contact with the Canadian planning committee for the last NABC. They have not confirmed if they are planning to host the NABC in 2028. The Canadian committee is planning to have a meeting in January, Scott will stay in contact. There will be more information presented at the Spring meeting.

**Breeders Challenge:**

Scott Seymour presented on the Breeders Challenge. The committee is working on getting judges for the event. The judges will be announced at the Mid America Draft Horse Sale.

The committee presented different options for individuals who do not pay, or turn in forms late. The board discussed the different options presented.

If an individual has not paid for a service fee, they will not be able to participate in the program, until it has been paid for. If they have a horse that is eligible for one class, but hasn’t paid for a service fee for another class- they will not be able to participate with the eligible horse.

**Merit/ Youth Merit Program:**

Justin Berry presented on the Belgian Merit Program and Youth Merit Program. This year, the program launched a new online point tracking system. The Youth Merit program will have the same online tracking program starting in 2024. The committee had new awards again this year. The committee requested any feedback on the tracking program and awards.

The committee has received feedback regarding the Premier Dam award. The current rules state “The Premier Dam award is awarded annually to the dam with the high point offspring from the current year.” The committee recommends that the Premier Dam must have at least 2 offspring show during the current show season to be recognized.

Corbly Orndorff moved to approve the recommendation that the Premier Dam must have at least 2 offspring show during the Belgian Merit Show season to be considered for the Premier Dam award.

Jade Seaman seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously.

The committee will draw up language for the rule change to be approved during the Spring meeting.

The committee received a Belgian Merit application from the Grange County Fair. The board of directors reviewed the application.

David Moser moved to approve the Grange County Fair as a regional Belgian Merit show.

Corbly Orndorff seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously.

**Belgian Alliance Hitch Program:**

Justin Berry reported on the Belgian Alliance Hitch Program. The committee has come up with an application for shows to become a recognized show, and a sign-up sheet for individuals who want to participate in the program. Application deadline for shows has been extended to March. The committee will work on getting this application to all shows and members.

The committee will look at the rules and clarify the index level.

**Trophies and Awards:**

Michelle Keaffaber presented on the Trophies and Awards. Awards have been aligned with the current Merit Shows. Michelle will present the list to the Corporation for budget approval. Awards will be ordered and handed out during the Spring meeting.

**Breeders Showcase:**

Lisa Eller presented on the Breeders Showcase painting. Christine Marcus Stone has created the painting again this year. It will be picked up at Shipshewana Harness and auctioned off during the annual meeting.

**Hall of Fame:**

Jim Carey presented on the Hall of Fame. This year’s Hall of Fame inductee is C.O. and Ralph House. Todd Biddle is writing an article to be featured in the Belgian Review. Jim Carey is presenting an award to Chris House during the annual meeting.

Scott Seymour requested the committee look into the process of choosing the Hall of Fame inductees to accelerate the rate of growth of the Hall of Fame, before this information and stories are lost. Other associations require members to nominate individuals into the hall of fame and then have a vote. The committee will look into a process to present at the Spring meeting.

**Belgian Expo:**

David Moser presented on the Belgian Expo. This years Belgian Expo was held in Lancaster, PA. In the past, the external planning committees have been told that their budget is based on the amount of advertising money raised. This year, the external planning committee spent approximately $5,000 more than what was raised by advertising money. The Alliance sponsored the Friday evening dinner in the amount of $3,000. Overall, the Belgian Expo cost the Belgian Alliance approximately $8,000.00. The financial report received by the external expo committee was not detailed.

The board of directors discussed different ways to ensure we will not have a large bill at the end of the event.

Corbly Orndorff moved to give the Belgian Expo committee a budget not to exceed $10,000- that will specifically fund the Friday evening meal with a budget not to exceed $4,000 out of the $10,000 budget, and the local committee will host a benefit auction of at least 25 items with proceeds going back to the Alliance.

Justin Berry seconded the motion

No: Jim Carey

Yes: Justin Berry, Lisa Eller, David Moser, Corbly Orndorff, Larry Piergallini, Walter Schaefer Jr., Jade Seaman

Motion carried.

Larry Piergallini moved to create a document that will include the requirements of the external planning committee and language that the Belgian Alliance is not responsible for anything over the budget set by the board of directors.

Corbly seconded the motion.

No: Jim Carey and David Moser

Yes: Justin Berry, Lisa Eller, Corbly Orndorff, Larry Piergallini, Walter Schaefer Jr., Jade Seaman

Motion carried.

Larry Piergallini moved to reconsider the motion that was made previously that moved to give the Belgian Expo committee a budget not to exceed $10,000- that will specifically fund the Friday evening meal with a budget not to exceed $4,000 out of the $10,000 budget, and the local committee will host a benefit auction of at least 25 items with proceeds going back to the Alliance.

Lisa Eller seconded the motion.

No: David Moser

Yes: Justin Berry, Jim Carey, Lisa Eller, Corbly Orndorff, Larry Piergallini, Walter Schaefer Jr., Jade Seaman

Motion carried by 2/3 vote.

Larry Piergallini moved to give up to $6,000 to the Belgian Expo provided there was a loss on the event and all itemized receipts are turned into the Belgian Alliance. The Belgian Alliance will give up to $4,000 for the Friday night dinner. The Alliance board members within the Expo committee will review the documentation and have the authority to give payment.

Lisa Eller seconded the motion.

No: Jim Carey

Yes: Justin Berry, Lisa Eller, David Moser, Corbly Orndorff, Larry Piergallini, Walter Schaefer Jr., Jade Seaman

**Scholarship:**

Lisa Eller reported on the Scholarship program. Both recipients will be at the annual meeting and will be reading their bios that were turned in for the Belgian Review.

The board of directors reviewed the current scholarship application.

David Moser moved to remove (Post high school) in bullet point #2, and add “if applicable” to the line requesting Highschool attended and GPA. The new application will read:

* Enrolled in a technical or trade school which provides training and certification for a skilled trade such as but not limited to farrier training, automotive training, agriculture training, allied health training, mechanical trade training. Approval by the scholarship committee is required.
* High School attended and GPA (if applicable)

Larry Piergallini seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously.

**Youth Ambassadors:**

Jade Seaman and Jim Carey reported on the Youth ambassadors. This year we had 7 ambassadors, 2 will be attending the annual meeting. They will help sell raffle tickets and pass out merit awards.

For 2024, the application will include that ambassadors will be able to attend the NABC X. NABC X will be having the Ambassadors hand out awards instead of having queens. The board will need to make sure people are aware of this change. The application deadline is prior to the Spring meeting. The committee will review applications and request a budget during the Spring meeting.

**Coloring contest:**

Jade Seaman reported on the coloring contest. This year we had 38 contestants. Michelle Keaffaber has ordered a banner to be hung up during the annual meeting. Jade is working with Michelle Martin Randolph on converting her photos into a new coloring book.

The board reviewed budgets and when money will need to be available for the upcoming NABC X.

Walter Schaefer, Jr. moved to reinvest $175,000 from the Edward Jones CD that matures December 15, 2023. The financial committee and Michelle Keaffaber have the authority to reinvest the money.

Justin Berry seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously.

David Moser moved to adjourn meeting.

Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 2:13 pm

Signed:

Michelle Keaffaber

Secretary, Belgian Draft Horse Alliance