Minutes of the
2024 Annual General Meeting

Wednesday December 11, 2024
7:00 to 8:00 PM
Online

VTRA
VICTORIA THERAPEUTIC RIDING ASSOCIATION

Call to Order

Annie Brothwell, President, welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Karen Diederichs, Secretary, recording.

Territorial Acknowledgement

Sherry Niles acknowledged that we meet on the traditional territories of the Lekwungen (Esquimalt and Songhees) and W̱SÁNEĆ (Pauquachin, Tsartlip, Tsawout, Tseycum) peoples.

Quorum

A Quorum was established and the meeting deemed to be in order.

Agenda

Motion proposed to accept agenda: Anne Silver. Seconded: Sue Paterson. Approved

Minutes

Motion proposed to approve (as amended) the Minutes of the 2023 AGM held on December 13, 2023: Anne Silver. Seconded: Heather Love. Approved

President's Remarks - Annie Brothwell

Annie shared some heartwarming testimonials from participants and their families. The past year has been one of many changes - the staff have been amazing as they have adapted and supported others throughout.

The visit of Princess Anne, the Princess Royale was the highlight of the year and has led to many new donor relationships and opportunities.

Over 200 volunteers have collectively contributed 7,345 hours of work to support VTRA's programs! Special thanks to Virginia Rego who has contributed over 344 volunteer hours this year.

We welcomed two new horses – Socrates and Bjor – to rebuild the herd after the loss of Maryke and Danny last year.

Congratulations to Liz Gagel for assuming the role of Executive Director earlier this year. She brings with her many years of experience at VTRA and her wonderful, positive energy.

Special thanks to Anne Waterhouse who has supported VTRA in so many ways for so many years. She inspires us all in her quiet, unassuming way!

Executive Director Remarks – Liz Gagel

Thank you to the board members for their continuous support, expertise and encouragement and to Annie Brothwell for her longstanding leadership. A special thanks to volunteer Lynn Girard who is stepping down after nine years of extraordinary devotion to VTRA! Her efforts have kept the barn and the herd happy and healthy for many years.

Thank you to our funders, donors and supporters – both new and longstanding – for helping to build the organization.

Draft

Liz played our new "Magic in a Bottle" video which was developed for the Annual Appeal fundraiser.

Liz shared highlights of VTRA's new 2025-30 Strategic Plan. We had so much input from the VTRA community through surveys, focus groups and interviews to inform development of the five Strategic Goals. The plan will be reviewed every year to ensure we're on track to meet our goals and to respond to emerging issues.

Treasurer Remarks – Matt McNeill

VTRA has had a few rocky years from a financial perspective. The good news for 2024 is that we are finally not in a deficit! We have managed to keep program fee increases very small. However, our expenses continue to rise, so we must keep pushing forward with revenue generation. We continue to improve our processes in response to recommendations from our auditor (KPMG).

MOTION proposed to accept the approved audited financial statements for the year ended August 31, 2024. Matt McNeill. Seconded: Lenora Spencer. Approved

MOTION proposed to elect KPMG as auditors for 2025: Matt McNeill. Seconded: Heather Love. Approved

Election of Board Members

Nominations for directors closed on November 1, 2024. Five amazing candidates came forward after the call for nominations was issued.

After discussion, the board voted to expand to 12 directors (the maximum allowed under VTRA Bylaws). This change will allow the board to be more robust and add skills in the areas of legal, HR and risk.

The following directors are presented for re-election for a 2-year term:
Annie Brothwell, Anne Silver, Bonnie Campbell, Heather Love, Karen Diederichs and Sherry Niles

The following new candidate is presented for election for a 2-year term:
D-A Allen

MOTION proposed to elect the presented slate of candidates for a 2-year term: Sue Paterson. Seconded: Virginia Rego. Approved.

Executive positions will be announced after the next Board meeting in January 2025.

As permitted by VTRA Bylaws, two candidates – Deb Gaul and Kate Carmichael – have been appointed to complete the remainder of the terms for directors Tom Rock and Jodi Goodrick (who both stepped down in 2024).

Adjournment

Annie adjourned the meeting at 7:46 p.m.

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