

Orinda Horse Association

Board Meeting Minutes

March 11, 2025

6:00 - 7:30 pm

These minutes are intended for the exclusive use of OHA members. Please refrain from sharing this document with non-members.

Meeting called to order by Elise at 6:00 pm.

Board members present: Elise Torres (President), Linnea Wren (Vice President), Sylvie Thome (Treasurer), Kusia Hreshchyshyn (Communications), Mark Tompkins (Secretary)

Members present: Lila Abdul-Rahim, Heather Armstrong, Allison Bloodworth, Michael Bowen, Suzette Curran, Tanya Ericson, Wakean Maclean, Morris Older, Alix Quay, Eddie Reiter, Liz Strauss, Holly Turner

REMINDER TO MEMBERS: Please pull coyote brush & scotch broom. Also let Kim know if you can help her feed Cookie. Thank you!

1. Adoption of Agenda - Elise proposed changing 4b to include a discussion of horse rule amendments. Mark asked to add, if time allows, discussion of grazing of the ring pasture to April look-ahead and hay survey during herd feeding. Elise moved to adopt changes. Mark seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.
2. Adoption of Previous Meeting Minutes - February 11. Linnea motioned to adopt previous minutes. Mark seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.
3. Consent Calendar - no items.
4. Member Comment - Elise noted that we have limited today's meeting to just OHA members. We want to have a positive and open dialogue during member comment period to address maintenance of our lease, caring for our horses, and supporting one another. Mark seconded Elise's opening statement. Linnea clarified the Zoom member comment logistics. Kusia noted that the Board wants to create a listening space for members to be heard on their concerns around the efforts of a non-member to shut-down OHA with misinformation about horse care at OHA. The Board wants to be supportive to our members, our horses, and EBMUD. Kusia provided an update on Board discussions with EBMUD representatives and reiterated that EBMUD has voiced trust and support for OHA.
 - a. Allison Bloodworth offered support for the work and writing that the Board has done to navigate this situation and asked for clarification on the support the Board has offered to Kim and Cookie at OHA. Elise walked through the timeline of the Board's coordination with Kim on Cookie's recent care. Starting in Fall and

early Winter of 2024, Cookie damaged three of the stalls, and the Board subsequently authorized payment for repairs and work hours for Kim to do the repairs. There was then a period in January when stalls were damaged and the Back 40 was being repaired, and due to the prior damage he caused, Cookie couldn't be in a stall unsupervised. Around February 10, the Board gave Kim permission to have 2 horses unsupervised in one on the 4 pavilion stalls. Around February 12, 2025 the Back 40 paddock repairs/ improvements were finished and they were reopened.

- b. Wakean asked if the Red Barn stalls were considered for Cookie. The Board told Kim she could have Cookie in a stall with a buddy in the stall next door if he was supervised.
- c. Liz asked if the veterinarian scored Cookie as a 3.5, and if so, what date that was on. Elise said that was on February 25, 2025 and it was conducted by Dr. Soltau.
- d. Alison asked if the external party who has been threatening OHA (Marcy) came from Colorado. Elise confirmed it is the Board's understanding that she lives in Colorado and trespassed on OHA property when she took photos of Cookie in early February 2025. Alison asked if some of the photos and videos Marcy has posted were from horses at other places and Elise confirmed at least one photo is of a horse from another place with no affiliation with OHA.
- e. Liz noted that she thought Marcy had taken some of her false information on Facebook down. Liz also asked how Bryn is engaged in this situation. The Board's understanding is that Marcy followed Bryn onto OHA property and Bryn did not condone this.
- f. Morris thanked the Board for organizing tonight's meeting to allow members to voice their concerns. He is also very concerned that someone within OHA is sharing information with Marcy, who is not a member at OHA. He continued to note that even if it was well-intentioned, the member who has been sharing information with Marcy has made a significant error in judgement. Morris also encouraged the Board to address the concerns around underweight horses proactively - in general we need to be very careful and proactive in keeping all horses cared for and in good condition.
- g. Elise clarified that the Board is open to all member input regarding rules and processes to maintain optimal horse condition and has already initiated work on a draft rule revision that includes body conditions score.
- h. Liz added that any body condition score must consider the type of horse and the age of the horse. Not all horses can be kept in the same condition.
- i. Wakean requested that the Board consult with an attorney to address the damaging and libelous statements that Marcy has made on social media, at public meetings, and in other forums. He also suggested the Board take some action on the internal leaks that must be happening because of the information Marcy has been getting that couldn't have come from anyone other than a member.
- j. Michael started by thanking Morris for joining as a long-standing member of the horse community who always offers up positive input and perspective. He also

thanked the Board for being reasoned, methodical, and fair in dealing with some very difficult issues. He acknowledged a great deal of respect from the Board in dealing with the difficult circumstances OHA is currently facing. Michael also expressed gratitude for OHA working to preserve what is a very special and rare place.

- k. Liz asked what we have heard from Alberto at EBMUD. Our ranger Jackie has expressed that Alberto can't comment on the Contra Costa County Animal Control case, but that EBMUD does have trust in OHA and understands that we have had hundreds of horses over many decades and that this situation is an anomaly. Eddie offered that Alberto is probably the main person at EBMUD addressing this issue.
- l. Wakean asked if this issue has gone above Alberto. Our ranger Jackie has expressed that it has been elevated, but we're not exactly sure how high or to whom.
- m. Linnea added that we currently have 2.5 years left on our current lease.
- n. Wakean asked that the Board work to engage with as many EBMUD staff as possible.
- o. Morris offered that he could talk with Scott Hill at EBMUD (watershed superintendent). Eddie felt that would be great to see how far up in EBMUD this situation has risen.
- p. Michael added that it would be helpful to hear Scott Hill's perspective as the watershed manager. He also suggested that the Board engage with the engineers and directors at EBMUD because they have significant influence at EBMUD. The current situation should also remind OHA that we should do more community engagement (for example, high school group broom pulling, Girl Scout horse care and watershed stewardship, etc.).
- q. Liz asked if Kim is getting a veterinarian to come assess Cookie again. Elise said that the Board has required that Kim provide a vet update on Cookie's condition by the end of March around the time of Animal Control's next check. Liz also asked if the Board has required a feeding log from Kim. Elise noted that the Board has requested a feeding log and Kim had provided general feeding information until February 25, 2025 but has not provided feeding information since then.
- r. Wakean suggested that the Board remind members not to share OHA communications beyond members or allow trespassers onto OHA lease property. Elise said that these messages have or will go out from the Board.
- s. Eddie asked about the email thread from Marcy titled "Kim lost in court" - the Board clarified it was the Board's understanding that this was initiated by Marcy in response to the restraining order court case that Kim had filed against Marcy.
- t. Alison asked how members can best support OHA right now. Kusia suggested that community building and advocacy for OHA would really help. This is the time to stick up for OHA. It's understandable to be upset and worried in the face of an external threat to the organization - one that started as a personal dispute and expanded to include OHA. But our members know that the things that have been

said about OHA are not true, that this is not a place with skinny starving horses. We have a good organization with good people taking good care of our horses in a setting that is incredible for our horses' quality of life. Kusia continued that we need to stick up for OHA and we need to stick up for each other.

- u. Liz asked if OHA can prevent Marcy from spamming all OHA members with unsolicited emails. Linnea explained that the Board set one filter that did not prevent Marcy's emails from reaching the entire business email list and has set up a second filter that the Board hopes will prevent Marcy's unsolicited spam emails.
- 5. Membership rules pertaining to Suzette's membership. Elise described that per OHA rules, Suzette forfeited her membership because she did not have a horse at OHA for 12 months. However, Elise added that Suzette has been informed that she just needs to reapply and she will be at the top of the priority list. Eddie asked if the Board could consider waiving or adjusting the application fee and the Board said they would consider this. Elise also clarified that the Board did not have anything to do with Suzette not being able to bring a horse to OHA in August of 2024. The Board's understanding is that the rescue who Suzette was working with decided not to give the horse to Suzette. Linnea also clarified the timeline of membership payments from Suzette. Suzette joined the meeting and requested to share her perspective with the Board during executive session. The Board said this would be fine.
- 6. 2025 AGP Projects
Linnea provided an update that she is working with Eddie and Heather to format possible AGP projects for presentation to EBMUD. EBMUD is trying to schedule the AGP meeting with OHA, so we should have our list of projects ready as soon as we can. The meeting technically should have been in the Fall of 2024. Eddie thinks EBMUD has the lease ready to go because they have communicated that the receipts we have submitted total much more than we are eligible for reimbursement. The Board agreed we need to get the AGP proposed project list ready ASAP. Wakean asked the Board to clarify why EBMUD has not allowed mowing as an AGP project and to add tree encroachment on the roof on the Red Barn. Kusia noted that the tree is borderline in terms of our comfort zone for doing chainsaw maintenance. The invasives that would be controlled by mowing are hemlock, milk thistle, tarweed, and mustard. Eddie, Erica, and Heather McHugh will try to complete the AGP in the next week or two. Eddie also encouraged the Board to make completion of the Beer Can improvements a priority.
- 7. Planning Grid (https://orindahorsemen.org/?page_id=14063)
 - i. March
 - 1. Review Pasture Calendar upcoming herd moves - Erica is coordinating
 - a. 23rd from Plateau to Forest
 - b. 30th from Forest to Middle Meadow
 - 2. Spring vet clinics - reminder to get
 - a. Alpern March 30
 - b. O'Brien March 27
 - c. Dues: Proprietary and Associate will be due April 1.

3. Arena / ring management - Mark is on John Fouhy's calendar for mid- to late-April discing depending on rain.
8. Emergency Preparedness
 - a. Michael Bowen volunteered to take over the Emergency Preparedness & Fire Coordinator task assignment and increase coordination with MOFD and EBMUD. The Board voiced support for this member offer. As the fire danger becomes an increasingly important issue the Board sees the value of having a nearby, active member doing more active and physical fire management work. The Board appreciates and acknowledges the wonderful contributions of Linda and Anna and hopes they will continue to be involved. Wakean asked if Michael could coordinate the transition with Linda and Anna. Michael is confident he can draw on Linda and Anna's expertise to really ramp up this role in a time of increasing fire danger and expectations of proactive management and communication. Michael feels OHA could be an even more proactive partner to EBMUD and MOFD on fire management and ecosystem stewardship, but this will take significant proactive work with OHA as an active partner. Elise motioned to switch the Emergency Preparedness & Fire Coordinator from Linda and Anna to Michael. Linnea seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.
9. FEC, Worming Procedure
 - a. Tabled for future meeting.
10. Committee Updates
 - a. Hay survey - there was extensive OHA discussion on hay type to procure in the 2007-2009 range. Kim suggested a hay survey for members and prepared a draft of this for the Board. The Board supports doing the hay survey soon but wants to add some information to the survey before rolling it out. Mark to recirculate the latest draft of the hay survey to the Board so that additional context and history can be added before finalizing and distributing the survey.
 - b. Treasurer - Email for spring dues will go out in one week.
 - c. Legal Committee - no report.
 - d. Membership Recruitment Advisory Committee - no report.
 - e. Board Liaison Report - no report.
 - f. EBMUD Liaison Report - no report.
 - g. Communications Report - no report.
11. New Business: No new business.
12. Executive Session - Mark motioned to transition into executive session. Kusia seconded. All in favor. Motion passed. Open meeting session closed at 7:34 Executive session opened at 7:36.
13. Executive Session - Discussion of OHA issues. Executive session ended at 8:25pm.
14. Next Meeting
 - a. Agenda - items deferred from this meeting should go on to the next meeting's agenda.
 - b. Date - April 8, 6pm

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

=====updates from Board March 28=====

Dear Members,

We're writing to provide an update on several issues raised during the March Board meeting.

Cookie (registered name Fortune CH):

- Contra Costa Animal Services visited on March 27th and determined Cookie's case remains open while his condition continues to improve.

Stall and Back 40 Paddock Access for Feeding:

- The stalls and Back 40 paddocks have been and continue to be open and available year round for members to feed their horses and for overnight stays due to medical needs, including supplemental feeding.
- Note: The stalls and Back 40 paddocks have been and continue to be open and available for all horses. Horses that may be destructive or too anxious to eat when alone are always free to use stalls and paddocks, though supervision may be required to prevent damage or for the well being of the horse.
- To accomplish member requested drainage improvements the Back 40 was closed briefly, from January 18th to February 12th, 2025.
- Apart from this short closure, all stalls and paddocks have been accessible.

Legal Counsel:

- The Board has retained [Polly Hey](#) as legal counsel. She will advise the organization throughout the animal services investigation and regarding Marcy Roth's campaign to terminate OHA's lease.
- We have not received any new updates from EBMUD.

Membership Updates:

- Suzette has reapplied for proprietary membership and has completed her interview. The membership committee will proceed to the next steps in the membership application process, including contacting all members regarding her application.
- The membership committee is currently contacting and scheduling interviews with additional new membership applicants.

We hope this update addresses the main points. If anything is still unclear, or if you have other questions related to the meeting or this email, please don't hesitate to reach out to the Board.