

# LCEA Meeting Minutes: January 19, 2021

Board members participating were Anna Connors, ~~Louise Cotulla~~, Kelly Foltman, Emily Houston, Stephanie Jennings, Michelle (Sheli) King, Marion Lee, ~~Jack McCormack~~, Reid O'Connor, and Janet Vandervaart.

The meeting began at approximately 5:07pm.

**Approval of December minutes:** minutes approved

**Membership report:** Sheli reported 16 business members and 11 individual members, 27 total members. Sheli said that includes carryovers from 2020. Kelly commented that the number seemed low and Sheli said she thought it might be related to the Expo cancellation. Reid asked if any Board members were due to renew and Sheli said she would check. Sheli will send a separate email to everyone with Board status. Kelly asked the Board for their thoughts on membership appeals, possibly mentioning the Tuesday Talks. Sheli suggested that as the talks were free, perhaps it was better to advertise for TLAER. Board discussed revisiting the potential trailer safety check program in partnership with Another Turn Tack. Reid suggested pushing member benefits on social media and asked Sheli for clarification on benefits. Sheli said there was the 15% discount at Southern States. Sheli said she would send the membership cards out in the next couple of weeks and would include a flier on the benefits. Kelly suggested that before March we should start posting on Facebook about March member discount. She suggested beginning posting in 3 weeks' time. Reid asked if a membership card was required for the discounts, but Kelly and Sheli said the list of LCEA members given to Southern States is what matters. Kelly also suggested mentioning the year-round discount at Another Turn Tack. Sheli said she would send the flier to Reid to adapt for Facebook. Emily said it's easy to make the case you more than make back the cost of your membership with the discounts.

**Treasurer report:** Stephanie reported the current balance is \$26,936.69. LCEA will receive an additional \$5,000 in grant income from USEF. She also reported that she and Mike had made a \$100 donation to TLAER. The only expected monthly expense was for Constant Contact. Stephanie said she was going to send out a newsletter with another membership renewal appeal to members.

**Wander Magazine:** Emily said the magazine has their plan for the next two issues. There will be a Spring/Summer and a Fall/Winter. Emily said they want to do an article on how to get into horseback riding. Emily asked if anyone on the Board would consider writing the article, and said they were not looking for any particular angle. She suggested we write about how it was a good way to get outside during COVID-19. As Anna had mentioned in previous meetings, many parents are curious how to get their kids into riding. Emily said she is surprised how many kids who come to her have never been to a horse show or horse race. Marion said highlighting horseshows as spectator sports in the Spring/Summer issue would be a problem because there are no licensed spectators with COVID. Stephanie suggested Sophie write the article. Emily said it is nice to have an outsider writing it to give a fresh perspective. Stephanie will give Emily Sophie's contact information. Anna suggested the article should highlight different options and emphasize there is not just one type of riding. Emily asked if LCEA wanted to advertise again. Kelly asked the cost and Emily said she thought it was \$325. Board agreed to address this at next month's Board meeting.

**Economic Development/Loudoun Farms update/:** <https://biz.loudoun.gov/loudoun-farms-equine/>

Board looked at the hyperlink. Stephanie asked what is the definition of year round activity. Kelly said she would ask Chris. She also wants to know if there was a place to put pictures. Kelly suggested renaming “clothing and gifts” to “equestrian clothing and gifts,” as well as adding another section of feed and farm supplies. Kelly asked for suggestions/feedback. Sheli asked if there should be a label for summer camps. Reid suggested a label to indicate if businesses were “kid friendly”. Stephanie suggested adding a banner or medallion that says “kid friendly”. Kelly said she would talk to Chris.

**REDC update on “the state of the equine industry”:** Kelly said they would be doing small 5-minute sector updates to let people know state of the industry. Kelly will present. Her view is that the equine industry is doing better than many others. Lesson barns are full and there is a demand for more horses and larger facilities. Sheli said shows that have been held have been pretty full, although for some organizers it is too complicated to deal with restrictions so they are not holding shows. Sheli said she didn’t know about number of shows, as the shutdown from March to June encompassed a large part of the show season. Sheli said the VADA/NOVA regional championship was as big as ever. Kelly asked about Upperville. Marion said there were several hunter jumpers shows which were quite full as well as combined training. Emily and Reid confirmed Upperville was going ahead. Kelly said she wants to advertise her B&B for Upperville and Emily said she will put her in touch with Emily Day. Kelly asked Sheli about vendors, and Sheli said there were quite a few at VADA/NOVA. Kelly suggested doing a survey monkey after COVID asking our members how they had fared and how they adapted. Reid suggested LCEA also ask about PPP loans and aid from grants. Marion said she doesn’t think we will have that many members who will respond to a mass email. She said she got information from about half a dozen people early on, and she will get back in touch. Kelly said if anyone thinks of any additional things to add to the survey, to email her in the next couple of weeks.

**LPAT/PROS update:** Kelly reported the project was moving forward. She said there were 70 volunteers who helped with mapping over 50 miles. The contractor will be having a look at the areas that are not filled in. Kelly said there would be a meeting on the following Thursday and she will report back with updates. Kelly attended the Parks and Recs meeting and said that she was glad to hear there was recognition that equestrians need trails. She said they did not get to the topic of equestrian facilities. Marion asked if all the trails were multiuse. Kelly they were a combination, but that criteria was added when the trails were mapped. Kelly said they would only approach landowners for easements if the trails were to be made equestrian-friendly. She suggested that VDOT would like to turn traffic lights into some of the trails crossings, but this will not work for equestrians.

**Oatlands update:** Kelly reported that USTR would be holding their Memorial Day Ride at Oatlands. She said the trails have brought in a lot of new members and people are enjoying them. Kelly said she was out there Saturday remapping and ran part of the trail. She said the trail is now starting to show as a trail. The Memorial Day ride will also be a membership drive for Oatlands. She said the main thing they needed to sort out was food, which might be built into the registration cost. Kelly suggested putting them together for Caleb and reaching out. Janet said the ride is always Sunday. She mentioned an Eagle Scout (David) would be doing much the bridge-building for his project. Kelly said they also needed some volunteers to help with the crossing to the open Heritage Trail. Janet suggested this would also be a good Eagle Scout Project and LCEA should ask David if he has any friends who would be interested. Kelly said they bought some gate hangers for gates on a road that is also part of the Journey Through Hallowed Ground. The gates are currently held together with ropes.

**TLAER.** Kelly asked about refunds and paying out. Stephanie said everything is on the spreadsheet, but that she hasn't heard back from the venue. The only cost LCEA won't get back are the paper advertising brochures. Sheli asked is it worth spending money to save them by adding a sticker. Janet said big posters are easy to change, the cards are small and they would be harder. Kelly asked if cards were expensive. Stephanie ran through expenses. Kelly said we are going to need to be financially cautious as no one has paid yet. However, first responders should be vaccinated early so this bodes well for the program. Kelly said we need to find out how Rebecca has changed her program for social distancing. Janet said we are going to need to limit auditors, and Kelly pointed out that would set us back expected income. Janet said she was going to sit down and crunch the numbers. Kelly said we need to know where we stand on TLAER so we know what we can spend elsewhere. Janet said will do it the following week. She also said they need to go to fairgrounds and check out the venue to see how we could adapt the space. Stephanie said there is an arena, but everything else is slanted ground. Kelly said we need to push on getting the contract. Janet will set something up and let people know the dates.

**Other Business:** Emily said she had two other items to discuss. She brought up the equestrian partnership with Gravel Grinder and said she had spoken with Andy Bacon who runs it. Apparently the group is very open to ideas on collaboration. Emily suggested a separate meeting with him to discuss options. She also said she would like to get participation from Middleburg Hunt. Maybe the event could start at the hunt kennels as the ride does not need to be confined to roads. Kelly said this could be a good opportunity to show how the trails connect. Reid expressed concerns that the hunts and Upperville have overlap so it might be best not to do it the same day as the Upperville grand prix. Kelly asked about infrastructure. Emily said they don't close the roads off, but there are people monitoring major crossings. Kelly said we should get back in touch with them to discuss logistics. Sheli said the odds that spectators are allowed at Upperville this year are not high so no need to worry about overlap. Janet said she would like to take this to USTR. She asked about the mileage and Emily said that was something we could determine. Janet asked if it would be all on gravel roads and Emily said there could be a combination. She would like to look to Middleburg Hunt to provide ideas. Kelly suggested to Emily the first thing to do would be to reach out to the hunt. She also said there would be added interest if they can ride at Glenwood. Kelly said she would be happy to work with Emily on that, and Janet said she would help out as well. Janet emphasized the difference between ribbon rides and rides with a ride leader. Emily said a ribbon ride mirrors the gravel grinder experience more closely. Janet said she thought there was a potential for really good turnout. Reid expressed concern about gathering sizes. Emily said they were successful last year despite the pandemic. Kelly said gathering size restrictions would be another reason for equestrians to start at a different location. Board agreed the first step was to get in touch with the Hunt and Gravel Grinder company together to gauge interest.

Emily had an email from Judy Burkett in planning and zoning. She said they want to do a rezoning project and suggested they meet with LCEA for 45 minutes to an hour. Emily said she would send the Board the email. Kelly asked if that was something LCEA did with them. Emily confirmed. Kelly suggested we make this the February meeting, but Emily said she didn't know if they could meet after 5pm. Sheli said if it is a 45-minute conversation minimum it might be too much to add to our normal meeting. Kelly asked about the Board's time constraints. Anna said beginning of February, Reid said after 5pm was good, and Sheli said she has quite a few horse shows which happen at the end of the week.

The February Meeting is scheduled for the 16<sup>th</sup>. Sheli said she hadn't yet heard back if that day would be our Tuesday Talk. Kelly asked about making an intro on behalf of LCEA. Sheli said she has drafted

something already and Emily volunteered to take a look. Kelly said they will give an update on all LCEA has done as well throughout COVID as make an appeal for membership.