

Southeast Endurance Riders Association, Inc.
Members' Meeting Minutes
Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront, Jacksonville, Florida
February 25, 2023

Meeting

The meeting was called to order by President Lara Worden at 8:46 a.m.

Financials Update – Treasurer Tamra Williams

- Tamra Williams gave a summary of SERA's 2022 income vs disbursements and let the membership know that SERA was upside down in 2022. She advised the membership that the organization needs to consider an increase in member dues and noted that such an increase would be the first we've had in 20+ years.
- Since the blood analyzer has been sold the funds which were allocated to it were moved to the general fund.

Old Business – President Lara Worden

- Blood Analyzer
 - Use of the blood analyzer declined while costs increased.
 - The Board voted to sell it to Dr. Dee Dee Huff.
- Scales
 - The old scales (wooden scales) lasted 20 years but needed repairs.
 - SERA and the OD worked out a deal in which the cost of repairs were split between the organizations, Tim Worden made the repairs and then the OD took the wooden scales.
 - We had a set of new scales (aluminum scales) manufactured which were great in concept but in reality, they were not durable, requiring repairs within a year, and difficult to transport and manage.
 - The OD Board contacted Lara and very generously offered to return the old scales to SERA on the condition that the old scales would always be available to The Old Dominion ride (June ride).
 - Transport of old scales still needs to be logistically managed. Lara is currently managing the logistics and will be choosy about where they go, especially since they require sufficient advance notice and take some skill to transport, assemble and disassemble.

New Business – President Lara Worden

- Membership Dues Increase / Membership Drive
 - Compares SERA's member dues to SEDRA's member dues.
 - Sudi Lenhart urges the members and the Board to consider a dues increase, and also suggests that SERA consider having an annual convention every other year. This suggestion sparked discussion on rotating venues or changing to a one-day format.
 - Eric Rueter suggests that SERA should look at raising dues and raising sanction fees. Other members who are also ride managers point out that an increase in the sanction fees would make be tough on ride managers.
 - Other recommendations made included having SERA membership applications available at rides, promoting the organization at rides, and state directors sending reminder postcards to those who have yet to renew.
 - Tamra Williams recommended giving a 1-month grace period for the 2023 ride season since the reminder postcards were not sent before convention.
 - Lara Worden tells the membership that we are missing out on a huge market of younger riders.
 - Steven Hay suggests that SERA look at using a payment platform named Zeffie which is available to nonprofits. It keeps track of who signs up, generates QR codes and sends out automatic email reminders to members/former members.
 - Angie McGhee discussed offering horses to junior riders and encouraging them to try the sport.
 - Victoria Mexcur discussed the "generation gap" and methods to market SERA/endurance to that segment of riders.
 - Shannon Thomason
 - The Georgia Arabian Horse Association has a social media coordinator. Shannon suggests Victoria Mexcur, Erin Lean and Steven Hay to head up a social media committee.
 - Suggests a mentor program and the need for a mentorship coordinator.
 - Jim Jarosik says that we need to engage riders so that they want to return to future rides.
 - Laurie Underwood – our current volunteer base is also aging out/burning out.

- Freshman Horse of the Year
 - Lara Worden led a discussion regarding the 2022 Freshman Horse of the Year award. The award has been offered since 2009 and the rules/criteria governing it have been unchanged since its inception. This year's nominations revealed a conflict in the rules. Lara informed the members that the Board had a meeting in January 2023 and voted to revise the rules governing this as follows (note, additions to the rule are shown in underlined text):

All recipients of SERA Awards and Recognitions must be a member of SERA, and, subject to the qualifications below, and only the ride results achieved as an active SERA member apply. Ride results from years prior to the 2009 ride year do not apply. For SERA Awards purposes, a ride year is December 1 – November 30. For any award which requires nomination, nominations are due to the Secretary of SERA (for open and limited distance awards) or Secretary of the East Coast Ride and Tie (for Ride and Tie awards) no later than December 15 and may be made by email or by snail mail.

- Based on the horse with most consecutive miles
 - In case of a tie, AERC points break the tie
 - If at any time the horse fails to complete any ride (regardless of region or SERA sanctioning), a new count begins at zero.
 - Consecutive miles prior to pull may still be submitted
 - If the horse has multiple riders, combined results of SERA member riders are used
 - Based on the horse's combined Open and Limited Distance completions
 - Miles from a single ride year count
 - Only miles from the Horse's first full year of competition apply.
 - "First full year of competition" is defined as:
 - Previous ride starts recorded in no more than one prior ride year, and
 - Ride starts in prior ride year are no more than 3
 - All previous ride history applies, regardless of region or SERA sanctioning
 - Member must self-nominate to ..."
- SERA Teams Competition
 - Eric Rueter led a discussion regarding implementing a new teams competition. The proposed structure is:

General Rules:

- All SERA Team members must be current SERA members.
- Only SERA sanctioned rides will be considered for SERA Team award points.
- A minimum of 3 and a maximum of 10 SERA members makes a team.
- Teams can change over the course of a year, but points only count while a member is declared on a SERA Team.
- A SERA Team must declare which three (minimum) or four (maximum) members are participating in any given SERA event day.
 - SERA Teams can field different members for different Events.
 - SERA Teams can only field one team per Event Day, if an Event is multi-day, then the SERA Team can field different teams on the different days. If there are multiple SERA Events offered on the same day in different locations, then a SERA Team can field a different Team in both Events.
- A team must finish three members for SERA Team points to be applied.
- The SERA Teams earn points separate from any individual event's team competition
 - An event may or may not offer a team competition specific to that Event – but it has no bearing on the SERA Team Competition.
- A member can only be a member of one SERA Team at a time.
- If a SERA Team Member decides to change teams, they must pay an additional signup

fee. Their points earned up to the change will remain with the first team, and any points earned after the change will be awarded to the new team

- The maximum points earned by the three finishers will be used to award points for a given ride.
- Awards will be awarded to all SERA members on the first, second and third place SERA Teams at yearend.
- Points will be awarded as follows:
 - 25-49 mile distance - 1 point each for any SERA Team member that completed the ride.
 - 50-74 mile distance - 2 points each for any SERA Team member that completed the ride.
 - 75-99 mile distance - 3 points each for any SERA Team member that completed the ride.
 - 100+ mile distance - 4 points each for any SERA Team member that completed the ride.

Financial:

- Entry fee \$15 per team member
- Small plaques for first place, second place and third place
 - Maximum of Ten plaques / trophies per placing / minimum of three
 - Cost is break even if the award is equal to or less than cost of entry fee

Logistics:

- SERA Teams must declare a SERA Team Lead.
- SERA Team Lead is responsible for informing the points keeper of a SERA Team's intent on attending a SERA Event, and which team members will be participating.
- SERA Team members will sign up with the points keeper and all monies collected will be transferred to the SERA Treasurer.

- Eric will keep the points and be the point of contact.

- Ride with GPS (ridewithgps.com)

- Joe Schoech led a discussion regarding use of Ride with GPS
 - SERA offers this mapping feature to all SERA sanctioned ride managers at no cost either to the ride manager or the riders who use it at the ride.
 - Joe Schoech is the initial SERA point of contact.
 - As of the date of this meeting, Ride with GPS will be offered this ride season at the Biltmore Challenge ride in May and at Big South Fork in September (so far). We are hoping more ride managers will take advantage of this SERA benefit.
 - Ride with GPS allows participating ride managers to offer riders the equivalent of Google maps, but for trails instead of roads.
 - Riders who sign up for the Ride with GPS "EVENT" will be given the link to the loops before the ride so that it can be downloaded to their phone prior to leaving home for the ride.
 - Once the trails maps are downloaded into the app, riders will be able to follow the trails on their phones with voice cues as you ride the loop – this service is especially helpful in the event of trails sabotage or confusion on markings.
 - Cell phones can be operated in airplane mode to conserve battery usage.

- Lara Worden

- We may not have our ducks in a row but we have a lot of ducks.
- Will be stepping down as president in 2024.
- SERA needs volunteers for a convention committee – putting on a convention is a team effort and one which is difficult to do alone.

- State Representatives Election

Nina Barnett made a motion that the current slate of state representatives be nominated to serve which was seconded by Sudi Lenhart. Motion passed.

Florida	Kathy Burnett
South Carolina	Patsy Gowen
Virginia	Diane Connolly
North Carolina	Lara Worden
Tennessee	Sudi Lenhart
Mississippi	Jack Price
Alabama	Ike Nelson
Georgia	Shannon Thomason
Kentucky	Amy Whelan

- Susan Kasemeyer suggested that SERA revisit the eligibility criteria for president and vice president to include all members of SERA vs. limiting those offices to state representatives.
- Stagg Newman reminded the members of the two clinics being held at the Biltmore Estate:
 - Night Ride Clinic scheduled for March 25, 2023
 - Endurance 101 Clinic scheduled for April 7 and April 8, 2023

Shannon Thomason made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Michelle Brinton. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Submitted by Laurie Underwood, Secretary