

BOTC MINUTES OF MARCH 7, 2024

Attending: Mary, Tom, Nancy, Val, Lori, Bob B, Bob W, Janine, Liz, Andy, Mary McF, Dave H, Diane

Mary called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

APPROVE JANUARY MINUTES – Mary Willmuth:

First up on the agenda is to approve the January minutes. Diane noted that a date-error was corrected. Tom moved that we accept the January meeting minutes as adjusted. Unanimously agreed. The minutes of the January meeting are approved.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT – Mary Willmuth

Mary thanked everyone for working so hard & appreciates the effort of the current board & of those previous members willing to continue to guide us. She also thanked those volunteers handling our upcoming events, as well as Bob for being our technical support person & getting our database & website organized.

Mary then listed her aspiration goals: 1) to focus on being member-friendly, energizing the club & the benefits we offer; 2) to continue research for online event entry (she, Tom & Bob will meet); 3) to encourage new & younger members; 4) discuss an annual in-person fun event (previously in December at the Windjammer, & also another Fun Day but would need a location). Mary & Bob will work on this & anyone else who is interested & maybe offer a location-perhaps send an email; & 5) have an updated website & database (Bob is working on this).

Tom has provided a listing of lapsed members. According to the By-Laws, they have until the end of March to renew. Mary, Tom & Val will send reminder emails. Mary asked Tom to finalize this list after we get some more answers.

Discussion on the By-Laws & application process. Val noted that we should either follow the By-Laws or amend them. Liz & Nancy will take a first-pass at looking through the By-Laws & return with suggestions. Discussion on amendments vs. operating procedural changes.

TREASURER’S REPORT – Tom O’Brien

Tom sent out the reports & there were no questions. He noted that we are now completely converted to North Country Federal Bank, with fewer branches & one debit card. So, when you have BOTC expenses, check in with Tom to either get reimbursed or use the debit card. Unfortunately, this bank is slow & transactions take much longer than expected.

Some membership payments are still outstanding. Tom will send some emails.

SECRETARY’S REPORT – Diane Sullivan

Diane thanked Tom & Val for all their help & guidance, especially about who’s supposed to be doing what, etc. Tom created the current membership list which Diane will use to keep updated as we go along. A request was made to add the date of the next meeting to the minutes. If there are any updates or changes to the membership listing, please let Diane know. A new membership listing will be emailed after March 31, when we’ll have a complete list of who has paid.

Diane sent AKC & the VT Federation the new Board of Directors listing. She’s forwarded AKC event notices to the corresponding chairs. She’s forwarded a few emails as requested. She sent a decline email to an applicant since their application was incomplete, but Mary plans to address that later today.

AGILITY – Tom O’Brien

April 19,20,21, 2024 / July 24,25, 2024

Tom noted that the April trial is about 40% full on Friday, 50% full on Saturday & 30% full on Sunday, which is fairly standard. Tom has been looking into online entries & may have a possibility of integrating with the agility software. Not for April, but perhaps it may be ready to roll out for the July trials.

Val noted that since there will be a provisional judge doing Open & Novice at the April trial, the excellent classes will be earlier in the day. This means we’ll need more help from members & friends, especially in the afternoons & Sunday. The runs will be small to tall on Friday & Sunday & tall to small on Saturday. Let Tom or Val know if you can be there to help at these events - & bring a friend!

Dave will check with Barbara Fitch/NOMAD on discussing agility equipment.

TRACKING – Lynda Morgan & Ilene Morgan

April 7, 2024 / May 5, 2024

Lynda & Ilene were absent. Val noted that Ilene is in the hospital again. Val reviewed the April 7 tests, offering 3 TD tests & 3 TDX tests. So far, there are 2 entries for each. The entry deadline is March 28. Ilene has the judge reservations all set & will contact people about track-laying.

Janine reviewed the May 5 tests, offering 3 TD tests & 3 TDX tests. No entries yet, but it’s early, with an entry deadline of the end of April. Fields are set.

OBEDIENCE/RALLY – Pam Loeb

October 19,20, 2024 R/O

Pam was absent, so Nancy, as Trial Secretary, provided input. All 6 trials have been paid & Judging panels approved. We're moving right along & have a meeting planned for next week. Pam emailed Mary noting that Leslie Pennell will judge 2 rally trials & 1 obedience trial. Nancy Withers will do 2 obedience & 1 rally trial. She also noted possibly bringing a seminar speaker to the area but needs a host location.

AUDIT REPORT – Nancy Suarez

Nancy noted that she, Jen & Andy completed the audit with the information Tom provided, with no errors found. The registers, deposits, payments were double-checked against the QuickBooks reports.

IDEAS FOR NEW EVENTS – Nancy Suarez

Nancy noted the Fun Day sounds great. Perhaps we could think of offering some events for the community as well as our members, like an AKC Fetch demo or trial at the fieldhouse or Scent workshop, or tracking workshop, or CGC with testing, or tricks training, or 4-H offerings. We have members involved already in Fetch training, CGC trainers & evaluators. Mary agrees we could do demos or mini events for CGC & Fetch & pair it up with something else, like a fun day, etc. Bob B asked to look at FAST CAT (GM, does twice a year, May 4 & 5). OK, Nancy will create a Program Committee with Liz & Lori, canvass the membership for interests & report back to the club.

DATABASE UPDATE – Bob Bolduc

Website: Update is in progress with focus on improving existing site before considering redesign. Leaving as is & improve with updates is the least expensive. Or use a pro web designer. Bob & Tom are the Website Committee & will email for interest & ideas from members & then decide on approach.

Minutes Transcription: This meeting used Bob's Family Note Taker for the first time that can create some highlighted notes to flag certain comments from the meeting. It's a work in progress.

Database: Options are being explored, including cloud-based CRM system, to handle club members & exhibitors (i.e., Microsoft Dynamics CRM subscription), or more basic like Microsoft Access, an Excel spreadsheet. Mary hopes to include member skills & volunteer options. Liz suggested integrating the mailing list with online entries for email blasts & will discuss with Bob. Will get input from members.

VERMONT FEDERATION – Mary McFaun

There's a bill making it illegal for insurance companies to refuse insurance for a particular breed, unless the dog has a problem history. Legislation is out, but if it's brought up again, we'll send an alert email for comment with committee members & their email links. Another bill, 626 House, about animal welfare regulations & responsibilities has 3 parts (create an office for animal welfare; require rescues to be registered & inspected; the importation of dogs into VT regarding tax regulations & enforcement). Mary is scheduled to give testimony soon. Another bill wants to prevent pet stores from selling puppies. Committees have become more aware & responsive overall. Discussion on additional donation. All agreed to pay an extra \$50 & Tom will send the check.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS – Mary Willmuth

Mary began the discussion on the application from Gabby Dowd. Mary proposed being flexible & vote her in, get her signatures later & invite her to the next meeting. Val noted that the application should be signed but also the applicant must be present at the meeting to be voted in – according to By-Laws procedures. Ok, Mary agreed to let Gabby know that we'll vote her in at the next meeting with her present, where she can introduce herself. Bob B suggested a Welcoming Committee/Mentors for the future. Gabby will be on the next agenda. Val suggested revisiting the membership application form.

Diane asked if there's anything we can do for Ilene as she's back in the hospital. Tom will send an email.

Tom motioned to adjourn. All in favor. Adjourned

As usual, the next BOTC meeting will be held on the first Thursday of the month: April 4, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,
Diane Sullivan, Secretary