

Constitution of the Vermont Quarter Horse Youth Association

By-Laws Revised April 2009

Article I - Name and Purpose

Section I - Name

The organization shall be a division of the Vermont Quarter Horse Association, and shall operate within the scope of the by laws, rules and regulations of the Vermont Quarter Horse Association, The American Quarter Horse Association, The American Quarter Horse Youth Association, and shall be named the Vermont Quarter Horse Youth Association.

Section II - Purpose

The objectives and purposes of the Vermont Quarter Horse Youth Association, hereafter referred to as the VQHYA, shall be as follows:

- A. To improve and promote the American Quarter Horse Breed.
- B. To improve and develop the capabilities of youth, both individually, and through group participation in breeding, raising and exhibiting of the American Quarter Horse.
- C. To develop and improve leadership, community interest sportsmanship and participation of youth and its members.
- D. To establish a means whereby youth members may work in conjunction with the American Quarter Horse and Vermont Quarter Horse Youth Activities Committee.
- E. To acquaint youth members with the parent organization (VQHA) and the American Quarter Horse Association.

Article II - Governing Structure

Section I - Quorum

In order to conduct any business of the organization, there must be a quorum. A quorum is defined as at least 1/3 of the membership in good standing, which shall include at least 2 officers, one of which must be the President or Vice President.

Section II - Officers and Board of Directors

Governing of VQHYA shall be the responsibility of the 4-5 officers elected annually plus up to 2 Board members. All elected positions must be filled with members in good standing in both VQHYA and AQHYA according to AQHYA rules. These people will be known as the Board of Directors and will operate under the supervision of the Youth Advisor(s). The officers will include the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Reporter (if a reporter is elected). Should there be a need for satellite groups throughout the state, each group may elect a director to serve on the Board. Vacancies can be filled by appointment by the elected officers.

Section III - Duties of the Board of Directors

A. The Board of Directors shall take action to carry out the primary purpose of the VQHYA, without membership vote, when deemed necessary by the Board and its Advisors. However, the Board of Directors shall not overturn a majority vote of the membership. A majority vote of the Board of Directors is required for any action to take effect.

B. The Board of Directors shall review policy issues affecting the Association, and make recommendations to the general membership regarding such issues.

Section IV - Elections

The officers shall be elected annually by the members, at their February meeting with terms beginning March 1st of that year. All officers must be members of AQHYA in good standing per AQHYA rules.

A. Notice of Intent - Any member in good standing must notify the secretary in writing of his/her intention to run for an office. The notice must be email or letter postmarked by December 1.

B. Campaigning - After filing a letter of intent by the due date, a member may campaign between December 1 and the voting date.

C. Speeches - Campaign speeches will be held at the January meeting.

Section V - Terms

All officers' terms are one year.

A. President: The president may be elected for a maximum of two successive terms.

B. Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Reporter (reporter position as needed) may be elected to successive terms without limits.

Section VI - Duties of the Officers

A. The President shall:

1. Preside over all the meetings of the association and all meetings of the Board of Directors.
2. Appoint all committees deemed necessary by the Board of Directors.
3. Call all Board and/or membership meetings as necessary. At least (3) three Board Meetings and (2) membership meetings shall be called during each year. The Board has the right to call meetings by majority vote should the President fail, or be unable to fulfill this obligation.
4. Be an Ex-Officio member of all committees of the Association.
5. Have the same powers and duties as all members of the Board of Directors.

B. The Vice President shall:

1. Perform all duties assigned by the President provided they are consistent with the purposes of VQHYA.
2. Have all powers of the President when for any cause the President is unable to act.

C. The Secretary shall:

1. Take minutes of all meetings of the Membership and Board of Directors.

2. Maintain a file of all records and correspondence of the VQHA.
3. Provide written notice of all meetings, either through regular mail or email, to the membership.
4. Post minutes of each meeting in a timely manner on the website or provide the minutes for posting by the web manager.

D. The Treasurer Shall:

1. Have the care and custody of and responsibility for any money transactions for the Association.
2. Make a financial report to the Board of Directors at each meeting, and whenever requested.
3. Keep proper accounts, showing the disposition of VQHYA funds.

E. The Reporter shall:

1. Be responsible for reporting VQHYA news and activities to the VQHA Newsletter editor for inclusion in the monthly VQHA newsletter, and to the AQHA Journal for publication at least (4) four times annually.
2. Be responsible for the promotion of VQHYA by submitting articles and news on the VQHYA activities to media sources and other equine organizations deemed appropriate by the Board and Youth Advisor to the Reporter.
3. Appoint a network of reporters including one from each local Youth Advisors group to assist in gathering/reporting on activities throughout the state.
4. The reporter shall serve as the historian of the association and shall maintain a scrapbook of the activities of the Association.

Article III - Membership

Section I - Eligibility

- A. All persons who are interested in Quarter Horses and the objectives of VQHYA shall be eligible for membership.
- B. Individual members shall be eighteen years of age and under as of January 1 of the membership year.
- C. VQHYA members are not required but are encouraged to maintain membership in AQHYA. The individual member is responsible for both his or her AQHYA and VQHYA dues. The officers and board of directors of VQHYA will set VQHYA annual and individual membership fees. AQHYA membership dues are levied by AQHA in Amarillo, Texas.

Section II - Duration

Membership is good for one year. It will be renewed each year on the receipt of the annual dues and will be good for one year from receipt.

Section III - Member in Good Standing

In order to maintain membership in good standing, a VQHYA member must pay dues, must attend 6 of the scheduled meetings of the year, and must participate in 50% of the fundraising and 50% of the community service projects with VQHYA.

A member who is a full time college student must attend at least 4 meetings, must attend all fundraisers and community service events held May 30 – August 1 and must contribute to other fundraisers with sponsorships, donations, etc as much as possible.

Section IV - Voting

Members in good standing shall exercise their vote by being present at the meetings, and not by proxy or absentee ballot.

Section V - Conflicts of Interest

No part of the organization's net earnings may benefit any person having personal or private interest in the activities of the organization.

Section VI - Revocation

Those members abusing or misusing their privileges of membership may have membership revoked by the VQHYA Board of Directors. Person or persons making complaints shall do so in writing to the Board of Directors. Any member having their membership revoked by the Board of Directors may appeal this decision at the next membership meeting where a quorum is present. A majority vote will determine the appeal.

Article IV - Meetings

Section I - Dates

The calendar year is March 1 through to the last day of February. Meetings are to be held the 3rd Sunday of every month from September through May, and the 3rd Tuesday of every month from June through August, subject to change with 1 week's notice through email, phone or regular mail.

Section II - Notification

Written notice of all membership meetings and activities must be provided for each member by the secretary at least ten (10) days before each meeting. Other acceptable means of contact are mail, email, posting on website, and/or phone tree.

Section III - Quorum

In order to conduct any business of the organization, there must be a quorum. A quorum is defined *as at least* 1/3 of the membership in good standing, which shall include at least 2 officers, one of which must be the President or Vice President.

Article V - Amendments

Section I - Proposals

Proposed amendments to this Constitution shall be submitted in writing by December 1st to the Secretary and the President to be discussed at the December and January meetings. Any bylaw changes will be voted on at the February annual meeting when officers and board of directors are also elected and will stand until the following year.

Section II - Notification

Notification of all proposed amendments must be included in the notice of the meeting at which they will be considered. This notice must be sent to the membership at least (10) days prior to the meeting.

Section III - Vote

A majority vote of members present is necessary for the amendment to take effect.

Section IV – Effective Date

Bylaws will be voted on at the February annual meeting and shall take effect immediately.

Article VI - Financial Assets and Obligations

Section I - Assets

All assets raised by or given to the VQHYA, and all financial obligations undertaken by the VQHYA, shall be that organization's property and responsibility so long as the Association is active.

Section II – Sustainability of Assets

Individual and team funding may not cause the VQHYA balance to fall below \$2000.00. Expenses in relation to fundraising, donations, etc. may reduce the balance below \$2000.00 with a 50% membership vote.

Section III - Assets and Association Dissolution

Should VQHYA cease to exist, any assets remaining at the time of dissolution shall become the property of VQHA.

Article VII - Behavior

Section I - Penalties

All states and most provinces have clear laws regarding the use of alcohol and other controlled substances and AQHYA believes in those laws. VQHYA will strictly adhere to a no-tolerance policy of alcohol, drug, and tobacco use by its youth members. Any VQHYA youth member in violation of this will receive disciplinary action as follows: first offense 12 hours of VQHYA service as determined by Youth Advisor, second offense 6 months suspension from participation in VQHYA, and third offense expulsion from VQHYA.

Section II - Treatment of Horses

Person or person's making complaints about a member's behavior regarding inhumane treatment of a horse or horses should report it to a member of the Board of Directors, a youth advisor, or another official at the time of the incident.

Article VIII - AQHYA Convention/YES Seminar, Riding Teams, and Educational Teams

Section I - Qualifications

A youth must be a current member in good standing and have belonged to VQHYA for at least one year

previous to the event application deadline. An applicant must be a member in good standing and also be an AQHYA member. Further, a member applying for the YES Seminar must be at least 13 years of age.

Section II - Letter of Intent

A member must submit a letter of intent and application by the posted deadline as to why he/she would like to attend the chosen event.

Section III - Selection of Delegates or Team Members

Letters of intent and applications will be forwarded to the youth advisors who will then submit paperwork to 2current or past members of the Board of Directors of VQHA who do not have any relatives in VQHYA applying for the event. Other factors considered will include current position or ranking in VQHYA, age, and level of commitment to VQHYA.

Article IX - Funding

Section I – Amount of Funding Available

VQHYA funding will cover hotel and registration costs of selected participants and appropriate chaperone(s) for each event, except for hotel costs and class entry fees for riding teams for which each rider will be responsible.

Section II – Funding Limits

Funding is limited to two events per person per year.