

American Hippotherapy Association
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
September 12-13, 2008, Newark, New Jersey

Call to order: 11:00 am Day 1

Attendance: Meredith Bazaar, Rose Crivolio, Deb Silkwood-Sherer, Mary Beth Marzulli, Janet Weisberg, Lori Garone, Sarah Pictor, and part time Executive Director, Bonnie Cunningham.

Gina Taylor joined the meeting on Saturday, the 13th.

Quorum established

Minutes from March 2008 Board meeting: minutes had been approved via email after review and edits completed.

President's Report: Meredith (report available upon request)

Meredith opened the meeting with a thank you to the full Board for attending the meeting. Highlights of President's report were discussed.

- Complimentary memberships have been awarded to APTA, AOTA, ASHA and AQHA.
- Texas Hall of Fame currently has a display regarding hippotherapy.
- AHA now has quarterly financial reports submitted on time (thank you to Rose).
- Discussed linking professional association sections from AHA website, for example: have a link to the APTA Pediatric and Neurology sections from the AHA web
- FRDI will have an ad for AHA with each quarterly newsletter
- Website appears to be the most frequently used resource. Linda T. has begun to track for future
- International memberships need to be paid for by credit card so the bank doesn't charge AHA to convert the currency. This will be conveyed via the web and through mailings, publications and at conference.

Strategic planning grid (developed in March) is available upon request. Board discussed items and tasks that have been completed and modified target dates on future tasks to reflect a more reasonable timeline. The following was added:

Maintain a presence at NARHA Conferences

Motion made to approve the edits and updates on the Strategic Planning Grid;

Deb/Rose: carried

Discussion ensued regarding Board meeting minutes. Where and how should they be made available and accessible to members? Board reports should be made available upon request, however, the Board member who submitted the report will be contacted by the AHA office or the ED prior to the report being released. Minutes will be posted on the web after approval from the Board.

Discussion Area on website has had little action. Lori will ask the membership (through an E-Bulletin) what topics are of interest. Lori will contact Leslie for topics and an E Bulletin will be sent out to the membership regarding the topics and when

discussion will be. In addition through E-Bulletin, AHA merchandise for sale will be regularly updated and membership will have this reminder to purchase items.

The President's Award and Therapist of the Year Award will be presented at AHA Conference in May, 2009.

The Board acknowledges that a presence at NARHA Conference is important, however, with no AHA pre-conference course being offered, it is difficult to mandate Board attendance. This will need to be revisited in the future, as it may impact AHA By-laws for frequency of "face-to-face" meetings.

Executive Director Report: Bonnie Cunningham (report available upon request)

- Membership drive: numbers have been fairly consistent with previous years. Very few comp tickets were given out this year. In the past, comp tickets have inflated membership numbers, and they haven't been renewed.
- International Scholarship Committee: this year, South African Riding for the Disabled Association (SARDA) has won the award. In lieu of Barb Heine's health concerns, Bonnie will be managing the scholarship.

Treasurer's Report: Rose (report available upon request)

- Since membership is the major income source for AHA, continued strategies to increase membership needs to be encouraged.
- For AHA Conference in May of 2009, supporters and sponsors are needed! Please assist with this major event.

Research Report: Deb (report available upon request)

- Research Committee has expanded with another OT
- Inquiries about Canadian representation on the committee: research qualifications are different from US, so this has been a difficult situation.
- Deb reported that she has responded to many research related inquiries (including international)
- Research submissions for 2009 Conference: few received to date. Deb will pull together the committee to review proposals as they are submitted.
- Resources: updates to the AHA Bibliography will be ongoing. If an article doesn't address accurate information, it will not be included.
- Possibility of pursuing NIH grants for hippotherapy
- Recent article in Pediatric PT has dated terminology and poor choice of goals. Bonnie suggested writing a letter to the editor to share AHA perspective.

Outreach (Liaison) Report: Mary Beth (report available upon request)

- Regional reps have given feedback requesting AHA presentations at Regional Conferences
- Several states still do not have a liaison. Some liaisons are inactive and Mary Beth is considering asking them to step down, especially if there is another therapist willing to take on the responsibility. Membership involvement is critical for the health and growth of AHA and it needs to be encouraged through the efforts of those who are active within Regions.

Day 1 adjourned 5:00pm

Call to order: 8:45 am **Day 2**

Attendance: Same as Day 1 with the addition of Gina Taylor

Standards and Practice Report: Sarah (report available upon request)

- Texas A&M University online course: the following concerns discussed:
 - Is this a conflict with AHA established curriculum?
 - How can mentorships be arranged? Request that TAMU remove internship option for the HPOT track
 - Does the participant fee jeopardize AHA 501(c) 3 status?
 - The current contract between TAMU and AHA has expired. Who will draw up the terms and sign for the new contract?
 - Since Sarah developed this course and is the course instructor, a contract needs to be signed between Sarah and AHA to establish what happens when Sarah leaves AHA Board of Director

Action steps:

Motions: 1.) Meredith (on behalf of AHA) will contact legal counsel regarding 501(c) 3 status with this course: **Deb/Rose: carried**

2.) Meredith (on behalf of AHA) will renegotiate the contract between AHA and TAMU to adjust marketing of course to reflect that this IS NOT equivalent or a substitute for AHA Level I curriculum for therapists interested in hippotherapy.

Deb/Rose: carried

3.) Sarah will contact TAMU and request that the internship option be removed from the hippotherapy track. **Sarah/Mer: carried**

Moving forward, Sarah will be the contact person with questions or concerns regarding this course.

- Scope of Practice and liability issues for Level I and Level II courses being offered in a state where the faculty teaching the course are not licensed was discussed. In addition, the concern regarding hands-on treatment of course participants who are not licensed in the state where the course is offered in the Level II course was also discussed. Lori, Sarah, Gina and Deb had done some investigating. Each state and each discipline has different standards. It needs to be determined state-by-state.
 - Motion: Level I Practicum: only the treating therapist for the demo, or if the AHA Faculty is licensed in the state where the course is given will be able to provide the demo. If the state has an exempt clause, that will be honored. **Lori/Sarah: carried**
 - Motion: Level II courses: Host sites will be investigated for state requirements for licensure and suitability for out of state participants and exempt clauses for the educational demonstrations. **Lori/Rose:carried**
 - Motion: Adapt the liability waiver form for Level II course to include but not limited to
 - Participant will not be reimbursed (the demo)
 - No services will be billed for the demo
 - 100% supervision given during demo
 - Fully informed consent form will be obtained

- Statement that individual is a willing participant in the educational activity. **Lori/Janet: carried**

Education Committee Report: Lori (report available upon request)

- AHA piloting courses:
 - Long lining: Lori/Lisa/Lesley
 - Core Connection: Joanne/Ruth
 - Business Aspects: Lori
 - Communicating for the non-SLP: Meredith
- Proposed courses (discussed at Faculty meeting, July 2008)
 - Muscles in Motion: Jane F.
 - The Neuro Connection- Neuro and HPOT: Nancy, Steve, Barb
 - Sensory Connection: Gina, Lesley, Linda
- Further discussion on the mentoring requirement by NARHA for the 20 hours of HPOT treatment with a NARHA Registered Therapist or HPCS Therapist needed for NARHA Therapist registration following the Level I course and the HPOT treating experience recommendation of 6 months or 100 hours by AHA prior to taking the Level II course.
- Weight limits for riding practicums: need for clarity in brochures- Lori will add this to the brochure and check with the ADA as to the liability involved to do this.
- Recommendations following the faculty meeting for a need to formalize a policy and procedure to “qualify” centers that are interested in hosting Level II courses were discussed.
- Discussion of various NARHA websites and statements found on those websites regarding ages of the pediatric patient in HPOT and the need to address this as an organization. Motion: Guidelines/Recommendation for EI age ranges for HPOT along with competencies for therapists should be sent to EI providers. **Janet/Mary Beth: carried** Target date: Q 1 ‘09
- Reimbursement/insurance dilemma needs to be revisited. The websites of insurance companies have the definition of HPOT and terminology listed incorrectly and the need for a task force to try to get a revision of this to insurance companies may need to be formed. Task force needs to be developed (again). There was some discussion as to the difficulty in this matter because the “request” for coverage should be generated by family/parent or the referring physicians. Perhaps a task force could include advocates through involved families.

AHCB Report: submitted by Nancy McGibbon

- Congratulations to 3 new Hippotherapy Clinical Specialists from the August exam:
 - Eileen Davies, PT
 - Ellen Erdman, PT
 - Tami Scotto, OT

This brings the current number of HPCS to 62. There are 38 PT, 18 OT, 4 SLP, 1 OT/SLP and 1 PT/OT

In January 2009, Carol Huegel will be the new Chair of the Board. Cynthia Thomas will join the Board and Joann Benjamin rotates off.

Request from the AHCB: have the AHA Treasurer send the board chair the current balances in the AHCB account to ensure that accounting records are accurate. AHA is authorized to take 5% of the AHCB yearly income and both boards should be aware of account balances.

Fundraising: Mer

Meredith presented recommendations for fundraising strategies. AHA donor request letters and provider envelopes were edited.

Conference 2009 (Mark you calendars!!) Rose

- Timeline discussed
- Planning discussion brought forward great ideas: key note speaker possibilities, presentation topics, overall format of conference
- Venue: Westin (Atlanta, Georgia)
- May 1-3, 2009

Meeting adjourned: 4:15 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Pictor