

August, 2007

Dear NRHA Board Members,

On behalf of the Florida Reining Horse Association we would like to express our support for the position taken by numerous other NRHA affiliates regarding the apparent actions of the board relating to two serious issues facing NRHA; the proposed medication policy and the proposed membership fee structure. We request that the NRHA Board of Directors table both issues at the upcoming board of directors meeting and leave them for further consideration and discussion before taking action that may irrevocably harm the viability of our national organization.

FRHA consists of a wide cross-section of NRHA members, ranging from multiple World Champions to first-year Rookie riders. FRHA has been an historical leader and one of the largest NRHA Affiliates and has a long history of financial viability rooted in the hard work and dedication of its members. Based on our success and history within the reining industry we are well informed with respect to the results that the proposed medication policy is likely to produce. The method of data collection is so general that a large percentage of the data will be invalid and even worse will not be recognized as invalid. Many medications that may be administered days or even weeks prior to an event will require members to remember to report them or face the risk of sanctions. The proposed policy amounts to nothing more than an unjustified additional cost to show management for collecting and processing the forms associated with the program, not considering the impact that filling out forms will have on the show entry process.

Before the NRHA implements a medications policy we should first establish that a legitimate need exists. After the need for a medications policy has been clearly established the development process should be done openly, with input solicited from across the entire membership as well as the veterinarians that help care for our horses. Finally, a policy of this nature should only be implemented after being put to a vote by the entire membership. If and when the NRHA Directors make the decision to include the membership in developing and adopting a medications policy The Florida Reining Horse Association will stand ready to support that process.

With regard to the increase in membership dues, we feel that the current proposal will do more to harm the organization than to remedy any shortfall. Such a drastic increase in dues will drive members away, ultimately resulting in a loss of sponsorship dollars. With fewer sponsorship dollars available dues will have to increase even more, and a toxic spiral will result. NRHA management has yet to justify its claims of cost per member in terms that support this increase. If you feel an increase in dues is unavoidable then we request that you adopt a policy of full disclosure and provide detailed financial records to the membership to explain the need. When the members have an understanding of the problem you cite, NRHA has a much higher likelihood of gaining support for a dues increase.

Many FRHA members have expressed a substantial degree of mistrust in the current NRHA leadership and we were encouraged about your intentions when the ill-advised Strategic Plan was withdrawn. It surprises us that the NRHA Board of Directors can reasonably put forth the drug and fees proposals in the wake of the Strategic Plan debacle when these clearly illustrate the same lack of communication between the Board and the NRHA membership. We are all bound by a common love of reining. Help the members better understand the challenges faced by the organization and let's all work together to build a strong and vibrant organization that is once again the envy of the equine world.

Respectfully,

The Officers and Directors of Florida Reining Horse Association