

BTHE BETHANY HORSEMEN, INC.

RULES OF RIDING

ADOPTED SEPTEMBER 13, 2011

and

BYLAWS

ADOPTED APRIL, 2003, REVISED MARCH 2022



WRITTEN: March, 1962

AMENDED: October, 1974

January, 1980

January, 1988

September, 2011

March, 2022

(Last dated issue supersedes all prior issues)



Membership in this organization requires knowledge of and strict adherence to this Constitution and its Bylaws and Rules. Membership may be denied or rescinded from any person, family or group whose riding conduct or use of our trails is judged a liability or an abuse jeopardizing the privileges of the rest of the organization.



Introduction

Welcome to The Bethany Horsemen, Inc. (hereafter “Bethany Horsemen”). We are a non-profit riding club dedicated to the promotion of trail riding in Bethany. Our trail system includes land owned by the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority (RWA) and several private properties that we use with landowners’ permission.

Bethany Horsemen members are responsible for

- maintaining our trail system
- protecting access to those trails by abiding by the rules for both RWA and private landowner properties
- fostering fellowship between members
- supporting horse-related community education

This is an annual commitment and each member receives a trail pass and signs a liability waiver. The organization provides insurance to protect our landowners from liability resulting from this use of their land by our members, but we do not insure our riders themselves. Guest passes may be added to an annual membership. It is the responsibility of each member to make sure that a guest signs the required waiver prior to using the trail system.

Our contract with the RWA is annual and does not allow us to prorate membership fees. We are also required to close the trail system for Mud Season from March 1 to April 15 to protect it from excessive erosion.

The trail system changes periodically, and trails that you may have ridden on previously may not currently be open to equestrians. There are numerous multi use trails, but not all trails allow horses. Members are given the rules and a map of the trail system with each membership and should become familiar with them. The RWA has additional rules for riding on their property that are printed on the back of your trail map.

Bethany Horsemen values our agreement with the RWA and other private landowners. Please take the time to read the following so that you are well versed in our club’s History, Rules of Riding and Bylaws. A responsible organization of committed equestrians, united by love of horses and riding, is critical to retaining use of these beautiful trails for years to come!

History

In the late 1950’s, the New Haven Water Company, later to become the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority (“RWA”), was considering closing Lake Chamberlain to horses. Jacob Podoloff, long-time horseman and Bethany resident, heard about the proposed trail closing and talked with the president of the Water Company. He was able to negotiate an arrangement: riders were to form a responsible organization in order to continue using Lake Chamberlain trails. As they rode, they were to patrol and report trespassing and other incidents which might

endanger the water supply. That was in 1959 and the organization was named Bethany Horsemen.

After the success with the New Haven Water Company, Jacob obtained other landowner agreements to maintain riding trails as open space shrank. The Ansonia-Derby Water Company and Elizabeth Spykman's trails were second and third of several more agreements that Jacob added during the years that he was Bethany Horsemen's first president. Presidents who followed added more trails during their terms of office.

The use of this beautiful land has not been without its challenges. In 1982, the RWA as part of its new Land Use Plan, decided not to renew the agreement with Bethany Horsemen for horseback riding on water company land. This decision was not based on misuse by the horsemen, but because the RWA feared that erosion caused siltation in the reservoir. In addition, the RWA did not want to permit special use of the reservoir by a single group (hikers and fisherman were not allowed use of the reservoir at that time).

Through persistence and patience, Bethany Horsemen was able to prove that riding, properly controlled, was compatible with the prime function of water supply lands. Use of the water company trails was restored three years later. Requirements under the new program included parking arrangements for horse trailers, community service events, public liability insurance, trail maintenance and marking, and a fee system to support the cost of the program, including water testing for the Department of Health, at no expense to the RWA.

Fifteen years after the system was put in place, the Department of Health discontinued the water testing requirement due to no adverse finding resulting from equestrian use.

The RWA again considered discontinuing the recreational use of the Lake Chamberlain trails after 9/11. However, the monitoring function that Bethany Horsemen provided helped tip the scales in favor of allowing horses.

In 2002, Bethany Horsemen helped dissuade the DEP and The Nature Conservancy from adopting a uniform management plan which would close all the KELDA water company lands in Fairfield County to all equestrian use. The plan had been based on assumptions of detrimental impact similar to those that the RWA had raised 20 years before as justification for closing Lake Chamberlain to equestrians. The Bethany Horsemen experience provided invaluable evidence of the inaccuracy of such general assumptions.

In 2003, Bethany Horsemen was incorporated as a non-profit recreational club. Keeping Bethany's RWA and private landowner trails open to horses is our number one priority. How we conduct ourselves on horseback determines if we can continue to enjoy this unique area as so many have before us. The history of Bethany Horsemen shows that riders, responsibly united, can make a difference.

Bethany Horsemen Rules of Riding

These rules apply when riding on Bethany Horsemen mapped trails. Riding privileges are based on strict observance of these rules. Every member by virtue of their membership is personally bound to ride safely and to safeguard the private property on which his membership allows them to ride. To assure this, **it is a condition of membership that members shall conduct themselves according to the Rules of Riding set down on these pages and to be thoroughly familiar with them, as well as the Bylaws of the organization and the RWA Rules.**

1. No commercial activity is allowed on Bethany Horsemen trails by any individual in his capacity as a member. This means there shall be no lessons conducted on the trails, no charging for the use of a horse to take out on the trail (no hack stable function), no using guest privileges and charging the guest, or similar activities or uses.

2. Tags Upon joining Bethany Horsemen, you will receive a numbered colored saddle tag. Tag colors change annually so that it is clear who is a current member. Every member must sign a liability waiver before using the trails.

- Tags are assigned to the rider, **not the horse**, and may not be transferred or loaned to anyone including guests.
- Loss of a tag must be reported to a Board member, and a new one must be issued before riding may resume.
- A member who lends their tag to someone else may lose riding privileges.
- Bethany Horsemen issued tags must be clearly visible while riding the trails. You should be ready to present it and identify yourself to authorized persons.

2.1 Guests permits

Adult Members may add Guest Permits to their membership. Members must accompany their guests and are responsible for their actions. A guest must sign a liability waiver and only ride with the member that Guest Permit is assigned to. Please make sure the guest permit is visible on your guest's clothing.

2.2 Legal Waivers must be signed by all members and all guests.

2.3 Minors (Junior Members) are under the age of 18. Their waiver must be signed with a parent or guardian. Parents or legal guardians are responsible for the riding conduct of minors.

3. Protection of Trails

3.1 Mud Season - Obey the mud season moratorium on riding on Bethany Horsemen properties between March 1 and April 15 (unless there is a specific written change of dates).

3.2 Erosion - If a trail is deeply worn, ride alongside it but not in it, and then report it to an Officer of Bethany Horsemen. Do not ride when weather conditions make trails very muddy and subject to erosion.

3.3 Dangers - If possible to do so safely, correct or mark dangerous trail conditions (holes, glass, washouts, downed large branches or trees, etc.). Otherwise, please report any trail issues to a Bethany Horsemen Officer.

3.4 Smoking – Positively no smoking on any private or RWA lands.

3.5 Fields - Always ride around the outside edges of fields. Do not cross through the center.

3.6 Fences and gates - Do not cut or break any fences. Do not open any gates unless specifically permitted. Close permitted gates securely.

3.7 Trail blazing - You may ride only on trails shown on the current trails map. Trail blazing and riding on trails not shown on the current trails map is not permitted. Do not make shortcuts.

3.8 Trash - Do not discard any kind of trash anywhere. If convenient, remove any trash you discover as you ride.

3.9 Manure - If your horse drops manure on the concrete causeway at the north end of the lake, please dismount and move it to an uphill area away from the water. If you cannot do this, please text or call our Manure Management Officer.

4. Riding Etiquette and Safety

4.1 Courtesy, Passing - Pass other riders, pedestrians and fishermen at a walk. A group must pass other riders single file and maintain a walk until well away.

4.2 Jumping - Only experienced riders should negotiate jumps. There are several trails with jumps. Please make sure to check the approaches and landings.

4.3 Dismounts - Riders may not dismount on the RWA trails at any time, except as necessary to correct or mark danger, to open or close gates, or to remove manure or trash.

4.4 Safety - Riding according to these rules will help you to ride safely and is a requirement of membership. Consideration for personal safety and the safety of others is paramount in situations not covered here.

4.5 Helmets - Bethany Horsemen recommends that all riders wear helmets. All riders under the age of 18 must wear ASTM –SEI certified helmets while mounted.

5. Prohibitions

5.1 Groups - Organized group rides of ten or more riders must apply in writing for a special permit from an authorized Officer of Bethany Horsemen at least 45 days in advance.

5.2 Trespassers - Report trespassers, obstructions, or trail problems to an Officer of Bethany Horsemen. We do not recommend that you confront trespassers yourself. Simply report the incident after your ride.

5.3 Dam/Boat Ramp/Swimming - Positively no riding or hand walking your horse across the dam at the south end of Lake Chamberlain or on its back slope. No horses are allowed on the paved Boat Ramp on the East side of the lake. There is no swimming allowed in Lake Chamberlain, nor are horses allowed to be in the water or at the water's edge.

5.4 Dogs - No dogs are allowed to accompany riders on the RWA trails.

5.5 Walking - Your Bethany Horsemen membership does not allow walkers to accompany horses while in the RWA. Bethany Horsemen membership benefits and privileges apply only to mounted members.

Bylaws of Bethany Horsemen, Inc.

Article 1. Purpose

This not-for-profit organization is organized exclusively to join together equestrians to promote the availability of lands and facilities for club members for equestrian uses, to enjoy equestrian activities together, to foster fellowship between members and to further knowledge and interest in horse-related subjects.

Article 2. Members of the Corporation

2.1 Membership Classes. There shall be four (4) classes of membership. Subject to the provisions of Paragraph 2.2, membership shall be open to any person interested in the purposes and objectives of the Corporation as set forth in its Certificate of Incorporation and who qualifies as one of the following classes of membership, signs the waiver required by the Corporation and pays the requisite dues:

- a. Regular: Residents of Bethany
- b. Associate: Non-residents of Bethany whose horses are stabled in Bethany; must be recommended by a resident voting member
- c. Public Access: Non-residents of Bethany whose horses are not stabled in Bethany.

d. Event: Persons allowed to ride only on specific properties and on day(s) for which the permit is issued. Membership is effective only for the duration of the permit.

Annual membership dues for classes a, b, and c shall be established from time to time by the Board of Directors. Due to the limited nature of the permit membership, a separate dues structure may be established by the Board of Directors for Permit members.

2.2 Membership Refusal.

a. Membership shall not be open to persons who have had their membership revoked in previous years unless the Board of Directors approves such membership by a majority vote.

b. The Directors may, by a vote of a $\frac{3}{4}$ majority of the directors in office, refuse membership to any person in its sole discretion; provided, however, that membership may not be refused on the basis of race, color, or religion.

2.3 Voting Rights. Each Regular or Associate member aged 18 years or older shall be entitled to one vote on each a matter submitted to a vote of the members and may exercise such vote in person or by written proxy. No members shall be entitled to vote on amendments to the Certificate of Incorporation unless they are directors of the corporation.

2.4 Termination. Membership in the Corporation shall automatically terminate upon the happening of any of the following with respect to any member:

(a) Death

(b) Resignation

(c) Upon the expiration of the dues year

(d) Upon removal upon a majority vote of the Board of Directors for cause shown including, but not limited to, violation of established membership rules.

Article 3. Directors

3.1 Powers. The Board of Directors shall be vested with the management of the activities, property, and affairs of the corporation, and to those ends may exercise any and all of the powers of the corporation. No director or officer, shall as such, receive any compensation or remuneration from the Corporation for his activities as director, provided, however, the Board of Directors may from time to time as it sees fit reimburse its directors and officers for any necessary and reasonable expenses incurred.

3.2 Term. The Board of Directors shall be composed of a minimum of three (3) and a maximum of fifteen (15) individuals who shall be Regular or Associate members of the corporation, their number to be fixed by and all of whom to be elected by the incorporators at the organization meeting of the corporation, to serve until the next succeeding annual meeting and until their successors are elected. Any vacancy arising in the Board of Directors may be filled until the next annual meeting of the corporation by majority vote of the remaining Directors. The number of Directors cannot be reduced to less than three (3) unless such a Bylaw is adopted.

Commencing with the annual meeting of the corporation to be held in 2003, the Board of Directors shall be composed of eight (8) individuals qualified as aforesaid. At said annual meeting of 2003, four (4) directors shall be elected to serve until the annual meeting to be held two (2) years

thereafter, and four (4) directors shall be elected to serve until the next annual meeting. Thereafter, all Directors elected to serve at an annual meeting shall serve a term of two years and until their successors are elected, the intention being that, starting with the annual meeting in 2004, approximately one half of the Board of Directors shall be elected annually.

3.3 Committees. Committees may be appointed by the Board of Directors or when authorized by the Board, by the President, and all committees shall have such authority including that of the Board of Directors as may be specified in their appointment. The appointing authority in each instance shall have the power to fill vacancies in any committee.

Article 4. Officers

4.1 Officers. The Corporation shall have officers including a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and other officers, as the Board of Directors from time to time, deems necessary. An officer may hold more than one office in the corporation, except that the President may not simultaneously serve as the Vice President or Secretary. The Board in its determination may leave any office vacant. All Officers serve at the pleasure of the Board, which shall fix their compensation and term of employment.

4.2 President. The President shall be the presiding officer for the members and Board of Directors meetings.

4.3 Duties of Officers. The duties and authority of the Officers shall be those customary for similar corporations in Connecticut and as provided by law and as may be specified from time to time by the Board of Directors.

4.4 Election of Officers. The Officers shall be chosen by the Board of Directors at the annual meeting or at any other meeting and shall all serve during the pleasure of the board which may fill any vacancy in any office.

Article 5. Meetings

5.1 Annual Meeting. The annual meeting of the members of the Corporation for the election of directors and the transaction of any other business of the corporation shall be held in March or April of each year, on such day in said months as shall be designated by the President. Meetings shall be held at the principal office of the corporation or at such place as maybe designated by the President.

5.2 Special Meetings. Special meetings of the members may be called by a majority vote of the Board of Directors, or the President of the Corporation, or upon petition of a majority of the voting members of the Corporation. Monthly meetings are open to all members.

5.3 Notice. Notice of annual and special meetings of the Corporation shall be in writing and shall be mailed, postage prepaid, or shall be sent by electronic media (such as email), to the last known address of each of the members of the corporation not less than seven (7) days nor more than sixty (60) days before any such meeting.

5.4 Conduct of Meetings. Actions taken at any meeting of the members, no matter how called, or noticed, and wherever held, are as valid as if taken at a regularly noticed and called meeting, if a quorum is present, in person or by proxy, and if each of the absent persons entitled to vote signs a written waiver of notice or a consent to the holding of the meeting or an approval of the minutes. All such waivers, consents and approvals must be filed with the corporate records or made a part of the minutes. If a person attends a meeting and fails to object at the beginning to the holding of the meeting because it was not lawfully called, then such an appearance is a waiver of notice to that person. Such attendance is not a waiver of the right to object at the meeting to the consideration of matters required by the law or these Bylaws to be included in the notice but not so included.

5.5 Quorum of Membership. A quorum exists when **eleven** members entitled to vote are represented in person or by proxy. The Business may be transacted after withdrawal of enough members to leave less than a quorum, so long as the action taken is approved by the number of shares required to constitute a quorum. A quorum is not needed to adjourn a meeting so long as a majority of the shares present, in person or by proxy, votes in favor of adjournment.

5.6 Director Meetings. The Board of Directors shall hold its organization meeting following each annual meeting of the members and no notice of such meeting need be given. It shall meet at other times either regularly as determined by the board from time to time or upon call of the President or upon written request filed with the Secretary by any two or more directors. The Secretary shall give reasonable notice, oral, written, wire or wireless communication or by electronic media, of the time and place of each Board meeting

5.7 Quorum of Directors. A quorum of the Board of Directors shall consist of **three** Directors. Every act or decision done or made by a majority of the Directors present at a meeting of the Board is the act of the Board, except as provided by sections in these Bylaws, or Bylaw. Any meeting where a quorum is present may transact business after a withdrawal of the Directors if the vote for approval of an action constitutes a majority of the required quorum for that meeting.

5.8 Unanimous Written Consent. Action required to be taken at a meeting of the Board may be taken instead by unanimous written consent of the Directors. Such consents shall be filed with the minutes of Board proceedings and may be given by electronic media.

5.9 Meeting Participation. Presence at a meeting shall include in person, hybrid or virtual.

Article 6. Indemnification of Corporate Agents

To the extent permitted by law, the Board of Directors shall provide for the indemnification and reimbursement of any person made a party to any action, suit or proceeding by reason of the fact that he, or a person whose legal representative or successor he is, is a or was a director, officer or employee of such corporation, for expenses, including attorneys' fees, and such amount of any judgment, money decree, fine, penalty or settlement for which he may have become liable, as the Board of Directors seems reasonable, actually incurred by him in connection with the defense or reasonable settlement of any such action, suit or proceeding or any appeal therein, except in relation to matters as to which he, or such person whose legal representative or successor he is, is finally adjudged in such action, suit or proceeding to be liable for negligence or misconduct in the performance of his duties.

This provision of indemnification shall be in addition to any other right or remedy which such person may have. The corporation shall have the right to intervene in and defend all such actions, suits, or proceedings brought against any such person.

Article 7. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Corporation shall begin on the first day of April.

Article 8. Amendment of Bylaws

These Bylaws may be amended or repealed, and new Bylaws adopted, by the majority vote of the Board of Directors provided that written notice of the proposed amendment shall be given in the manner required for the meeting which is to act upon the amendment.

