

# Executive Meeting of the AAT (Animal Assisted Therapists) Chapter

4:30 PM on June 17, 2020

## Executive Members present through Zoom:

- **PRESIDENT:** Eileen Bona (from Ardrossan, Alberta)
- **SECRETARY:** Wendy Tredger (from Rocky Mountain House, AB)
- **TREASURER/COMMUNICATIONS:** Kayla Shore (from Lethbridge, Alberta)
- **MEMBER AT LARGE:** Sue McIntosh (from Cremona, Alberta)

Two members at large were contacted: Ashley McDonald and Carol Cleveland. Ashley responded but Carol did not. Nancy Blair (Past President and Animal Voice) intended to join the meeting but there were issues with the zoom invite and no members received it although it was sent the day of the meeting. Joan Conrad and Sharon Cameron were the most recent past presidents of the chapter.

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- Eileen spoke to TWO obvious priorities for the executive, in reviving our chapter:
    - 1) **The fact that we are required to have an annual AGM**

Eileen will check with the CCPA to see if there is a time required to inform the membership before holding an AGM. We have set the tentative meeting for July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020.
    - 2) **We need to recruit a working executive**
      - Interim President – Eileen
      - Past President and Animal Voice – Nancy
      - Interim Secretary - Wendy
      - Interim Treasurer - Kayla
      - Member At Large - Sue

It was agreed that we will recruit for one more Member At Large, a Communications Manager and a Student position. Eileen will send this information to the CCPA to put out the call for nominations through the membership.

- **Eileen asked if we had six months to accomplish one thing, what would it be? These were our various answers:**
  1. Understanding who is in the membership, where are they located, how many are practicing AAT, what training do they have, what level are they at, etc.
  - To accomplish this goal, creating a survey for our membership (through Survey Monkey or such) was discussed and some ideas for questions were proposed:
    - Which province do you practice in? (which would later create a provincial listing to facilitate local networking amongst our members)
    - What trainings do you have?
    - What animals do you work with in your practice?
    - Other questions to be determined.
  2. Establish National minimum standards for Animal Assisted practice

- Eileen, Kayla and Sue talked about the need for Animal Assisted Therapist guidelines that would apply across Canada.
  - Eileen has written emergent guidelines and connected with the American Psychological Association's "Human Animal Interventions" guidelines and the professionals who created them. The people she spoke to were very cooperative, collaborative and willing to share what they have done with us – so we could use their work as a starting point and not have to reinvent the wheel.
  - Sue talked about how we might be able to put some authority to following our minimum standards by getting the insurance company (s) to require a minimum training level or credentials in order to be insured.
  - BMS requires an extra \$50 to cover the fact that you are working with horses in your practice – and Sue is struggling to get clear information about whether that covers only groundwork or also clients riding.
- **Other tasks that require immediate attention:**
    - Reviewing our by-laws to provide feedback about any need for change.
    - The website for the AAT Chapter needs to be changed to reflect the new executive's names at minimum.
    - Eileen encouraged all of the executive to check out both the by-laws and the website and offer feedback on any changes, additions, deletions.
- **Introductions of each of the executive members** happened at the end of the meeting, as there were many technology hick-ups at the beginning of the meeting.
  - Wendy offered the Turn Around Ranch as a meeting place if we would like an old fashioned, in person, human to human meeting someday.
  - **Gratitude was given to Eileen for stepping up as President and getting the chapter revitalized!**
  - **NEXT MEETING:** Tentative AGM on **July 2, 2020 at 4:30 PM** (Unless there is a need for change after notifying the CCPA.)
  - **Meeting adjourned at 6:10 PM**