

*This meeting was held electronically via WebEx on Wednesday, June 9, 2021 during the Governor's declared state of emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic making it unsafe for the public body to assemble in a single location.*

*This was a meeting of the Strategic Marketing Committee.*

**Board Members Present:**

Debbie Easter  
Janie Ober  
Robert Banner  
Kelly Foltman

**Guests/Staff:**

Heather Wheeler, VDACS, Program Manager, Virginia Horse Industry Board

**I. Call to Order – 2:06 PM**

The notice of meeting was read followed by member roll call.

**II. Strategic Marketing Plan Discussion**

The committee discussed the following initiatives:

**Economic Impact Study –**

The committee discussed the need to contract economic impact studies on a regular basis with a suggestion of every 5 years. The Board would like to contract again with the American Horse Council on their Economic Impact Study as they did in 2018. The committee will make a recommendation to the Board at the next meeting to set aside \$100,000 for the cost of the Virginia State Study and for publication costs after the study is received.

**Venue Sponsorship**

The committee discussed how to support the equine venues in Virginia as the industry emerges from COVID. The committee's goal is to help a number of venues each year. The committee will make a recommendation to the Board at the next meeting to set aside \$100,000 in funding each year to fund four venue sponsorships each year at \$25,000. VHIB will develop a list of sponsorship terms that will allow VHIB to receive information, media and data back from each venue that participates.

### **Marketing Grant**

In an effort to support the industry post-COVID, the committee is recommending to the Board the launch of a new marketing grant program. This grant program would provide up to \$5,000 in funding to equine organization, events and associations in an effort to support the industry in their marketing efforts. The committee discussed the logistics of launching the grant program and will schedule another meeting to begin reviewing applications and guidelines in preparation of the Board Meeting.

### **Website and Logo**

The committee discussed developing a new logo and redeveloping the website as an information pipeline for the industry. The committee will suggest to the Board that they form another committee to focus on these two items after the Marketing Grant has been finalized.

### **III. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

### **VI. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the subcommittee will be determined.

### **V. Adjourn**

The committee adjourned the meeting at 3:58 PM.