**We Can Ride 4-H Club By-Laws**

**Article I. Name** The Name of the Club shall be “We Can Ride 4-H Club.” The club shall be organized as an unincorporated association.

**Article II Purpose**

Section 1 We Can Ride 4-H Club provides horseback riding for youth with disabilities in Berrien County to enhance their lives with educational activities related to horses.

Section 3 The vision of We Can Ride 4 H Club is to enhance the lives of youth with disabilities across Berrien County through adaptive horseback riding; and to heighten the understanding and inclusion between persons with and without disabilities throughout the community.

**Article III Michigan State University Extension Affiliation**

The Club agrees to comply with all applicable MSU Extension policies and procedures governing Michigan 4-H and agrees that the county 4-H Youth Development staff has all necessary and proper authority to oversee the Club to ensure the Club's compliance. MSU Extension is authorized to include the Club in a group tax exemption, and the Club will supply all necessary documentation to ensure the Club's inclusion in a group tax exemption. The Club will meet the standards of usage and protect the 4-H Name and Emblem as set by 4-H National Headquarters. This constitution may not be amended without the written consent of the State Leader for Michigan 4-H Youth Development.

**Article IV Meetings**

Section 1 Board Meetings will be held on the 1st Thursday of each month, with the exception of November, and December, at a place and time designated unless otherwise noted.

Section 2 All other meeting dates will coincide with the yearly program calendar.

Section 3 The fiscal year shall begin the first day of September and conclude the last day of August of the current calendar year.

Section 4 Regular meetings shall be run according to “Robert’s Rules of Order.” Section 5 A quorum shall be six (6) members.

**Article V Membership**

Section 1 The Club will follow the current Michigan 4-H policy requirements that define eligibility for membership and volunteerism. Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, or veteran status.

Section 2 Michigan 4-H Youth Development programs are open to young people aged 5 through 19 and up to 26 for youth with disabilities. “4-H’ age is determined by a young person’s age as of January 1 of the 4-H program year (which runs September 1 through August 31).

Section 3 Michigan 4-H Youth Development programs volunteers/leaders are required to undergo the MSU Extension Volunteer Selection Process for acceptance as a volunteer and remain in an “active” status throughout their duration of their volunteer service to the club to be considered as a volunteer/4-H Leader.

**Article VI. Leadership**

The club shall be under the direction and guidance of adult local club leader(s) who have completed the MSU Extension Volunteer Selection Process and are currently in “Active” status as well as Teen Leaders.

Section 1 Leadership Board

The Board of Leadership of the We Can Ride 4-H Club shall be known as the We Can Ride 4-H Club Leadership Board, who shall make decisions and take actions as representatives on behalf of the total membership. The Leadership board shall consist of:

A. President

The president shall preside at meetings, and follow parliamentary

procedure, and will vote only in a tie. He/She will appoint all

committees as the need arises and shall be either an active member

on committees or ex-officio of all committees. The President shall

be the Club Coordinator or Administrative Leader to the club.

B. Vice President

The vice president performs the duties of the president in the

absence of, or at the request of the president.

C. Secretary

Duties include keeping record of all proceedings of the meeting

and keeping attendance.

D. Treasurer

A financial report must be submitted at each meeting, plus an

annual financial report and statement.

E. Members at Large (4)

Parent, Teen Leader and/or Volunteer that is a voting member.

F. 4-H Youth Development Staff

The current Berrien County MSU Extension staff working with

4-H Youth Development shall be ex-officio members of the board.

H. Committee Chairs & Co-Chairs

Responsible for providing updates on assigned committee tasks

and is a voting member of the board. Each committee receives one

(1) vote. Example: Two Chairs equal one vote. One Chair equals

one vote.

G. Terms for officers and members at large will be 2 years, with elections at year end or as needed. No officer will hold position for more than 2 consecutive terms (4 years)

Section 2 Vacancies

A. Any member of the Board of Leadership who is absent for three (3) consecutive meetings as noted by the Secretary, shall be considered for replacement. Consideration should be given to the desires of the absent member to remain on as well as other special circumstances. If the

absent member no longer desires to remain on the board their position shall be declared vacant. If the absent member wishes to continue the board, the Leadership Board will vote on allowing the absent member

to continue at the next business meeting, with the absent member

restricted from voting on the question.

B. Leadership Board members who are aware of an impending extended absence are encouraged to submit their resignation to minimize the time the board will be short of members.

C. Any vacancy that arises shall be filled by the Leadership board at their next regular meeting following the declared vacancy by approval of the majority present of an agreeable candidate.

Section 3 Committees

The Leadership Board shall have several standing committees directly under its supervision and direction. The Leadership Board may appoint at least one (1) eligible member as chairperson for each of its committees.

A. Committee chairpersons are responsible for selecting their own Committee members. A monthly report is due at each board

meeting on what has been accomplished since the last board

Meeting. Chairpersons are responsible for maintaining a file on

each activity for future reference.

B. Example of Standing Committees:

1. Horse

2. Tack & Equipment

3. Fundraising

4. Parent & Volunteer

5. Fair

6. Instructor

7. Stable Management

8. Showmanship

9. Financial committe will consist of all voting members

Section 4 Instructors

A. Instructors must be Registered PATH certified and MI 4-H PEP certified, or Advanced PATH certified or working toward

completion of certification.

B. Instructor’s Contract: Each instructor, upon completion of

training, will be expected to sign a contract with the We Can Ride

4-H Club for 2 years.

Instructor in training is required to sign a contract with wcr 4-H

Club for 2 years

1. If contract is broken, instructor must pay back original PEP and

PATH training fees.

C. Program must have a PATH Certified instructor on grounds at any activity.

Section 5 Volunteers

A. All volunteers are expected to conduct themselves according to the program handbook and be considered in an “active” status prior to

participating in club activities/events. Any questions or concerns

should be addressed to the Club Coordinator.

B. Youth volunteers that are opting to participate in the club in a leadership volunteer role that are between the ages of 13 – 19 years and up to 26 years for youth with disabilities will be known as

Teen Leaders and will be eligible for 4-H membership including

but not limited: recognition, scholarships, activities, workshops,

competitive events, serving on committees and leadership boards,

etc. Teen Leaders must submit an annual 4-H Youth enrollment

form each year.

C. Youth volunteers that are opting participate in the club in a

volunteer role that are between the ages of 5 – 12 will be known as

youth members and will be eligible for 4-H membership including

but not limited: recognition, scholarships, activities, workshops,

shows, etc. Youth volunteers must submit an annual 4-H Youth

enrollment form each year.

Section 6 Parents

A. All parents are expected to conduct themselves according to the program handbook. Any questions or concerns should be

addressed to the Club Coordinator.

B. All parents are expected to attend all mandatory parent meetings,

or send a representative in their place.

C. All parents are expected to complete a minimum amount of

volunteer service hours as noted in the program handbook. Parents

must go through the MSU Extension Volunteer Selection process

and be considered an “active” volunteer prior to completing

volunteer hours.

Section 7 Youth Participants

A. All applications must be submitted prior to the due date by all  ~~p~~otential youth participants. If received after the due date or

incomplete, they will be considered for alternate status.

B. Youth participants applications may not be accepted after June 1st of the current riding season. Applicants received after June 1st will

be assessed by the Leadership Board for considerations based on horse, tack, and volunteer team availability.

C. Selection of youth participant is according to the criteria set by the selection committee.

D. Age limits and requirements shall follow the State 4-H guidelines as issued by Michigan State University.

E. Three unexcused absences, as defined in the program handbook, per season, will mean immediate dismissal from the program for

the current year.

F. All youth participants who have participated in 50% of the season, and riding sessions, are eligible to compete at the BCYF, subject to

BCYF rules.

G Selection of youth participants for special events will be at the discretion of the instructor.

**Article VII. Objectives**

Section 1 The objectives of this program shall be:

A. To provide an environment for members and leaders to acquire leadership, communication, and organizational skills as members of the program or board.

B. To develop a sound financial base from which to administer the We Can Ride 4-H Club.

**Article VIII. Election of Leadership Board Officers**

Section 1 A nomination committee will be appointed at the discretion of the Board.

Section 2 Nomination committee will have a slate of names to submit within 60 days of appointment.

Section 3 Voting will occur 30 days after submission of names. Members will be notified in writing that elections will be held. A majority vote is needed to pass the motion.

Section 4 Vacancies can be filled at a regular meeting by a simple majority vote of the members present.

Section 5 Election of Leadership Board Officers shall be held at the September board meeting, or no later than December of each calendar year.

**Article IX. Equipment**

Section 1 All equipment purchased or donated to the program is the property of the We Can Ride 4-H Club.

Section 2 Equipment Committee Chairperson is responsible for the maintenance and safe repair of the equipment, etc.

Section 3 Program owned equipment is to be used for the benefit of We Can Ride 4-H Club.

A. People with program volunteer/owned horses may be loaned tack on an individual basis, at the discretion of the equipment chairperson.

Equipment is to be brought with the horse on riding nights.

B. Equipment may be loaned to others or loaned to We Can Ride 4-H on a case-by-case approval of the equipment chairperson. Equipment loan will require an agreement in writing.

C. All equipment must be returned clean and in good condition. The borrower will be held responsible for all repair or replacement costs.

D. All equipment is to be in the trailer upon completion of the BCYF show for inventory, repair, and cleaning.

Section 4 All helmets used by program participants and will adhere to the helmet policy of no more than 5 years of expiration date inside helmet and must be an approved equestrian helmet, checked by a We Can Ride PATH instructor; all helmets no matter the age must be replaced in cases of an accident or damage.

**Article X. By-Laws**

Section 1 The by-laws may be amended, providing all members have been notified in writing prior to the meeting, by a 2/3 vote of the membership present at the meeting.

**Article XI Program Year**

Section 1 The program year of the We Can Ride 4-H Club shall be September 1 through August 31 of the following year.

**Article XII. Dissolution Clause**

Section 1 In the event that the We Can Ride Club terminates, the remaining members by a simple majority vote of those present can formally dissolve the club and are directed to turn all assets, financial, equipment, materials and supplies to the Berrien County 4-H Foundation.

revised and approved October 2022