The Spring meeting of The Maine Highlands Sled Dog Club was held on Sunday April 17th, 2016 at the American Legion Hall in Newport, Maine.
The meeting was called to order at 1PM by President Jill Carter.

1.  The secretary’s report was read and accepted.
2.  The treasurer’s report was read and Julie W. asked that we replace back into the fund the money that was donated to one of our members. Her report and suggestion was accepted.
3. Lindy Howe is resigning as Animal Welfare Advocate. Jill nominated Darlene F. to replace her. Darlene accepted and said that she would attend the 6 meetings a year. Darlene's nomination was accepted.
4.  Our corresponding secretary Julie B. asked for members to contribute articles for the newsletter. She said that she would be passing out the new club business cards to us and is hoping that we distribute them. She also mentioned a Mutt-Strut that is going to be held that she will be attending. She said that more of us should go as it would be a good way to promote sled dog sports.
OLD BUSINESS
1. The Fall meeting and rig race at Viles Arboretum was very well attended.
2. Brownville had a great turn-out. Terry was very happy with the amount of volunteers that this event had. He also said that the church group kids were a big help. The added Sunday Fun Run had 14 teams running.
3.  Milo was not very well attended.
4. Garland was not held.
NEW BUSINESS
1.  The future of the club was then discussed. Jill asked what members would be interested in.
a)  Tony mentioned that maybe the poor turn-out was due to the fact that is was rescheduled.
b)  Sandy said that with the weather being so warm and snow free that people didn't have time to train.
c)  Don said that there were not many spectators because this event was held the same weekend as the big fishing derby.
d)  Tony said that the members of the Mason are great hosts.
e)  Larry said that maybe the club should do this weekend or the following weekend schedule for events but Jill said that it would be hard because of scheduling conflicts with other clubs and that we would be leaving our hosts hanging by telling them either this weekend or the next.
2.  Julie B. said that our club should promote 1 or 2 dog snow or dryland events where as many people only have 1 or 2 dogs. She said that she had recently attended a DESDC meeting and that there was a gentleman from Westbrook who would love to have sled dog events on his property. He would be willing to prepare the trails and have food and a volunteer staff for these events.
a)  Jeff said that we would still have to set up the trails; Jill said that help would be needed if these events were a go.
b)  Terry then asked for a show of hands from people who would attend the Milo event in the future. There were a lot of hands.
c)  Dave F. said that he would do the set-up for the dry land race at the Fall meeting; he also said that help would be appreciated. Jeff M. said that he would help and added that he would also help with the set-up for the Winter event at Viles.
d)  Larry S. said maybe because of global warming we should consider more dryland events. Jeff said that they are hard to plan because you can't run dogs when it is too hot, he added that all sled dog events are weather dependent.
3.  Trail safety was then discussed. Most of the members agreed that snow-mobilers and ATVers are for the most part diligent when it comes to safety for us and themselves on the trails. Rhonda said that the people that worked with Jeff at the accident scene will never forget it.
a)  Julie B. said that positive information about shared use trails and education about it should be presented to the public. She said that public service announcements would be good as would get information out to snowmobile rental locations. Joan said that since we all use snowmobile trails that it is a good thing to belong to a snowmobile club. Don mentioned that on every snowmobile and ATV an age for operator use is posted.
b)  Terry said that it would not be a good thing to challenge the snowmobile industry.
c)  Jill then asked for 3 volunteers for a committee to work on safety related issues. Jeff M. Julie B. and Val volunteered. Dave F. said that in recent years New Hampshire had run a "share the trail" campaign. Val said that we should use "race in progress" signs on the trails during events.  The members voted on the formation of the trail safety committee and it was accepted. Larry mentioned incorporating trail safety into the demonstrations that are done at schools by our members.
d)  Guest speaker Henry Owen could not attend our meeting today; he was going to speak about the Downeast Sunrise Trail committee.
e)  Basics and Beyond is scheduled for Columbus Day weekend 2016. Joan said that there are still 7 spots available and that participants must bring dogs and a handler. A committee was formed to read and pick the best essay out of those submitted for the Basics and Beyond scholarship. The essays will be due by the club's Summer outing. Joan, Darlene and Margie volunteered to be on this committee to pick the winner.
f)  Val said that she has trails at her homestead in Bradford that can be used as a 4 mile and a 6 mile loop. The trails would need to be widened and have the sharp turns made better. She thought that having an event there during the Bradford Winter Carnival in February would be nice. She would also like to arrange for a Poker Run from Bradford to Corinth which would be 8 to 10 miles. The trails belonging to 3 different snowmobile clubs would be used. This event would be more casual than a sprint race and the award ceremony would be held at The Countryside Restaurant. Jill said she would also like to add an event in Greenville and she will be having a meeting about the possibility of it before the club's Summer outing.
g)  Jill will be representing our club at the 1st annual Pet Fair in Guilford and was wondering if anyone else would like to attend and do a demonstration. She also asked for volunteers to man a table at the Northern New England Trade Fair. Jeff and Jessica said that they would do it. Val also mentioned that our club should have a table at The Maine Sportsman's Club Show in Orono in March 2017. The table cost is $350 but we could share the cost with some other sled dog equipment vendors. It would be great outreach to people with 1 or 2 dogs. Julie B. and Jill volunteered to help Val arrange this. Jill also asked for someone to do a demonstration at a school in West Gardiner, Dave F. said he would do it.
h)  The 2016-2017 club schedule was then discussed.
Summer BBQ and auction July 9th or the 16th
Basics and Beyond Oct 8th-10th
Fall Meeting and rig race Nov 13th
Brownville Jan 28th and 29th
Milo Feb 11th
No Garland
Spring meeting Sunday before Easter.
i)  Val mentioned that she already has 5 nominations for the club's Sportsmanship Award and 2 for the Seppala Award.
j)  The election of club officers was then held:
Jill will remain as president
Valerie as vice president
Julie W. as treasurer
Jessica will replace Jan as secretary
Julie B. and Darlene will remain as corresponding secretaries
On the board of directors:
Lindy's replacement will be Terry
continuing members will be Chris M. Dave F. George B. Gary C. and Joan F.
A motion was made to accept, it was seconded and accepted by the attending members.
5.  Jill then asked for member comments about this last season.
Terry said how much help Neil has given at events.
Joan said that we have a lot of great volunteers to help with timing now.
Nana said that there has been a lot of suggestions for new club merchandise. Maybe bumper stickers and Val will be having key-chains made up. A plan was made to put the old merchandise on clearance and put some into the Summer auction and get new shirts in varying
sizes. Nana said that she is really enjoying doing the club store.
Jeff said that turning Brownville into a 2 day event was great.
It was also mentioned that Julie B. is doing a wonderful job with getting our club information out on public media.

At 2:10 PM a motion was made to end the Spring meeting of TMHSDC. It was seconded and accepted by the attending members.

Jan McCannon   Secretary