



Health Committee Meeting: April 7th, 2022

Present: Angie DePuydt (Chair), Jo Clough (Board Liaison), Geneva Maxwell, Lisa Domeier, Becca McCartney, Caron Osborn, Amiee Ziller, Tracey Estes

Absent: Dr. Jennifer Melgey.

Budget Information

Measure Goal: N/A at this time	Measure Actual: \$0
Revenue Budget: \$0	Revenue Actual: \$0
Expense Budget: \$0	Expense Actual: \$0

FHANA STRATEGIC PLANNING GOALS: N/A at this time.

1. Ms. DePuydt opened the meeting and briefly discussed the three proposals FHANA received for the Research Grant Program.

- Auburn University – RNA Sequencing of Strangulating Lipomas (Colic)
- NC State University – Lymphatic Pneumatic Compression Therapy Device (CPL)
- New Bolton Center – Fecal Microbiota Role in Recurrent Colic & Colic Surgery Recovery

2. **Evaluation of Research Grant Proposals.** To begin the evaluation process of the three submitted proposals the committee first discussed and developed objective criteria. Each proposal was then discussed and weighed against the criteria.

	Auburn University RNA Sequencing Strangulating Lipoma	NC State Lymphatic PCT Device	New Bolton Center Fecal Microbiota Role in Colic
Administratively Complete	☑	☑	☑
Meets Timeline	☑	☑	☑
Within Budget	☑	☑	☑
Sufficient Credentials of Researchers	☑	☑	☑
Addresses Key Topic	☑ Colic	☑ CPL	☑ Colic
Pilot Study (May Lead to Further Research)	☑	☑	☑
Includes Friesians	✗	✗	✗
Relevance of Findings to Friesian Horses	LOW	LOW	HIGH
Incidence of Disease/Issue in Horses	LOW	UNK	HIGH
Potential Impact of Findings	HIGH	LOW	HIGH

3. Discussion of Evaluation Results. The committee discussed the results of the evaluation of each proposal. There were two follow up questions developed during the evaluation for Auburn University: 1. Clarification of the percentage rate for strangulating lipomas in surgical colic cases. 2. Clarification regarding how many samples will be RNA sequenced during the study.

The committee agreed there were several concerns with the proposal submitted by NC State University. Strong concerns were raised regarding the conflict of interest noted in the study due to the primary researcher also being the co-inventor of the PCT device (EQ Press) which intended to be used in the study. Ms. DePuydt reported she consulted with Rebecka Blenottoft at Equilymph Ltd. and confirmed that intermittent pneumatic compression therapy (PCT) devices such as the EQ Press are not recommended for standalone treatment in lymphatic disease and use of a PCT device on CPL horses could cause damage if used too frequently or incorrectly. In humans, PCT devices are intended to be used as part of very full and comprehensive management plan. Ms. Clough confirmed this response based on her experience as a physical therapist. Finally, the study is intended to evaluate the usefulness of this PCT device in horses with CPL, however the horses which will be used in the study are thoroughbreds who are unaffected by CPL. **Based on this discussion, the committee strongly recommends the board NOT choose the NC State proposal.**

The committee agreed it was disappointing that none of the proposals were Friesian specific or intended to use Friesians exclusively in the study. However, the committee agreed it was important to proceed with an award as all the proposals do address a key topic and all have potential to make a positive impact on the health of Friesian horses. The committee feels it's important to launch the grant program and work to refine the program to increase Friesian specific proposals. Additionally, the committee discussed ways in which they might increase the use of Friesian horses in future proposals. It might be necessary for the committee to facilitate the coordination of candidate horses for studies. Additionally, it may be necessary to open the program to European countries as they do conduct Friesian specific research more often there.

4. Recommendation of Grant Award. Ms. Osborn made the motion **the FHANA Board award the grant to the New Bolton Center for their study regarding the Fecal Microbiota's Role in Recurring Colic and Colic Surgery Recovery.** Ms. Estes seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. The committee agreed this proposal was the most appealing proposal as it has the potential to positively impact the health of the largest number of Friesian horses. Additionally, if the study is successful, the findings could lead to a simple and cost-effective way to prevent/reduce colic surgery complications and recurrence of colic by proactively identifying and treating disrupted microbiota.

Next Meeting. The next meeting will be held Thursday, April 28th 7pm EST.