

Veterinary Medical Association of the Bahamas Meeting Minutes

March 5th, 2019

Department of Agriculture, Gladstone Road

7:00 pm

Members present:

Dr. Robert Allen

Dr. Kwesi Smith

Dr. Solomon Kwayke

Dr. Valentino Grant

Dr. Maurice Isaacs

Dr. Suzette Hepburn-Lyn

Dr. Deandra Delancey

Dr. Bridgette Johnson

Dr. Issah Hanson

Apologies: Dr. Keith Cox and Dr. Pedro Davis

1. Welcome – meeting chaired by Dr. Robert Allen in Dr. Cox's absence.
2. Matters Arising –
 - a. Update on Veterinary Act during Meeting Minister
 - i. At the meeting the Act was discussed. The minister wants association to submit letter endorsing the current draft of the act. Once that happens he will act to prioritize it and have it passed into law. Waiting on Dr. Cox to write letter to minister, as well as submit letters from past presidents that have contains a history of our efforts to have act past.
 - ii. Members present at the meeting took a vote on changes that would be made on draft of act before submitting the final draft. Changes to be made of Peer Review Committee would be:
 - Members of committee will sit on committee for 1 year.
 - Peer Review Committee will be appointed by random selection.
 - There will be one vet per private practice at one time that will have to sit out the following year after serving on committee.
 - The committee will be comprised of six veterinarians with one lay person from another professional body.
 - The committee will make recommendations to the board for re-certification of any veterinarian brought before the peer review committee.
 - The VMAB will decide who the lay person will be each year.

- iii. Dr. Grants input from meeting is that the Minister is in our corner with the Act. He is just awaiting a letter from the VMAB to indicate that we are in agreeance with the act in its current state. Due to changes in the Act at this present meeting an entirely new but final draft will have to be submitted with the letter. Dr. Johnson will make necessary changes and forward to membership before next meeting.

- a. Report on WTO from Meeting with Minister

- i. As it relates to WTO since there was no real response from the medical, dental and veterinary professionals towards the WTO, the Ministry has already sent in submissions on our behalf.
 - ii. WTO seeks to add protection to major islands from oversaturation with veterinary professionals. Those who see to apply for registration and licensure in the Bahamas will be restricted from setting up practice on islands such as New Providence and Grand Bahama where there is already veterinary representation. The goal would be to distribute any new veterinary entity across the archipelago of islands on a needs basis.

- b. Re-instatement of Committees

- 1. Public Relations/Education – Dr. Grant- at last meeting he said he would form a steering committee on common diseases that the public is still unaware of. Will also try to encourage vets that do not typically come to meetings to get more involved especially with committees where their input would be highly valued and improve their attendance to meetings.
 - 2. Veterinary Act Committee- comprised of Dr. Davis and Dr. Johnson – amendments to act to be made before next meeting.
 - 3. Spay/Neuter Committee- Dr. Smith, Dr. Pinder and Dr. Kwayke to become active and facilitate planning of spay/neuter project before end of year.

- 3. New Matters

- a. CVMA CE Credits- Letter was sent to Dr. Davis to ask for members to fulfill 5 hours of CE hours and technicians or assistants to fulfill at least 3 CE hours, that will be monitored through the Ministry of Agriculture in Belize. The draft of the Veterinary Medical Act contains a requirement for more hours, so we want to present the proposal to the membership to get more participation from

Veterinary colleagues in the Bahamas if we were to pool resources in finding avenues to attain CE credits and improve veterinary standards in the country. Dr. Allen suggested that joining up with the CVMA may also make us privy to more information about emerging diseases in the region. We hope to reestablish connections with the University of the West Indies.

- i. Dr. Allen says that Dr. White (Tuskegee grad) willing to come and speak on Dermatology to provide CE credits.
 - ii. IVIS association – have regular CE meetings/conferences internationally, and have been to Paradise Island numerous times, without making contact with the Vet Association. They have been approached on a few occasions and have offered all Bahamian vets the opportunity to attend their CE courses with too little notice. It is suggested that once registered with IVIS members will receive notice of upcoming conferences and can make contact with organizers in advance to schedule attendance for VMAB members to attend.
- b. Rabies Free Declaration – testing had commenced in 1999 to have country declared rabies free by the CDC, which in order for the Bahamas to self-declare under the OIE that we were rabies free, continued sample submission would be necessary. Due to lack of man power the efforts ceased and the Bahamas has not been able to be reclassified as rabies free. We discussed possibly attempting to resubmit.
- c. Veterinary Pharmaceuticals being sold on the black market/online – There is a breach in the local pharmaceutical industry that has allowed for lay persons to obtain and sell veterinary products in their stores or online here in the Bahamas. The argument as to whether they are being illegally sold due to current laws i.e., Pharmacy Act and Veterinary Act came into question. Review of Pharmacy Act was suggested as well as prioritizing the Veterinary Medical Act to protect the profession.

4. Next Meeting Date – Tuesday April 9th, 2019 at Bahamas Humane Society at 7:00 pm.
5. Meeting Adjournment – 10:38 pm