

## **Pennsylvania State Horse Racing Commission**

February 16, 2016

### **Minutes**

A meeting of the Pennsylvania State Horse Racing Commission was held on Wednesday, February 16, 2016 at the Parx Racing, in Bensalem, PA, at 11:30 A.M.

In attendance representing the Commission were Alan Novak, Chairman; Dr. Corinne Sweeney, Commissioner; Thomas Jay Ellis, Commissioner; Walt Remmert, Acting Executive Secretary of Horse Racing and representing the PA Department of Agriculture as an Ex-Officio Member of the Commission was Fred Strathmeyer, Deputy Secretary. Jorge Augusto, Legal Counsel by phone.

Chairman Novak called the meeting to order and announced the meeting was duly advertised in accordance with the Sunshine Law.

Jorge Augusto, Legal Counsel stated that an executive session was conducted and no agency business was transacted. Legal and personnel issues were discussed.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Commissioner Ellis, seconded by Commissioner Sweeney, and unanimously passed, to approve the minutes of the January 13, 2016, commission meeting.

### **OLD BUSINESS (STATISTICAL REPORTS)**

Chairman Novak requested the statistical highlights for the past month.

### **Parx Racing**

Joe Wilson, Chief Operating Officer, reported the previous month and year to date statistics. Parx is still on the break and the last two barns are under construction, the track is almost ready after all the snow and rain with live racing scheduled to begin again on February 27<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Elliott also spoke briefly about the new track and backside safety program. There is a new employee to head up the track safety initiatives. There are lights and sirens on the new poles to help for example with a horse getting loose or going down. The next step is what the riders wear on track.

### **Pennsylvania Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association**

Michael Ballezzi, Executive Director of PTHA, noted that there was great cooperation between Mr. Wilson, Mr. Elliott and the PTHA about the new rail and very pleased with how it has turned out. Mr. Ballezzi spoke briefly about the new track and backside safety program.

### **Penn National Race Course**

Eric Johnston, Director of Racing, reported on the previous months and year to date statistic totals. Penn National has also been looking into its safety rules and house rules as well. The camels will be back this year because they were so popular and such a great time last year. Looking forward to revitalizing the World Series of Handicapping and the Clydesdales will be back also.

### **Presque Isle Downs & Racetrack**

Debbie Howells, Director of Racing for Presque Isle Downs, reported on the previous months and year to date statistic totals. Stall applications and employment applications are online and gearing up for the 2016 racing season, backside opens on April 22<sup>nd</sup> and live racing starts on May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

### **PA Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association**

Todd Mostoller, Executive Director of the PA HBPA, thanked Mr. Remmert for coming to talk to the PA HBPA during the general membership meeting about medication issues and some things that have been seen at the lab.

### **Pennsylvania Horse Breeders Association**

Brian Sanfratello, Executive Director, noted that some advertising has been used to help with getting the stallion registry out for Pennsylvania and also a list of farms for places that could be used to reside the mare and for foaling and the 2016 Stakes schedule is available.

### **RESEARCH**

Dr. Mary Robinson, Acting Director of the Pennsylvania Equine Toxicology and Research Lab, and of the University of Pennsylvania, presented: There are multiple research projects in progress in the laboratory, and highlights from the past few months are presented.

There are multiple research projects in progress. Research studies on 5-amino 4-carboximidazole riboside (AICAR), capsaicin, methocarbamol, cobalt, lidocaine, tCO<sub>2</sub>/base excess, boldenone, etanercept (Enbrel), cobratoxin, several stimulants, and extracorporeal shock wave therapy have all been completed. The data are being summarized for publication and manuscripts will be submitted to appropriate journals for publication. There are currently 15 manuscripts in preparation and one manuscript is under review. Future studies on xylazine, beclomethasone, fluticasone, and other non-therapeutic drugs which will remain confidential at this time, are in progress.

At PETRL, 6 new instruments were installed last fall, and analytical methods have been transferred, developed and validated to improve the drug testing program. Method development is ongoing, as we will continuously work to improve the program.

At New Bolton Center, an inductively-coupled plasma mass spectrometer (ICP-MS) donated by the PA Harness Horseman's Association and the Meadows Owners Standardbred Association has been installed, and method development is underway to enable testing for cobalt. We expect to be able to analyze cobalt samples for the Pa Racing Commissions by March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016.

### **QUALITY ASSURANCE OFFICER**

All internal blind samples sent to the screening sections of the laboratory this month have been correctly identified. An internal blind sample was also correctly identified by the DNA section.

The laboratory correctly identified all of the samples in the December Racing Medication and Testing Consortium External Quality Assessment Program, RMTC-EQAP, Proficiency Set. All proficiency set results are reported to American Association of Laboratory Accreditation, A2LA.

The supporting documents required for the on-site assessment were submitted to the A2LA in January. The on-site laboratory assessment is scheduled for April 4-6, 2016. A team of two auditors will visit the laboratory and review compliance to all management and technical requirements of the international standard for testing and calibration laboratories, ISO 17025.

The PETRL Technical Management Committee met in January as required by the A2LA, and the PETRL Quality Assurance Program. This committee reviewed the effectiveness of the laboratory's technical and quality assurance systems. The committee formulated suggestions for improvements for the coming year.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

A motion was made by Commissioner Sweeney, seconded by Commissioner Ellis and unanimously passed to approve item 5.a.(1); approval of the thoroughbred full race card simulcast schedules for the month of March 2016 at Penn National, Parx Racing, and Presque Isle Downs.

A motion was made by Commissioner Ellis and seconded by Commissioner Sweeney and passed to approve item 5.a. (2)<sup>1</sup>; approval of the harness full race card simulcast schedules for the month of March 2016, at The Meadows, Mohegan Sun at Pocono Downs, and Harrah's Philadelphia Casino and Racetrack.

A motion was made by Commissioner Ellis and seconded by Commissioner Sweeney and unanimously passed to ratify item 5.b. (1); Parx racing request for permission to move the

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<sup>1</sup>Concerning Item 5.a. (2); "Consideration for approval of the Harness full race card simulcast schedules for the month of March 2016, at The Meadows, Mohegan Sun at Pocono Downs and Harrah's Philadelphia. Approval is pending submission of the fully executed simulcast agreements to the Commission Office." Chairman Alan Novak abstained from voting on this item due to a business relationship with The Meadows.

opening date back to February 27<sup>th</sup> and to make up the days these will be added. April 3<sup>rd</sup>, April 10<sup>th</sup>, April 17<sup>th</sup>, April 24<sup>th</sup> and May 1<sup>st</sup>.

A motion was made by Commissioner Ellis and seconded by Commissioner Sweeney and unanimously passed to approve item 5.b. (2); Presque Isle Downs request to correct an error on the wagering menu for the 2016 season, the listing should be P5 not P6.

A motion was made by Commissioner Ellis and seconded by Commissioner Sweeney and unanimously passed to table item 5.c. (1); The adjudication of Burton Sipp—Penn National Ejection.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Deputy Strathmeyer and Acting Executive Secretary Remmert addressed HB941.

Jane White and others addressed their concerns on the fast timeline for the safety helmets and other safety procedures. Also continued dialog on the owner bonus discussion and the integrity of racing.

Chairman Novak announced the next commission meeting will be held March 29, 2016, at New Bolton Center, in Kennett Square, PA.

Executive Session: 10:30 A.M.

Public Meeting: 11:30 A.M.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Novak adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,  
Walt Remmert  
Acting Executive Secretary