

**PENNSYLVANIA HARNESS RACING COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF MEETING**

**February 18, 2016**

A meeting of the Pennsylvania State Harness Racing Commission was held at Harrah's Philadelphia in, Chester, PA, Thursday, February 18, 2016 at 11:00 A.M. In attendance representing the Commission were Jonathan Newman, Chairman, and George Crawford, Executive Secretary and Jorge Augusto, Legal Counsel. Representing the PA Department of Agriculture as an Ex-Officio Member of the Commission was Fred Strathmeyer, Deputy Secretary

Chairman Newman called the meeting to order.

Jorge Augusto, Legal Counsel, noted that an executive session took place by phone yesterday where personnel issues were discussed no agency business was transacted.

George Crawford, Executive Secretary, noted that the meeting has been advertised in accordance with the Sunshine Law.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman Newman asked for approval of the minutes from January 21, 2016. A motion was made by Deputy Strathmeyer and Chairman Newman, and was unanimously approved.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**(Statistical Reports – Prior month and Year-to-Date)**

**The Meadows Racing**

Kevin Decker, Director of Racing Operations, reviewed the previous month's statistics and year to date totals. Mr. Decker also thanked Chairman Newman and the commission for all their hard work in putting harness racing as their first priority. The Night of Champions to honor all the horses at the top of the divisions in 2015 for Trot and Pace unfortunately had to be cancelled half way through the night because of snow and finished the rest of the races and celebration on Saturday before the Super Bowl.

Mr. Decker remembered Boots Dunn as a great business man and fellow horsemen who enjoyed racing at the fairs and life in general.

Mr. Decker addressed Chairman Newman's question about what can be done to help the sport of racing. Some ideas are larger field sizes, afternoon racing all year around, between December and March is the best handle time and helping to the product out to the people.

### **Meadows Standardbred Owners Association**

Kim Hankins, Executive Director, was not present and the report was given by Mr. Kevin Decker. Mr. Decker noted that things are working well at the race track and working hand in hand with The Meadows on some marketing ideas. There will be a \$5,000 handicapping contest the first weekend in March.

### **Harrah's Philadelphia Casino & Racetrack**

Barry Brown, Director of Racing Operations, reviewed the previous month's statistics and year to date totals. Mr. Brown also thanked the Chairman and the commission on their great work for Harness racing in Pennsylvania. Live racing will resume on Friday, April 1<sup>st</sup> and when in the future the exchange wagering discussion will be happening with all parties involved.

Mr. Brown also addressed Chairman Newman's questions about helping the racing product in Pennsylvania.

### **Mohegan Sun at Pocono Downs**

Jennifer Starr, Marketing, reviewed the previous month's statistics and year to date totals. March 19<sup>th</sup> Poconos resumes live racing and everyone is excited about that and the backside opens up March 1<sup>st</sup>. On March 16<sup>th</sup> is the annual press conference that shows everyone what Pocono Downs will be doing this 2016 race season also there will be an owner's luncheon and other meetings happening that week.

This coming Saturday, February 20<sup>th</sup> there will be a large handicapping tournament for everyone to take part in. There are coupons in the new calendar to help keep the OTW's busy with giveaways and different things to do every month.

### **Pennsylvania Harness Horsemen's Association**

Sam Beegle, President, noted that the USTA banquet went very well even with all the snow. Mr. Beegle asked for a moment of silence to remember Boots Dunn. Mr. Gillock will be his replacement and will be attending his first USTA meeting next week.

### **Research**

Dr. Mary Robinson, Acting Director of the Pennsylvania Equine Toxicology and Research Lab and of the University of Pennsylvania, submitted the following report: The laboratory continues to develop new screening methods for various classes of new drugs.

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**

Deb Tsang, Quality Assurance Officer, reported all internal blind samples sent to the screening sections of the laboratory this month have been correctly identified.

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 Deputy Strathmeyer, seconded by Chairman Newman, and unanimously passed to approve 7. (a). 1; the Standardbred full race card simulcast schedules for the month of February 2016 at The Meadows, Pocono Downs, and Harrah's Philadelphia Casino and Racetrack.

A motion was made by Deputy Strathmeyer, seconded by Chairman Newman, and unanimously passed to approve 7. (a). 2; the Thoroughbred full race card simulcast schedules for the month of February 2016 at Parx Racing, Penn National, and Presque Isle Downs.

A motion was made by Deputy Strathmeyer, seconded by Chairman Newman, and unanimously passed to ratify 7. (b). 1; Downs Racing, LP request for permission for itself and its three OTW sites to receive and conduct wagering on the 2016 fill card simulcast from Century Downs, CA (H).

A motion was made by Deputy Strathmeyer, seconded by Chairman Newman, and unanimously passed to approve 7. (b). 2; Clenbuterol Policy

A motion was made by Deputy Strathmeyer, seconded by Chairman Newman, and unanimously passed to approve 7. (b). 3; 2016 Fair Harness Racing 2 Day Events.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chairman Newman announced the next meeting will be held on March 31, 2016, at Harrah's Philadelphia in Chester, PA.

- Executive Session 10:00 A.M
- Regular Session 11:00 A.M.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Newman adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,  
/S/ George Crawford  
Executive Secretary of Harness Racing