

## **Pennsylvania State Horse Racing Commission**

October 19, 2015

### **Minutes**

A meeting of the Pennsylvania State Horse Racing Commission was held on Monday, October 19, 2015 at 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 Jorge Augusto, Legal Counsel.

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 September 22, 2015, commission meeting.

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

Chairman Novak requested the statistical highlights for the past month.

### **Parx Racing**

Sam Elliott, Director of Racing, reported the previous month and year to date statistics. The last two barns are going to be built some. On October 1<sup>st</sup> a horse tested positive for EPH the horse went to Mid Atlantic Equine in New Jersey, the quarantine is until October 29<sup>th</sup>. There has been tremendous help and cooperation from the state.

Mr. Remmert applauded the great work from Mr. Elliott and everyone at Parx who made it all happen with no issues during this quarantine.

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

Michael Ballezzi, Executive Director of PTHA, welcomed the commission to Parx and noted that the backside looking great. The last two remaining barns are going to be built and in January there will be work done on the rail. The quarantine has been going great and I would like to commend the commission and the Department of Agriculture for the great help. The fall Festival was cut short due to the EPH, but over all had a great run and did what was expected.

### **Penn National Race Course**

Eric Johnston, Director of Racing, reported on the previous months and year to date statistic totals. The quarantine has hurt field sizes at Penn National, there are always great horses coming back and forth from Parx, Mr. Johnston is looking forward to when that quarantine will be lifted.

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

Debbie Howells, Director of Racing for Presque Isle Downs, reported on the previous months and year to date statistic totals. October 6<sup>th</sup> was the last day of racing for the season at Presque Isle; horses continue to be onsite until October 21<sup>st</sup> when everyone has to be gone. Ms. Howells thanked the HBPA and the commission for a great 2015 racing season.

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

Todd Mostoller, Executive Director of the PA HBPA, was not present and no oral report was given. One problem that needs to be addressed was the taking of pre-race samples that had no protocol in place. Acting Executive Secretary, Walt Remmert, answered and said that the problems were being fixed and proper protocol will be followed and until both horsemen's groups agree.

About the uniform medication, the horsemen stress that research needs to be done as new medications is added to the list.

Mr. Shea, President of the PA HBPA, noted that the racing staff and the HBPA have been in discussion about more promotions for upcoming events. There has been great cooperation between both to help and have packed club house on Friday and Saturday nights which is great and due to more promotion.

### **Pennsylvania Horse Breeders Association**

Brian Sanfratello, Executive Director, noted that the budget has not been passed yet for the upcoming year and that should be happening soon as it is being prepared now, also being worked on is the 2016 Stakes schedule which will be going over at the December Breeders meeting.

### **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.

Drs Robinson, Chen, and Jiang, and Jesse Vanderhoef attended and presented at the 48<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Society for Leukocyte Biology held from September 27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> 2015. Two studies from the extracorporeal shockwave (ESWT) project were presented entitled:

1. Chen JW, Jiang Z, Stefanovski D, Boston R, Soma LR, Robinson MA. Population distribution of interleukin 1 beta and its receptor antagonist in Standardbred race horses via novel validated enzyme-linked immunosorbant assays.
2. Jiang Z, Chen JW, Robinson MA, Soma LR. Effects of extracorporeal shock wave therapy on gene expression of inflammatory cytokines in equine white blood cells.

The effect of ESWT on the expression of cytokines produced by white blood cells circulating in the blood was evaluated. Several of these cytokines were found to be affected at the mRNA or protein level. Population levels of these factors are now being measured to determine if they will be useful biomarkers for ESWT.

There are currently 18 manuscripts in preparation, two manuscripts at various stages of the review process, and three manuscripts have been accepted in 2015.

### **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 installation of 6 new instruments at PETRL, and training on those instruments, has been completed. Method development and validation is progressing well and should be completed by the start of the next race season. PETRL is now RMTC accredited, as well as A2LA accredited. The RMTC board recently adopted thresholds for four new therapeutic drugs. PETRL will begin implementing thresholds for those drugs as soon as the thresholds are publically available on their website.

### **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 November 2015 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 November 2015, at The Meadows, Mohegan Sun at Pocono Downs, and Harrah's Philadelphia Casino and Racetrack.

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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 November 2015, 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.

A motion was made by Commissioner Ellis and seconded by Commissioner Sweeney and passed to approve item 5.b. (1); approval of Parx racing request to change the first post time to 12:25 beginning Sunday, November 1, 2015.

A motion was made by Commissioner Ellis and seconded by Commissioner Sweeney and passed to approve item 5.b. (2); approval of Presque Isle Downs request to conduct a Mystery Voucher promotion on Friday and Saturday, December 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Approximately 91,674 mutuel tickets valued from \$2.00 to \$10,000 sent to qualified players via direct mail. Two (2) tickets will be locked in at \$10,000 and twenty (20) will be at \$5,000. The players will not know the value unless they come in to redeem them.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Jane White, owner/breeder since 1998 and stabled at Parx for at least the last 10 years. Ms. White spoke to the commission against the PA bred program pertaining to the owner's bonus and open races.

Lee Ann McCall came to the commission to discuss the image projected from Parx and how to make it better also the idea of "super trainers" who have 80-90 horses under them and how it's hard for the smaller trainer to succeed.

Ed Lehman, owner/trainer came to the commission to address the amount of time that it takes for the cobalt process and why it takes so long.

Chairman Novak announced the next commission meeting will be held November 17, 2015, at Penn National in Grantville, PA.

Executive Session: 4:00 P.M.

Public Meeting: 5:00 P.M.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Novak adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,  
Walt Remmert  
Acting Executive Secretary