

## Pennsylvania State Horse Racing Commission

March 13, 2014

### Minutes

A meeting of the Pennsylvania State Horse Racing Commission was held on Tuesday, March 13, 2014 at New Bolton Center, Kennett Square, PA, at 11:30 A.M.

In attendance, representing the Commission were Alan Novak, Chairman, Dr. Corinne Sweeney, Commissioner; Walter Remmert, Acting Executive Secretary of Horse Racing; and Jorge Augusto, Legal Counsel. Representing the PA Department of Agriculture as an Ex-Officio Member of the Commission was Mathew Meals, Deputy Secretary. Attending by conference call was Commissioner Jonathan Newman.

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

Chairman Novak stated that the Commission held an executive session in which the Commission discussed matters of litigation. No other agency business was transacted.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Commissioner Sweeney, seconded by Commissioner Newman, and unanimously passed, to approve the minutes of the February 20, 2014, commission meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Sweeney, seconded by Commissioner Newman, and unanimously passed to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting on March, 5, 2014.

### OLD BUSINESS (STATISTICAL REPORTS)

Chairman Novak requested the statistical highlights for the past month.

### Parx Racing

Sal Sinatra, Director of Racing, reported the previous month and year to date totals statistics. Mr. Sinatra stated that two new barns are ready to begin construction in the very near future. The filly that was tested for the equine herpes virus came back with negative results. Resulting in the quarantine will be lifted therefore the gates will open Monday, March 17, 2014 for racing.

The stakes schedule has no major changes. Labor Day will remain "Smarty Jones Day" celebrating its 10 year anniversary. The Cotillion Derby day will be on September 20<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Sweeney inquired regarding lasix administration at PARX and how the procedure is working. Mr. Sinatra stated he had a meeting with Ms. Kuntz and she will be picking up the lasix administration work at PARX following her current work assignments at Atlantic City.

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

Michael Ballezzi, Executive Director of PTHA, was not present and no report was given on behalf of the PTHA.

### **Penn National Race Course**

Christopher McErlean, Vice President of Racing for Penn National, reported the previous month and year to date statistical totals. Mr. McErlean noted five live race days were cancelled due to inclement weather and these make up dates will be scheduled in May and early June.

Mr. McErlean stated more construction of barns will be taking place on the backstretch by early April. Eric Johnson, who previously worked at Sam Houston racetrack for Penn National has been named Director of Racing at Penn National beginning April 1, 2014. Mr. McErlean expressed his gratitude to the Commission for their assistance during his tenure at Penn National.

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

Debbie Howells, Director of Racing for Presque Isle Downs reported the previous month and year to date statistical totals.

Ms. Howells also stated that 101 stall applications were received for the 2014 racing season which is down 28% from the 2013 racing season.

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

Todd Mostoller, Executive Director of the PA HBPA, noted that the HBPA has made phone calls to inquire about the lasix administration program and whether the current group at Penn National can accommodate Presque Isle Downs. The matter should be resolved by March 31, 2014.

Mr. Mostoller noted that an agreement is being pursued on the barn issue with Presque Isle Downs and any agreement will be brought to the Commission's attention.

Mr. Mostoller also discussed the subject of electrolytes being used in summer weather conditions and there being concerns needing addressed. The Commissioners directed their Executive Secretary to create an ad hoc committee which will included a representative from all three horsemen's groups and a member of the research team to make recommendation pertaining to electrolytes at the April Commission Meeting.

Mr. Mostoller also discussed reasons for the restricted races being run at horse racing tracks from a legislative view, their economic impact, and the impact upon the agriculture community.

## Pennsylvania Horse Breeders Association

Jeb Hannum, Executive Secretary for the PHBA, reported that the horsemen's groups are in discussion to establish a minimum number of restricted races for each horse race track and the establishment for a funding model for the breeder's fund. A board meeting is scheduled for next week where the Stakes schedule will be approved.

## RESEARCH

Dr. Uboh of the Pennsylvania Equine Toxicology and Research Lab, and Dr. Robinson of the University of Pennsylvania, gave the following report:

The laboratory continues to develop new screening methods for various classes of new drugs. These approaches provide increased flexibility in processing track samples as multiple screening techniques are simultaneously and independently used. Several research projects are ongoing and progress in a select few is briefly outlined below.

Preliminary results have been provided by the New Bolton Center Toxicology Laboratory for the cobalt concentration in horse plasma and urine samples following the administration of several cobalt-containing substances. Horses administered some of these cobalt-containing products had increased plasma and/or urine concentrations of cobalt. Future studies will confirm these results in a larger number of horses and will assess the effects these products may have on the red blood cell count in the horse.

A typical procaine penicillin protocol has been administered to two horses and plasma samples will be analyzed to obtain an estimate of the length of time procaine is detectable in plasma using current analytical methods.

Thank you to the PA HBPA for their recent donation and continued support of the Penn Vet Equine Pharmacology Laboratory.

A manuscript by Dr. Zibin Jiang entitled "Selection of reference genes in equine white blood cells for real time PCR normalization following extracorporeal shock wave therapy." has been accepted for publication by the American Journal of Molecular Biology.

There are currently ten manuscripts being prepared, two manuscripts are at various stages of the review process, and four manuscripts have been accepted for publication and are at various stages of the publication process.

## QUALITY ASSURANCE OFFICER

Deborah Tsang, Quality Assurance Officer, reported that all internal blind samples sent to the screening sections of the laboratory this month were correctly identified.

The proficiency set from the Racing Medication and Testing Consortium External Quality Assessment Program, RMTCEQAP, is currently being tested at the laboratory. The first aqueous blood gas proficiency set has arrived from the College of American Pathologists, CAP.

There will be six blood gas proficiency sets from CAP this year. All of PETRL's proficiency testing results is reported to the issuing organization as well as the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation, A2LA.

Laboratory Records are being organized for the onsite A2LA assessment which will take place at PETRL in a few weeks. The balances, pipettes, water baths, drib locks, thermometers and electronic temperature monitoring system for the refrigerators and freezers have all been calibrated recently.

### NEW BUSINESS

A motion was made by Commissioner Sweeney and seconded by Commissioner Newman and unanimously passed to approve item 5.a.(1); approval of the thoroughbred full race card simulcast schedules for the month of March 2014, at Penn National, Parx Racing, and Presque Isle Downs.

A motion was made by Commissioner Sweeney and seconded by Commissioner Newman and unanimously passed to approve item 5.a.(2)<sup>1</sup>; approval of the harness full race card simulcast schedules for the month of March 2014, at The Meadows, Mohegan Sun at Pocono Downs, and Harrah's Philadelphia Casino and Racetrack.

A motion was made by Commissioner Sweeney and seconded by Commissioner Newman and unanimously passed to approve item 5.b.(1); ratification of Presque Isle Downs and Casino request to permit Twinspires.com to offer races from Presque Isle Downs in their Jackpot 5 pool.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Novak announced the next commission meeting will be held April 15, 2014, at New Bolton Center, Kennett Square, PA.

Executive Session: 10:30 A.M. in the Allam House  
Public Meeting: 11:30 A.M. in the Alumni Hall

### ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Novak adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,  
Walt Remmert  
Acting Executive Secretary

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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 2014, 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.