

**PENNSYLVANIA HARNESS RACING COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF MEETING**

**May 20, 2015**

A meeting of the Pennsylvania State Harness Racing Commission was held at Harrah's Philadelphia, in Chester PA, Wednesday, May 20, 2015 at 11:00 A.M. In attendance representing the Commission were Jonathan Newman, Chairman, and George Crawford, Executive Secretary. By phone was Noah Wenger, Commissioner. 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.

George Crawford, Executive Secretary, announced that the Commission conducted this morning an Executive Session in which litigation and personnel matters were discussed. No other agency business was transacted.

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

Chairman Newman noted that Commissioner Rogers resigned and thanked him for his many years of service and great knowledge to the racing industry.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman Newman asked for approval of the minutes from April 23, 2015. A motion was made by Deputy Strathmeyer and Chairman Newman, and was unanimously approved.

Chairman Newman asked for approval of the minutes from March 24, 2015. 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. The Friday events will be switching from day cards to night cards after Memorial Day, looking forward to continuing to work with the MSOA with many ideas. Post time for the Adios is 12:20.

**Meadows Standardbred Owners Association**

Kim Hankins, Executive Director, noted the stakes races started in the last few weeks and the Meadows Maturity races went very well; the races are being planned to

run every year. Have also been meeting with the Meadows Management to work on promoting racing which is wonderful and look forward to working side by side with them.

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

Barry Brown, Director of Racing Operations, reviewed the previous month's statistics and year to date totals. There was finally a deal reached with Monarch on March 27<sup>th</sup> which has really helped with the numbers for Harrah's over this past month. This coming Sunday there are three invitational races, the Maxi Lee, Betsy Ross and Jerry Taylor races, along with family day and a mystery voucher give away. There will be a lot going on with people on the patio and visiting the announcer and judge's stand or taking a ride in the starter car, t-shirts, and a guaranteed pick 4.

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

Dale Rapson, Director of Racing, reviewed the previous month's statistics and year to date totals. The numbers have bounced back after the Monarch dispute was settled. There were records set at the Casino and the OTW's on Kentucky Derby day of over a million dollars. For the Belmont as of right now there are 245 reservations for the club house. On the apron there will be food stands and other great stands to create a fun and exciting atmosphere. July 4<sup>th</sup> will be the Sun Stakes and they are looking forward to that and the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The Budweiser Clydesdales will be there, a t-shirt give away, and so much more.

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

Ron Battoni, Executive Director, thanks Barry and the Harrah's Philadelphia staff for opening the Riverview Terrace for the great races on Sunday. The top horses in the country will be participating in Sunday's card and they will be great races to see.

Pertaining to horses for race shortages at Poconos-- with night racing, it is sometimes hard to get people to come up from over two hours away, but the PHHA is working on solutions to that, including increased purses.

### **Research**

Dr. 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.

These approaches provide increased flexibility in processing track samples as multiple screening techniques are simultaneously and independently used. Dr. Robinson attended the Association of Racing Commissioners International/Association of Racing Chemists joint conference (April 20 – 24<sup>th</sup>) and provided input as a member of the Laboratory Directors panel and as a member of the newly formed ARCI Scientific Advisory Group, which met for the first time on April 21<sup>st</sup> to discuss cobalt. A summary report on cobalt was prepared and presented to the Drug Testing Standards and Practices

Committee by Dr. Robinson. The ARCI board approved the following recommendations for regulating cobalt in the horse: 1) Horses with plasma concentrations between 25 ppb and 50 ppb should be placed on the vet's list until concentrations fall below 25 ppb. 2) Trainers/Owners with horses found to have plasma concentrations greater than 50 ppb should be issued an ARCI Class B penalty.

Dr. Robinson is currently attending the American Academy of Veterinary Pharmacology and Therapeutics Biennial conference (May 17 – 20<sup>th</sup>).

### **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.

All internal blind samples sent to the screening sections of the laboratory this month have been correctly identified. The first gas proficiency set of the year has already been analyzed.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

A motion was made by Deputy Strathmeyer, seconded by Chairman Newman, and unanimously passed to approve 5. (a). 1; the standardbred full race card simulcast schedules for the month of June 2015 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 5. (a). 2; the thoroughbred full race card simulcast schedules for the month of June 2015 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 5. (b). 1; the standardbred full race card for May 2015 at The Meadows, Pocono Downs and Harrah's Philadelphia.

A motion was made by Deputy Strathmeyer, seconded by Chairman Newman, and unanimously passed to ratify 5. (b). 2; the thoroughbred full race card for May 2015 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 5. (b) 3; Mohegan Sun at Pocono Downs request for itself and its 3 OTW sites to receive and conduct wagering on the 2015 full card simulcast programs from Hazel Park, MI (T).

A motion was made by Deputy Strathmeyer, seconded by Chairman Newman, and unanimously passed to approve 5. (b) 4; the testing of Cobalt starting June 1, 2015. There will be a warning for levels between 25-50 ppb, a class B carrying a \$1,500 fine and 15 day suspension, and on the vets list until below 25 ppb.

A motion was made by Deputy Strathmeyer, seconded by Chairman Newman, and unanimously passed to approve 5. (b) 5; the proposed Hobble/Hopples rule.

A motion was made by Deputy Strathmeyer, seconded by Chairman Newman, and unanimously passed to approve 5. (b) 6; to utilize \$800,000 from the Standardbred Breeders Fund to give additional subsistence to the 2015 Pennsylvania Sired Stake Events consolation races. Each race of the eight race final events will receive an additional \$90,000 in purse money. The eight consolation races purses will be increased by \$80,000. The remainder of these funds (approximately \$800,000) will be held in abeyance to be used in 2016 to create a race for Pennsylvania sired horses to be called the PENNSYLVANIA CLASSIC for 3 year old colt and 3 year old filly pacers. These restricted account monies will be divided by giving approximately \$550,000 to the 3 year old colt race and \$250,000 to the 3 year old mare race. Stakes payments will also be made by owners to stay eligible to these races. The Harness Racing commission will determine at their August or September 2015 monthly meetings which racetrack will be the host for these races. Racetrack operators are requested to be ready to present at the August 2015 monthly commission meeting a presentation on why the inaugural event should be held at their racing facility. It is the anticipation of the commissioners that the monies received will provide some of the best harness racing in North America.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chairman Newman informed the horsemen that the lab has improved the confirmation method of Methylprednisolone.

Chairman Newman announced the next meeting will be held on Friday, June 19, 2015, at Harrah's Philadelphia.

- Executive Session 11:00 A.M
- Regular Session 12:00 P.M.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Newman adjourned the meeting.

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