

**PENNSYLVANIA HARNESS RACING COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF MEETING**

**October 21, 2015**

A meeting of the Pennsylvania State Harness Racing Commission was held at Harrah's Philadelphia, in Chester, PA, Wednesday, October 21, 2015 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 September 3, 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 Meadows is currently on a break right now and will get back to live racing on Friday, October 30<sup>th</sup> with a post time of 12:55 p.m. The stakes season has just ended and Keystone Classic races were very well received. The Fair finals were on Saturday, October 10<sup>th</sup> and those races all went very well. Mr. Decker thanked the MSOA for the great partnership on marketing and putting together a great night of racing for everyone.

**Meadows Standardbred Owners Association**

Kim Hankins, Executive Director, wanted to thank The Meadows and the Racing department for their help in promoting the County Fair Finals and the family fun night that they had. There was a huge crowd and a lot of compliments from the county fair patrons and the regular customers who came out.

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

Barry Brown, Director of Racing Operations, reviewed the previous month's statistics and year to date totals. Mr. Brown welcomed everyone to Harrah's Philadelphia and Chairman Newman thanked him for hosting. Harrah's also racing on Breeders Cup Saturday post time will be 12:40 p.m., live racing will continue until December 13, 2015.

Mr. Brown also noted that under Act 71, Harrah's is obligated to do statutory expenditures and maintenance for the benefit of the racing operation. There have been some preliminary discussions with Commission staff and the PHHA for potential usage of the funds. It is Harrah's intention over the next few months to work with the PHHA to develop and bring to the commission the details of an agreed upon capital investment program for the racing operation.

## **Mohegan Sun at Pocono Downs**

Dale Rapson, Director of Racing, reviewed the previous month's statistics and year to date totals. The race season is winding down at Mohegan Sun at Pocono Downs; the track will be closing next month. The 50<sup>th</sup> year of racing has been a great one here in Poconos. There will be some changes to the 2016 racing calendar next year which will be ready by the next commission meeting.

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

Ron Battoni, Executive Director, noted that The Meadows went to a 45 day rule and he would like the same consideration for the Poconos and Harrah's.

## **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.

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, three manuscripts at various stages of the review process, and two manuscripts have been accepted in 2015.

### **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 installation of six 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 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 November 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 November 2015 at Parx Racing, Penn National, and Presque Isle Downs.

### **ENDEKA PRESENTATION**

Present were: Mr. Joseph Procacci-Procacci Local Gaming  
Mr. Chuck Long-American Harness Track  
Mr. John F. O'Riordan-Esquire-O'Riordan Law Firm  
Mr. James Doherty, III, Esquire-Doherty Hayes, LLC  
Mr. Joseph Canfora-Merit Management  
Mr. Pete Ferro-Merit Managment  
Mr. Tom Chuckas, Jr.-Past President of the Maryland Jockey Club  
Mr. Barry Marshall-Architect-Hnedak Bobo Group

There was a 30 minute presentation to the commission showing what Endeka has planned to do for the new 1 mile harness racing track and casino in Lawrence County.

Chairman Newman introduced into the record the horsemen's dissent a letter dated October 9, 2015. Mr. Battoni, Executive Director of the PHHA spoke briefly about why the horsemen no longer support the project.

Mr. Sean Sullivan, Vice President and General Manager of The Meadows Racetrack and Casino spoke about concerns of over saturation in the industry.

Commissioner Dan Vogler, Chairman, Lawrence County Commissioners, spoke in favor of the racetrack.

The commission broke for an executive session.

The commission then read the ORDER which was approved and is attached to the minutes.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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

- 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