

Michigan Harness Horsemen's Association

April 15th, 2021 4 pm – Zoom Meeting

Meeting Minutes

1. Meeting called to order - President Tom Barrett
 - a. Moment of Silence – Robert Dyksterhouse Jr., Matt Nichols, Barb Keesler, Dave Beals
2. Motion to Excuse Absent Members - None
3. Approval of Agenda (Unanimous)
4. Approval of Past Minutes (Davidson, Terrell, Unanimous)
5. President's Report – Tom Barrett updated the board and referenced the high numbers of covid-19 cases in Michigan. We continue to remain optimistic that we will not shut down again, but are preparing for any and all situations. He noted that the Spring live race meet has started and that both Northville Downs and members appeared to be happy to be back to live racing. He also reminded folks that the Vest program is available to members and that Michigan now requires individuals on track at Northville Downs to be wearing safety vests.
6. Treasurer's Report – Crystal Terrell – Crystal gave an updated and reference that we currently have about 580k in Northville Purse Account with roughly 930k total in purse accounts to get through the rest of the Spring Meet. We are expecting a small purse bump, but trying to make sure any bump in purses can be sustained as we navigate our first year of additional ADW revenue. Additionally, Northville Downs has seen a slight uptick in simulcast revenue over the past month. We are hoping that as covid-19 restrictions continue to ease, we will see better attendance and simulcast numbers.
7. MHA Member Comments: Marilyn asked why the two weeks that were canceled in March were added to Sept (fall meet) instead of the end of the spring meeting (July). Thomas Barrett noted that adding the dates in Sept would allow maximum flexibility in using state supplement money before the end of the state's calendar year.
8. Old Business:
 - a. Summer Program Update - MWSG gave an update as the fairs submitted their applications for summer racing to the MI Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. The Summer fair book will be posted shortly, but as always we are likely to have some changes with dates or post times.
 - b. Vest Program Update – MWSG gave an update on the vets program which members have been taking advantage of. The program runs through June 1st and pays for 50% of the cost of a safety vest to any member in good standing up to a total vest cost of \$300.00.
9. New Business:

- a. Fred Davis – Seeking Lifetime Membership – A motion was made and passed to grant lifetime member status. (Sweeny, Pluta, Unanimous)
- b. Trot & Packing Marketing/Country Fair Racing Video Coverage – Crystal Terrell presented an opportunity to have the summer fair program recorded. The cost to do all of the summer fair programs it would cost 350/card to record and post replays. If the MHHA would like to live streaming and broadcasting would cost 600/card. The board voted to pay for the replay program at 350/card for this summer and to re-evaluate after the season. (Pluta, Sweeny, Unanimous)
- c. ADW Allocation Review – Crystal Terrell gave a presentation on projected ADW revenue and the breakdown of where those dollars would be allocated. The 2021 ADW revenue breakdown would send 70% to Pari-mutuel purses, 25% to the Summer Fair Programs, and 5% for administrative costs. (Crystal, Greg, Unanimous)
- d. Fair Track Improvement/Costs – Crystal Terrell proposed budgeting money to help improve the fair tracks at an estimated cost of roughly \$1000.00/Day to Improve and Widen the tracks. Todd Hacker has agreed to do the work as needed. Tim Roach Donated a Screen. The board voted unanimously to move forward on offering the improvement service to the fairs.
- e. Horse Racing Advisory Commission Update – MWSG gave an update on the new commission likely to be appointed. We are expecting a good group of members who are strong supporters of growing horse racing to be appointed including Tom Barrett on-behalf of the MHHA and Mike Carlo on behalf of Northville Downs.
- f. Thank You Gift Cards for Judges/Clerks – Thomas Barrett suggested that we provide gift cards and thank you notes for the judges and clerks of the county fair programs. The board voted unanimously to send a small thank you to those individuals. (Motion, Kelly, Claudia, Unanimous)
- g. Fair Blanket Lettering Agreement – There was a discussion about the fair blankets and an agreement to get the lettering screen printed on to each of those blankets.
- h. Gate Training – The board agreed to sponsor gate training opportunities for horsemen at fairs ahead of the summer program including Sunday June 20th at Fowlerville and Centerville Gate Training on May 30th (\$1000.00 per Fair – 2000 total. (Pluta, Kelly, unanimous).
- i. Scholarship Committee and Applications – The board set up the committee to review the scholarship applications as Claudia Davidson, Jerry Earls and Rachel Schroder.
- k. Howell Elks Club – May 23rd for Fowlerville Horsemen Annual Event – Claudia Davidson noted the date for the Fowlerville Horsemen’s annual event.

10. Legislative Policy/Report – Midwest Strategy Group gave an update about our legislative efforts in Lansing to gain approval on new tools like historical horse racing terminals or video lottery terminals.
11. Board of Director Comments: Terrell noted that NDs has reintroduced the big horse handicapper and it was available on their website.
12. EXECUTIVE SESSION – Association Management (Sweeny, Goodwin, Unanimous)
13. Next Board Meeting: May 20th (pending); 4pm
14. Meeting Adjourned 5:25 PM