

Michigan Harness Horsemen's Association

May 24th, 2022 4pm – MHHA Office

MEETING MINUTES

1. Meetings Call to Order
2. Moment of Silence – Monte Grimes
3. Motion to Excuse Absent Members – All members present
4. Guests: Carrie Marotta, John Goodyear, Marilyn Bertera
5. Approval of Consent Agenda
 - a. Approval of April Agenda (Davidson/Taylor/Unanimous)
 - b. Approval of March Minutes (Davidson/Marotta/Unanimous)
 - c. Approval of March Financial Statements (Marotta/Taylor/Unanimous)
6. Reports:
 - a. President – President Barrett gave an update on the mini-series conditions which were met with some criticism by the membership and edited in an effort to allow as many members to qualify for a condition as possible. He indicated that he would be in the race office on Monday to oversee the draw in the hopes that it would be as smooth as possible.
 - b. Treasurer – Treasurer Terrell went over the year to date numbers and indicated approx. 20M had been wagered in simulcast wagers and roughly 457k had been wagered in live handle.
 - c. Legislative – MWSG gave a legislative update on the Senate gaming package and the House bills lifting the internet gaming caps and sports betting caps on tax revenue to the AEIDF. Prior to the meeting Brett Boyd and MWSG met with Sen. Lauwer's chief of staff to walk through the substitute senate bill. It was indicated by Sen. Lauwers office that the goal would be to move all of the bills collectively and that Sen. Lauwers was working through the Speaker and his office to reach a final agreement to move the bills.
 - d. Scholarship - Board member Davidson gave an update on the scholarship applications and how they scored. The board approved (Davidson/Pluta/Unanimous) that Thacker be awarded \$3750.00 and Sarro be awarded \$1250.00.
 - e. Pari-Mutuel Track – Last weekend NDs hosted 25 races and 3 qualifiers. The good news is that we are able to field several races, but it necessitates a request to move qualifiers to mid-week. There was also a discussion about racing on triple crown Saturdays instead of shifting to Thursday Friday due to the impact on live handle.
 - f. Colt Stakes – A brief update was given about the colt stakes program. The next deadline is June 30th for Foals of 21 for the Sire Stakes. The board reapproved the move to online only entry for the summer colt stakes program (Terrell/Boyd/Unanimous).

- g. Horse Racing Advisory – President Barrett gave an update on the HRAC meeting which took place right before this meeting. The HRAC is creating a workgroup led by Dr. Frank on potential easier ways to use license track line funding to pay premiums to MOB horses with maximum flexibility from the state. Additionally, the HRAC is looking to host a horse ownership seminar at Northville Downs in Sept.

7. Old Business:

- a. Click Members – Membership Database Management Update – MWSG gave an update and presentation on the new database management software which will go live in June.
- b. Mini Series Discussion – The board discussed the latest mini-series conditions and pros and cons of the final conditions.
- c. 2022 Scholarship Awards – This was handled during the standing report.
- d. Fair Blankets – Board member Marotta led a discussion about the fair blankets and what ability we had to provide different screening options based on our current vendors as we approach fair season.

8. New Business:

- a. Board Stipends – the board approved (West/Taylor/Unanimous) stipends of 500.00 for each board member. This stipend level is the same as last year's level.
- b. MHC Representative – Claudia Davidson was named the MHHA representative to the MHC. The MHHA is an organizational member of the MHC and has a vote with in that organization.
- c. Draft Fair Book – MWSG presented a draft Fairbook to the board for review with the hopes of publishing it shortly.
- d. MDARD Grant – Claudia Davidson informed the board that Fowlerville was successful in receiving a MDARD grant for the Fowlerville Fair. This will allow the fair to repay the MHHA loan that was made for the roof on the barn. The MHHA indicated they were willing to work with the fair on a repayment timeline.
- e. MHHA Swag – the board had a brief discussion about the potential to purchase MHHA handouts/giveaways for certain days/fairs/events. The board made no decision to move forward, but may discuss this in the future.

9. MHHA Member Comments

- a. Marilyn Bertera indicated she wanted the MHHA and MGCB to put pressure on NDs to improve their facilities and attention to detail. She indicated that she believed NDs doesn't have to improve their processes or facilities because they are never penalized.
- b. John Goodyear had questions about qualifiers and the mini series and the ability to qualify ahead of week 2 to be eligible for the series.

10. Board of Director Comments

- a. Brett Boyd expressed his displeasure with the AEIDF plan that was passed at the April meeting and his desire to maximize funding for Standardbred programing by advocating that the Legislature remove thoroughbred funding from the budget and reallocating that funding to Standardbreds. The Board discussed the potential political implications on the pending legislation if that were the approach the board choose. The board ultimately voted to support the reallocation of the 3.2M 1 time funding to just Standardbred lines as the Thoroughbreds are not active this year, but to continue to support the 8M allocation to both breeds for next year's budget in the hopes that legislation passes this term. The motion stipulated that MWSG and the MHHA treasurer would work with MDARD and Rep. Alexander on trying to reach a deal on this approach. (Boyd/Pluta/Unanimous).
- b. Brett Boyd also made a motion that the MHHA's official position on pending legislation be to equally support HB 4823/HB4824 (lift the gaming tax cap) and SB 396 or HB4399 if the Senate language was subbed in to that legislation (HHR) equally. (Boyd/Pluta/Unaimous)

11. Next Meeting – Northville Downs June 16th, 2022 @ 4pm

DRAFT