

Michigan Harness Horsemen's Association

March 18th, 2021 4 pm – Zoom Meeting

Meeting Minutes

1. Meeting called to order - President Tom Barrett
2. Motion to Excuse Absent Members (Unanimous)
3. Approval of Agenda (Unanimous)
4. Approval of Past Minutes (Unanimous)
5. Special Guest – Bill Frank, MGCB – Spoke to the board about the use/requirement of safety vests and asked/encouraged the MHHA board to help offset costs and inform members of the new requirement. The board agreed that the vest requirement will protect members and increase safety, but also asked regulators to use discretion in their enforcement early in the season as horsemen get used to the new rule.
6. President's Report – Tom Barrett – Gave a Presidents Report and updated the board on the latest conversations with Northville Downs ahead of the live meet. The start of the meet is being delayed 2 weeks as we navigate capacity restrictions at Northville, but we will race Friday and Saturday nights with a 7:30 post time.
7. Treasurer's Report – Crystal Terrell – Gave a Treasurers report and updated the board on the latest financials (included in the board packet). The MHHA is in a good financial position as we have navigated the 2020 shut downs, and ADW revenue has begun to flow. Northville on track handle is down slightly from 2019 levels, but rebounding nicely. We are hopeful that once all covid-19 capacity restrictions are removed that the on track handle will continue to improve.
8. MHHA Member Comments:
9. Old Business:
 - a. Colt Stakes Nominations (159) – MWSG gave an updated on the total nominated colt stakes horses. The sustaining payments are due in April.
 - b. ADW Update – XpressBet will be approved by the MGCB in the next few weeks. They will mark the 3rd licensed third party facilitator (ADW provider) in Michigan. We expect NYRA to be licensed later this spring too.
 - c. Awards Banquet Discussion – Updated DHHS Orders have the MHHA board continuing to try to navigate when and how best to host an annual awards banquet to celebrate the accomplishments of our members. The board is targeting late Spring for some type of event, but trying to ensure that there is no need to cancel due to state capacity limits.

10. New Business:
 - a. Bob Tait – Seeking Lifetime Membership – Approved (Unanimous)
 - b. Return to Live Racing (April 2) – Live racing will start on April 2nd after a two week delay in the spring meet due to covid-19 capacity restrictions. We will race Friday and Saturday with a 7:30 post time.
 - c. Race Office/Condition Sheet – Thomas Barrett said he intends to receive a copy of a draft condition sheet from Northville and will try to get feedback from members on how to potentially improve those conditions.
 - d. Breeders (130+)/Great Lakes (30+)/Sire Stakes Update (30+) – This week was the deadline for several program nomination/sustaining payments. We don't have a final tally for each program as some forms may still be in the mail, but it appears that each program will have more horses nominated this year than nominated last year.
 - e. Fair Calendar – April 16th marks the deadline for fairs to submit their applications with final race dates and post times to the state of Michigan. We anticipate posting a Draft fair book by April 19th.
 - f. Blankets for Winners – Teresa Marotta updated the board on the latest conversations for ordering blankets for the summer fair programs (Colt, Breeders, Great Lakes, and Sire Stakes)
11. Legislative Policy/Report – Midwest Strategy Group provided a brief update on the latest related to legislation in Lansing. Our hope is to introduced legislation again this spring that would allow for new gaming tools to be used at racetracks that would generate money both for licensed race tracks and CHOs.
12. Board of Director Comments: None
13. EXECUTIVE SESSION – Awards Committee Recommendations/Approval
14. Next Board Meeting: April 15th (pending); 4pm
15. Meeting Adjourned