

Michigan Harness Horsemen's Association

February 25th, 2022 4pm – Northville Downs

MEETING MINUTES

1. Meeting called to order – 4:05 PM
 - a. Moment of Silence for Larry Smith, Amelia Williams, Eliison Roach
2. Motion to Excuse Absent Members – No Absent Members. Commissioner West, Marotta, and Earls participated remotely.
3. Approval of Agenda – Brett Boyd added a conversation about casino tax to the agenda. Approved Unanimously.
4. Approval of Past Minutes – Approved Unanimously
5. Nominations and Elections
 - The Board Entered Executive Session for the Purpose of Board Elections (Unanimous). The Board Elected President – Tom Barrett, Vice President – Chucky Taylor, Treasurer – Crystal Terrell, and Secretary Teresa Marotta.
5. President's Report – President Tom Barrett gave a President's Update highlighting the upcoming qualifiers at Northville Down and our desire/need to fill the box when live racing return especially with the longer winter impacting farm tracks. He also highlighted that the MHHA reached out to the OHHA's Renee Manceno for guidance on policy edits to the Senate Gaming Package. The goal of utilizing her expertise was based on her work in Ohio where the OHHA negotiates annually with large gaming company's.
6. Treasurer's Report – Crystal Terrell gave a brief treasurers report highlighting the year end financials and the numbers in the board packet. She indicated that the MHHA had recently sent 1M in purse money to Northville Downs to start the Spring meet and had roughly 1.6M in our purse account.
7. MHHA Member Comments: Marilyn Bertera had concerns about... The road leading up to the Barn area at Northville Downs which has been washed out, questions related to the mini-series conditions that were released, and concerns about the horse supply and the ability to fill some of those conditions. She also had questions about the purse level for NDs races and the live racing requirement in the current Horse Racing Law.
8. Old Business:
 - Summer Program Update – Midwest Strategy Group gave a brief update on the summer program and horses nominated to both the Sired-Only and Mixed-Company Colt Stakes programs. March 15th is the deadline for the next set of summer program payments.
9. New Business:
 - MI Horse Council Expo – Crystal Terrell indicated that the MHHA had a booth/stall at the MI

horse Council Expo the first weekend in March.

MI Horse Council Legislative Day Sponsorship – The MHHA board of directors agreed to sponsor the legislative day for \$1000.00 (Motion: Boyd, 2nd: Pluta, Unanimous)

Consideration of Lifetime Membership for Sue Smith – The board approved lifetime membership status for Sue Smith (Motion: Davidson, 2nd: Pluta, Unanimous)

Scholarship Donations in Memory of Larry Smith – As of the meeting \$745.00 had been donated to the MHHA Scholarship as of this meeting. Additionally, the board approved a MHHA scholarship total funding level of \$5,000.00 for the 2022 MHHA Scholarship (Boyd/Terrell/Unanimous)

Hardship Letter – Emmitt Allen – The Board approved the sending of one, \$100.00 tractor supply gift card to Emmitt Allen (lifetime member) who reached out with a letter of hardship and who missed the Covid hardship program previously. (Pluta/Boyd/Unanimous)

Colt Stakes Blankets – The board discussed the use of Trot and Pace marketing again this summer for race replays and approved moving forward with planning for race recording this summer with a goal of potentially doing live race streaming in 2023. (Terrell/Taylor/Unanimous)

Banquet Recap – Claudia Davidson gave a banquet recap highlighting the annual meeting at crystal gardens in Howell. The board agreed to move forward on scheduling the 2023 annual meeting at crystal gardens for some time in January with a preference of being on a Saturday.

Mailing List Policy – The board affirmed their commitment to the current mailing list policy which prohibits the MHHA from sharing member mailing lists with individuals or members looking to market services.

10. Legislative Policy/Report – Midwest Strategy Group gave the legislative update highlighting our legislative champions and the movement on the Senate Gaming package which allows for historical horse racing terminals (HHR) at licensed race tracks. This legislation would lead to the creation of new tracks and Churchill Downs has already committed to building in Michigan if the legislation passes. The MHHA and our partners continue to work with lawmakers and the Governor's office on trying to get this done despite casino opposition. The goal is to try to get something done this spring ahead of the election year. The legislation is currently stuck in the House Regulatory Reform Committee and the MHHA is leaning on the Speaker of the House to encourage movement on the legislation as well as working with lawmakers on a potential substitute to the bill that could earn support from the Speaker and a vote in Committee.
11. Board of Director Comments: Claudia Davidson thanked the board for their support of the red barn project and noted that Fowlerville did apply for a grant to cover the cost associated with that rebuild. Additionally, Fowlerville is looking at a potential yearling sale.
12. Next Board Meeting: 4pm Thursday, March 17th, 2022 @ Northville Downs
13. Meeting Adjourned: 7:10 PM

DRAFT