**Michigan Harness Horsemen’s Association**

**October 6th, 2022 4pm – Northville Public Library  
MEETING MINUTES**

1. Meetings Call to Order 4:20 pm

1. Moment of Silence - Leon Cable, Cheryl Cottongim, Tom Wantz, George Lamb

1. Motion to Excuse Absent Members – all members present

1. Guests:  Carrie Marotta, Rob Marotta, Marilyn Bertera, Todd Hacker

Motion by Terrell, supported by West to move into Executive Session 4:30 pm

Returned to regular session: 5:30 pm

1. Approval of Consent Agenda
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   2. Approval of Minutes
   3. Approval of Financial Statements

1. Standing Reports:
   1. President  - Barrett provided an update on Northville Downs 2023 race date application. Northville applied for 50 days of racing April through September. Several discussions took place with Northville Downs regarding the schedule and concern over racing in July and August at their facility.
   2. Treasurer – Terrell provided updates on financials and 9/30/22 financials are in review with the CPA. Boyd questioned CHO commission fluctuations over the summer months. Terrell confirmed the overall commission levels are consistent with prior year. Roughly $40 million has been wagered in simulcast revenue at Northville Downs, ADW revenue is down 10% from prior year and live handle is averaging $32,000/night
   3. Legislative – MWSG provided a presentation on the status of legislation on the Senate gaming package and the House bills lifting the internet gaming caps and sports betting caps on tax revenue to the AEIDF. It is expected these bills will receive movement after the Nov 8th election during lame duck.
   4. Scholarship
   5. Pari-Mutuel Track
   6. Colt Stakes – Terrell provided a breakdown of revenue and costs from the 2022 summer programs; colt stakes and overnights.
   7. Horse Racing Advisory Commission – next meeting is in late October

1. Old Business:
   1. AEIDF Funding Budget Follow Up – Terrell provided an update on the FY22-23 AEIDF budget. Due to conflicts that occurred in May and June regarding the proposed funding levels by members of the House, the MHHA’s proposal to move the AEIDF spending level to $8 million did not get approved. The current FY22-23 budget is for $5.6 million of which roughly $2.4 is for regulatory costs. MWSG and Terrell met with several members of the budgeting members to discuss a supplemental budget bill in November to move the fund up to $8 million. MDARD has already provided their support for this request. We will continue to work to resolve this issue to avoid impacts to 2023 programming.

1. New Business:
   1. Scholarship Question – MWSG – Terrell to research further and bring back to the board at next meeting
   2. Board Member Elections Update – MWSG – 3 board member terms are up for election: Tom Barrett, Chuck Taylor and Kim Pluta. Members wishing to join the board need to complete the election petition and return to MWSG by November 1st with 15 valid active membership signatures. Once petitions have been received if an election is required MHHA will engage Maner Casterian to complete the election process.
   3. ADW Revenues – MWSG – revenues are down 11% year over year.
   4. Colt Stakes Blankets for 2023 – Marotta – tabled to October 26th
   5. FY22-23 MHHA Budget – Terrell – tabled to October 26th
   6. Discussion of SB1131 – Boyd discussed his concerns over the bill being introduced as it would allow for ADW to continue if there was not an license racetrack operating in the state. This would allow for horsemen to continue to receive a share of ADW revenues. This bill has not received any movement in the Senate and was not discussed with the MHHA prior to introduction.
   7. Discussion on upcoming MHHA ELECTION and Seats up for election – Boyd – addressed above
   8. Discussion of Northville Downs 2023 Date application – Boyd – see President’s update
   9. Review of 2022 Fair Program/Recommendations for 2023 –Boyd and Pluta recommended the MI sired horses race for a premium compared to MI Bred horses for the 2023 year. There was concern expressed that due to the increase in number of MI sired horses that there will be more divisional splits and it should be explored if funding would allow a division to race for the same advertised purse in the event of the split. Terrell comment that revenue numbers were not sufficient to allow of such a program criteria.
   10. Discussion of Colt Stake/Fairs/Stakes payment schedule for 2023 – Boyd and Pluta suggested a one time payment be made in March to make all horses eligible to programming as a result of several members missing sustaining payments for the 2022 program. The board will continue to look for way to ease the nominating and sustaining process.

1. MHHA Member Comments – Todd Hacker discussed the summer fair track maintenance program and review of the summer track conditions. Charlotte, Hasting and Allegan continue to be concerns regarding track safety. Carrie Marotta provided an update the breeding season and indicated there are several stallion owners interested in Michigan but they want assurance the programming will remain consistent before fully committing. Rob Marotta suggested the MHHA assist the fairs with grant money every year to help improve their track conditions.

1. Board of Director Comments – Boyd expressed concerns of the SB gaming package moving forward based discussion with his contacts. He presented to the board the need for the house bills to be moved and to keep supporting the SB gaming package. Discussion took place amongst the board on alternatives that may need to take place post-election regarding all bills. Barrett requested Boyd provide comments on the SB gaming package and alternatives that Barrett could discuss further with Northville Downs to keep the industry together on legislative objectives.

Meeting adjourned 8pm