

**Virginia Racing Commission**

**MINUTES**

**OF THE**

**WORKING SESSION**

**Thursday, May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

**Patrick Henry Building  
East Reading Room  
1111 East Broad Street  
Richmond, VA 23219**

In Attendance

Commission Members:

J. Sargeant Reynolds, Jr., Chairman  
D.G. Van Clief, Jr., Vice Chairman  
Carol G. Dawson  
I. Clinton Miller  
Charles Steger, PhD

Commission Staff:

Bernard J. Hettel, Executive Secretary  
Rich Harden, Equine Medical Director  
David S. Lermond, Deputy Executive Secretary/Fiscal Officer  
Kimberly C. Mackey, Office Administrator  
Courtney C. Reid, Program Support Technician

Office of Agriculture and Forestry

Sam Towell, Deputy Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry

Attorney General's Office:

Joshua Laws, Esq.

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The meeting was called to order by Chairman Reynolds at 9:59 AM; all Commission members were present. Chairman Reynolds explained to the group the necessity of this working session to be prepared for the July 1<sup>st</sup> VRC meeting.

The first item for discussion on the agenda was the designation of a majority Horsemen group for both Standardbred and Thoroughbred groups. Several people added input into what they believe the definition of a horseman should entail. Vice Chairman Van Clief suggested a horsemen be a current license holder and also have had started a horse or maintained 1 or more horses in training in Virginia within the last thirty six months and going forward it would be 12 months.

Josh Laws, Assistant Attorney General, reminded the group that as of July 1<sup>st</sup>, in the Code of Virginia §59.1-365, the 'recognized majority horsemen group', is "the organization recognized by the Commission as the representative of the majority of owners and trainers racing at race meetings subject to the Commission's jurisdiction."

Mr. Laws informed the group of a required APA hearing must be held for recognizing both the Horsemens groups. After discussion, it was decided that this could be done before the meeting on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Commissioner Miller suggested the criteria needed for recognition should be put in the notice for the meeting and a deadline for submission should be made in order for review.

At 11:27 Chairman Reynolds suggested a quick break; the group reconvened at 11:47.

The next agenda item discussed included criteria for recognizing an industry nonprofit stakeholder. Jeb Hannum, Executive Director of the Virginia Equine Alliance (VEA), echoed the importance of recognizing this group on July 1<sup>st</sup> due to the necessity to distribute the source market fee paid by ADW companies. Mr. Laws added that an APA hearing is required for recognition of the industry nonprofit stakeholder and the VEA will need to provide supplemental documentation prior to the hearing, in addition to being able to show intentions to promote, sustain and advance horse racing in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The next agenda item was a review of standing and potential VRC committees, which include a facilities committee, legislative review committee, and stakeholder committee. Chairman Reynolds suggested he and Vice Chairman Van Clief review the participation in the current committees at a separate time and then make changes.

Administrative regulations needing to be amended will be submitted to Josh Laws for review and will be an agenda item at a future VRC meeting for approval.

Discussion of an economic study occurred, it was suggested that this topic return to discussion in the Fall when more funding is available.

Lastly, during the public comment period, Nick Hahn advised the group of the importance of jobs the horse industry and the economic impact it has in the Commonwealth. Also, Tad Burman suggested if the OTBs open in the future, they need to make more incentives for bettors to come to the OTBs and participate.

The working session was adjourned at 1:05 p.m.