

Virginia Racing Commission

MINUTES

OF THE

COMMISSION MEETING

Tuesday, May 12th, 2015

**Patrick Henry Building
West 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
Cassidy Rasnick, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry

Attorney General's Office:

Joshua Laws, Esq.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Reynolds at 10:00 AM; all Commission members were present.

Chairman Reynolds read a statement regarding the failure of source market fee payment from Colonial Downs and EZHorseplay to the Majority Horsemen's group, Virginia Horsemen's Benevolence and Protective Association (VAHBPA). In the statement, he relayed the disappointment in the circumstances and the opinion of the Commission holds that the money owed should be paid to the horsemen.

The minutes from the April 8th, 2015 meeting were approved unanimously.

Next, the Commission reviewed the 2015 Standardbred Breeders Fund budget, which consists of administrative costs and is identical to years past. The 2015 Standardbred Breeders Fund budget was approved unanimously.

Chairman Reynolds requested to have a working session with the Commission and stakeholders, in order to discuss in more detail, the designation of the majority Horsemen's group, determine the criteria for the non-profit industry stakeholder, and the VRC Committee structure. Suggested new committees will include a legislative review committee, a stakeholder committee, and a facilities committee. Chairman Reynolds requested other Commissioners and Stakeholders suggest any additional agenda items for the working session.

Next, Chairman Reynolds asked the Stakeholders to give comments.

Frank Petramalo, Executive Director of the VHBPA, suggested the Commission explore hiring an economist to review the economic impact of the racing industry in the Commonwealth.

Charlie Dunavant, President of the VHHA, reported there will be two weekends of racing at Oak Ridge on Saturday October 10th and 17th 2015.

Debbie Easter, Executive Director of the VTA, informed the Commission of the hard work the alliance has been doing. Also, she praised the success of the Virginia Gold Cup on May 2nd and is looking forward to racing at other location in the state.

Dr. Will Allison, President of the Virginia Gold Cup Association, reviewed the Gold Cup races held on Saturday, May 2nd. He reported crowds of over 75,000 spectators and praised the success of both the Flat and Steeplechase races.

Tom Eshelman, Shenandoah County Fairgrounds, invited the Commission to the Wine and Trotter festival on June 6th 2015 in Woodstock, VA. The fairgrounds are interested in more harness racing at the venue and potential pari-mutual events.

Scott Woogen informed the Commission his group approves of the planned racing at Woodstock and Oakridge. If recognized as the majority group, his organization envisions 7 weekends of harness racing.

Leann Hester conveyed her disappointment of not having any racing for two years and hopes for the Commission expand dates.

The first working session will be held on Thursday May, 28th at 10:00 AM and the second working session will be on Tuesday, June 9th at 10:00 AM.

The next Commission meeting was set for Wednesday, July 1st, 2015 at 10:00 AM.

Lastly, each Commissioner provided comments on the topics discussed in the meeting.

With no further business set forth on the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 10:42 AM.