

1 **Virginia Racing Commission**

2

3 **COLONIAL DOWNS**

4 **Ballroom, 4th Floor**

5 **10515 COLONIAL DOWNS PARKWAY**

6 **NEW KENT, VA 23124**

7

8 **June 6, 2023 at 11:00 a.m.**

9

10

11

12 **Commission Members:**

13 Stephanie B. Nixon, Chair
14 Marsha K. Hudgins, Vice Chair
15 Stuart Siegel
 John F. Tanner, Jr.
 Bette Brand

16 **Commission Staff:**

17 David S. Lermond, Jr., Executive Secretary
18 Kimberly C. Mackey, Director of Operations
19 Ada K. Caruthers, DVM, Equine Medical Director
 Rhonda Davis, Director of Pari-Mutuels and
 Licensing
 Yolanda Lopez Macias, Commission Veterinarian
20 Rebecca Gibbs, Pari-Mutuel Wagering and Licensing
 Coordinator
21 Thomas Cade, Licensing and Pari-Mutuel Wagering
 Assistant
22 Mary Gay, Licensing and Pari-Mutuel Wagering
 Assistant

23

24 **Attorney General's Office:**

25 Elizabeth B. Myers, Esquire

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1 CHAIR NIXON: Good morning. If everybody
2 could take a seat, I'd like to get started. I'd
3 like to go ahead and call the meeting to order.
4 First is the approval of the March 7, 2023 meeting
5 minutes. Did everyone have a chance to review
6 them?

7 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: I move approval.

8 CHAIR NIXON: Commissioner Siegel moves.
9 Second?

10 COMMISSIONER TANNER: Second.

11 CHAIR NIXON: Commissioner Tanner seconds.
12 All those in favor?

13 NOTE: Commission votes aye.

14 CHAIR NIXON: All those opposed?

15 NOTE: There was no response.

16 CHAIR NIXON: Thank you. Next up is the
17 public comment period. Is there anyone in the
18 public that would like to get up and speak? There
19 are two microphones; one here and one over here.
20 If you would come up to the microphone so we can
21 hear you. No one? Okay.

22 All right. Moving on to our new business is
23 the request for the approval of license for a
24 satellite wagering facility and to conduct
25 pari-mutuel wagering on historical horse racing at

1 Rosie's Emporia for 2023, submitted by Colonial
2 Downs Group, LLC, and I believe Mr. Jack Sours is
3 going to present this item for us.

4 MR. SOURS: Hello. Good morning.

5 CHAIR NIXON: Good morning.

6 MR. SOURS: Thank you, Commissioner. I
7 appreciate the opportunity to talk about the
8 Rosie's Emporia, so that's our newest property that
9 we're rolling out here, the franchise. So that
10 will be our seventh facility in the state. It will
11 be 150 historical horse racing machines.

12 It will have, obviously, a live OTB and an
13 R' Burger diner and it will have an entertainment
14 stage around the bar.

15 So it is our first green field, so that's
16 exciting. It's the first one we've done in an open
17 lot from the ground up, so that's a very exciting
18 development for us.

19 It is scheduled to open in September, so
20 September we'll be opening. We are hiring the
21 management staff now.

22 In fact, Jeremy Calahan, back there in the
23 back row, is our general manager for the facility,
24 so we have him hired. We've hired a couple key
25 managers already and will start hiring in earnest

1 in August for the September opening. We'll start
2 advertising positions in July.

3 The facility itself is, the structure is up,
4 putting in drywall, putting in mechanical and
5 electrical equipment now, so it's coming along
6 nicely. It's on schedule and very exciting to see
7 it opening.

8 It's going to be a great facility for us.
9 It'll be right off the interstate, very visible, so
10 it will catch a lot of traffic coming and going to
11 North Carolina. So a really good, strong location
12 for us, so we're very excited to get it going.
13 Happy to answer any questions.

14 CHAIR NIXON: Thank you. Commissioners, do
15 you have any questions for Mr. Sours?

16 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: How many HHR machines
17 are there? You might have said. I'm sorry.

18 MR. SOURS: Sure. It's 150.

19 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: Thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER BRAND: I have a question. Could
21 you tell me are you all conducting any kind of
22 surveys or anything around for other localities or
23 locations? I guess I'm not calling it correctly,
24 but finding out what the location, the next
25 location would be? I don't need specifics, but I'm

1 just wondering have you already been conducting
2 surveys in those communities?

3 MR. SOURS: Yes. Absolutely. We've been
4 looking at several communities within the
5 Commonwealth and we do have a couple that we're
6 focused in on. I probably shouldn't talk about it
7 publicly because it hasn't been announced yet.

8 COMMISSIONER BRAND: I understand.

9 MR. SOURS: We are very, very close to -- we
10 have been doing surveys, to answer your question.
11 we have been doing surveys throughout the
12 Commonwealth.

13 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: What's the update on
14 Dumfries?

15 MR. SOURS: Good question. Dumfries is
16 looking like probably spring of '24. There's been
17 some significant construction challenges up there
18 associated with landfills, so it's looking like the
19 spring of '24.

20 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER BRAND: Back to my original
22 question, too. Are you getting input from maybe
23 horsemen in the community when you conduct these
24 surveys or anyone that has a good sense of what
25 those communities, what's important to them so that

1 the questions are arranged or written in a way that
2 would be helpful for those communities?

3 MR. SOURS: Yes. The survey process is very
4 scientific, as you can imagine.

5 COMMISSIONER BRAND: Right.

6 MR. SOURS: So we do have boots on the ground.
7 We have a team that goes in and talks to the
8 community to understand what's important to the
9 community. There's a lot of communication, a lot
10 of dialogue with the community when we go in.

11 Certainly talking to the elected officials,
12 the businesses in the community. So trying to get
13 by on the front end. It's very, very important
14 that the community supports the project.

15 COMMISSIONER BRAND: Thank you.

16 CHAIR NIXON: Any other questions,
17 Commissioners? Thank you very much. I appreciate
18 it.

19 MR. SOURS: You're welcome. Thank you.

20 CHAIR NIXON: I want to turn it over to Dave
21 Lermond. I believe you're going to present this
22 for approval.

23 MR. LERMOND: Thank you, Madam Chair. The
24 staff report is behind Tab Two of your notebooks.
25 On May 27th, the following license application for

1 a satellite wagering facility to conduct
2 pari-mutuel wagering on historical horse racing at
3 Rosie's Emporia was submitted by Colonial Downs
4 Group, LLC.

5 Pursuant to §59.1-364, the residents of the
6 City of Emporia gave their approval by referendum
7 for pari-mutuel wagering to be conducted in their
8 locality on November 2nd, 2021.

9 The application submitted by Colonial Downs
10 Group is thorough, well organized and contains all
11 of the required information in accordance with
12 Chapters 40 and 47 of the Virginia Racing
13 Commission's regulations.

14 The facility will have a total capacity of 937
15 and measure 16,925 in total square feet. As we've
16 already said, the Rosie's will offer 150 historical
17 horse racing terminals throughout the facility.

18 In addition, there will also be a separate
19 simulcast area with two teller stations along with
20 six self-service betting terminals.

21 The regulations for a satellite wagering
22 facility require description of the facility to
23 include mutuel teller stations, self-service
24 wagering terminals and cash security areas and
25 ATMs.

1 The CDG has not yet decided on the exact
2 location of the self-service terminals, but other
3 than that, everything is clear on the diagram that
4 was included in the application and they're going
5 to let us know as soon as possible once they decide
6 where they're going to put those six self-serve
7 terminals, but according to the diagram there's
8 plenty of room. They have to decide which wall
9 they're going to go on, I guess.

10 In addition to that, we always require a
11 diagram showing locations of the surveillance
12 cameras. That's not something that has to be done,
13 but we always do it and according to the diagram we
14 received, there will be 150 cameras on the inside
15 with ten cameras on the outside of the building to
16 give good coverage of the parking lot and
17 everything outside.

18 This diagram was reviewed by Mr. Rudisill and
19 we will verify the locations as the construction
20 progresses. We can't tell now, but it's one of the
21 things we'll do as construction goes on.

22 Based on the projection in the application for
23 contributions to the Breeders' Fund, the facility
24 is projecting a yearly simulcast handle of
25 approximately six million and the yearly projection

1 for HHR handle is approximately 373 million.
2 That's based on the amount of state tax that would
3 be received. The safety and security plan is
4 included in the application and has been reviewed
5 by Mr. Rudisill.

6 Item Number 44 of the plan reflects that 29
7 standard operating procedures and internal controls
8 have been submitted to the VR Commission staff
9 previously in conjunction with other applications.

10 Should there be any deviations from the
11 standard operating procedures and internal controls
12 specific to the Emporia location, they will be
13 submitted no later than 30 days prior to opening so
14 they can be reviewed as well.

15 One of the nice things is that the standard
16 operating procedures and internal controls are
17 pretty much all the same at every Rosie's facility,
18 which is good for consistency.

19 Throughout the construction process,
20 Mr. Rudisill, Rhonda Davis and I will periodically
21 go in and check on the progress and see how things
22 are going.

23 Then finally, we will do one final inspection
24 before the opening just to make sure everything is
25 the way it should be and they have complied with

1 everything in the application.

2 Based on the contents of the application and
3 operations of existing Rosie's locations, staff
4 would recommend approval of this application with
5 two conditions.

6 Before I seek the motion, I just wanted to see
7 if any of my Commissioners had any questions based
8 on what I have discussed. Ms. Brand.

9 COMMISSIONER BRAND: I do have one question.
10 The bottom of Page Three of your report under
11 Security, you did say that Mr. Rudisill has
12 conducted his review of the plan, but there were
13 some areas that needed to be more detailed. Have
14 you received that detail or should that be part of
15 the motion?

16 MR. LERMOND: Commissioner Brand, that
17 refers -- maybe I should have taken that out. That
18 pretty much referred to when they first started
19 with the first Rosie's. We noticed that the
20 security plan was good, but it was missing the 29
21 standard operating procedures. So for the future,
22 I'll take that out.

23 COMMISSIONER BRAND: So that statement was
24 made when they first started talking about Emporia
25 Rosie's or the original Rosie's?

1 MR. LERMOND: No. The very first Rosie's.

2 COMMISSIONER BRAND: So is this just
3 replicated each time then?

4 MR. LERMOND: It's kind of like a shell. I'm
5 sorry I missed that.

6 COMMISSIONER BRAND: I'd like to request that
7 when we have these reports done like this, that it
8 be specific to that particular entity so that I can
9 get up to speed because I'm so new on the board. I
10 appreciate that.

11 MR. LERMOND: We'll do.

12 CHAIR NIXON: Any other questions for Mr.
13 Lermond?

14 MR. LERMOND: Hearing no other questions, I
15 would like to seek a motion to approve the licenses
16 for the satellite wagering facility and also to
17 conduct pari-mutuel wagering on historical horse
18 racing at Rosie's Emporia with the following
19 conditions.

20 The satellite wagering facility and the
21 pari-mutuel wagering on historical horse racing
22 shall be operated in accordance with all
23 representations, plans and specifications as
24 submitted in the application and as described at
25 VRC's June 6th 2023 meeting and the licensees shall

1 not deviate materially from these representations,
2 plans and specifications without prior consent of
3 the Commission or of its Executive Secretary.

4 Secondly, the satellite wagering facility and
5 pari-mutuel wagering on historical horse racing
6 shall be operating in accordance with all
7 applicable state and federal statutes and
8 regulations, the regulations of the Commission
9 and all local ordinances.

10 VICE CHAIR HUDGINS: So moved.

11 CHAIR NIXON: Vice Chair Hudgins seconds. Is
12 there a second?

13 COMMISSIONER BRAND: Second.

14 CHAIR NIXON: Commissioner Brand seconds. All
15 those in favor?

16 NOTE: Commission votes aye.

17 CHAIR NIXON: All those opposed?

18 NOTE: There was no response.

19 CHAIR NIXON: Thank you. Next on the agenda
20 is the request for the approval of the 2023 racing
21 officials for Colonial Downs, and I believe
22 Mr. Frank Hopf is going to present that. Yes.

23 MR. HOPF: Good morning, everybody. I was
24 just going to run through --

25 MR. LERMOND: Frank is the one that sent the

1 letter, but I can make the comment.

2 CHAIR NIXON: Okay. Sorry.

3 MR. HOPF: It's okay.

4 CHAIR NIXON: Sorry about that.

5 MR. LERMOND: You're okay, Frank.

6 MR. HOPF: I'm okay?

7 MR. LERMOND: Yeah. Mr. Hopf's letter was
8 received on May 26th. In accordance with our
9 regulations, we have to approve the racing
10 officials for each live meet and also the stewards.
11 The list in front of you looks very similar to the
12 list the last couple of years. There are a few
13 exceptions that I'd like to just outline.

14 As far as the stewards go, we've got Jack
15 Hauck, Jr., coming back as our senior Commonwealth
16 steward and I probably sound like a broken record,
17 but I think I say every year how lucky we are to
18 have Jack because he's so well respected and
19 knowledgeable in the horse industry.

20 Patrick Bovenzi has been with us for three
21 years. Patrick is a steward at Tampa Bay Downs,
22 which is very good because a lot of people with
23 horses and a lot of people in the racing office all
24 come up from Tampa Bay, so he has a good
25 relationship with all those folks.

1 Our newest addition -- well, I should say Tad
2 Zimmerman will still be our steward for
3 steeplechase racing when available, but when the
4 race days went to Thursday, Friday, Saturday, he
5 said it was either work as a steward or get
6 divorced because his wife wanted him home more.

7 So fortunately, there's a young lady, and I
8 say young compared to me because I'm old, Whitney
9 Verbal, who we've decided to hire as our third
10 steward.

11 She's recommended by Jack Houghton very
12 highly. She has experience. She worked for four
13 years with the Oklahoma Racing Commission and she
14 basically worked on their breed registry. Five
15 year after that, she's been at Maryland Jockey Club
16 as a racing official, a placing judge, and last
17 year, she worked at Colonial Downs racetrack as the
18 placing judge and also the program coordinator.

19 She has completed the stewards' education.
20 She is fully accredited and I'm excited about it
21 because when I went to steward school and came out,
22 it's very hard to find a job as a steward because
23 it's mostly elderly men that have the position
24 generally and it's great for us to give her a
25 chance to do this.

1 It's nice to get some young blood and she will
2 really benefit from working with Jack Houghton. So
3 she's just over the moon and we're very happy to
4 have her. I think she will go very well as the
5 third steward.

6 Back to the other racing officials, the
7 biggest change is that Allison DeLuca isn't going
8 to come back as Racing Secretary. Allison had been
9 with us a few years and not sure exactly, but she
10 just decided she was not going to come up this
11 year.

12 Luckily, Stan Shina, I think that's how you
13 say it, will be the Racing Secretary. Stan was the
14 assistant here. He also works as assistant at
15 Tampa Bay. I've heard nothing but good things
16 about him from various people in the industry, so I
17 think that will be fine.

18 Al Fox is going to move up as Assistant Racing
19 Secretary. I've known Al since 28 years ago at
20 Delaware Park. He's very sound and very good.

21 As far as the rest of them, they're pretty
22 much the same as last year. Most of these people
23 work at Tampa Bay, as I said, so there's good
24 continuity in between everyone in the racing
25 office.

1 Unless you have any questions about anyone
2 specific, I would recommend approval of the racing
3 officials for the 2023 racing season at Colonial
4 Downs.

5 CHAIR NIXON: Commissioners have any
6 questions? Do I hear a motion?

7 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: So moved.

8 CHAIR NIXON: Commissioner Siegel moves. Is
9 there a second?

10 COMMISSIONER TANNER: Second.

11 CHAIR NIXON: Commissioner Tanner, second.
12 All those in favor?

13 NOTE: Commission votes aye.

14 CHAIR NIXON: All those opposed?

15 NOTE: There was no response.

16 CHAIR NIXON: Thank you, Dave.

17 MR. LERMOND: Thank you.

18 CHAIR NIXON: Next is the request for approval
19 of a joint request from the Colonial Downs Group
20 and the HBPA for lower retainage percentage on the
21 Pick-5 and Pick-6 pools on live racing conducted at
22 Colonial Downs for 2023, and I believe Mr. Lermond
23 is going to present this as well.

24 MR. LERMOND: Thank you, Madam Chair. The
25 code of Virginia allows for a lower take out rate

1 to be applied if it's requested by the racetrack
2 and the majority horsemens group.

3 Normally, 18% comes out of Win, Place, Show
4 wagers and 22% comes out of others. So both of
5 these wagers fall into the 22% category and
6 basically the way it works is, I'll start with the
7 Pick-5. The 12% is divided by the 22, which is
8 normal, and that gets you about .55. So you
9 multiply that by the horsemens share, which is 9%.

10 It also says that the Breeders' Fund should be
11 reduced, but every time we've had this request, the
12 horsemen and the track have agreed that they didn't
13 want the Breeders' Fund to take the haircut, so the
14 Breeders' Fund will continue to get its 1% and the
15 horsemen will get 4.95 of the Pick-5s.

16 Pick-6, they're looking at a 15% take out
17 wager. So you take the 15, divide it by the 22 and
18 that's about .68. Multiply that by the horsemens
19 share of 9% and the horsemen would get 6.12.

20 I personally like this. I think it's good
21 promotion-wise. The old school people say, well,
22 you have a big multi-win wager like that, it kind
23 of ties the money up.

24 I think the best part about this is if
25 somebody wants to bet a Pick-5 or a Pick-6, they're

1 going to handicap all five or six of those races.
2 They're not just going to bet on Pick-5 or -6.
3 They're going to bet on horses that they've seen as
4 they've handicapped all those races.

5 I think it's a huge benefit. It's great for
6 the out-of-state betters, especially the big
7 betters who tend to gravitate towards these things
8 and I think if you had the 22% take out, you
9 wouldn't get nearly the attention or the play that
10 you would get by reducing Pick-5 to 12 and the
11 Pick-6 to 15. That's a little complicated, but I
12 would be happy to answer any questions.

13 CHAIR NIXON: Commissioners have any
14 questions?

15 COMMISSIONER BRAND: I do. I have a question,
16 but not, it shouldn't be complicated. Could you
17 just repeat the beginning that it has to be, I
18 guess the statute said it has to be agreed upon by
19 the track and the majority of the horsemen; is that
20 what I heard?

21 MR. LERMOND: That is correct. That's why
22 there are two letters; one from the track and one
23 from Mr. Petramalo.

24 COMMISSIONER BRAND: Okay. Thank you.

25 MR. LERMOND: You're welcome.

1 CHAIR NIXON: Any other questions? Okay.
2 Moving forward, I believe we ask for a motion.

3 COMMISSIONER TANNER: So moved.

4 CHAIR NIXON: Commissioner Tanner moves.
5 Second?

6 VICE CHAIR HUDGINS: Second.

7 CHAIR NIXON: Commissioner Hudgins seconds.
8 All those in favor?

9 NOTE: The Commission votes aye.

10 CHAIR NIXON: All those opposed?

11 NOTE: There is no response.

12 CHAIR NIXON: Thank you. Okay. Next, we have
13 the request for the approval of the Benevolence
14 Budget submitted by the HBPA for the 2023 season
15 and I believe Frank Petramalo will present this
16 item and answer questions.

17 MR. PETRAMALO: Thank you, Madam Chair.
18 Our proposed budget kind of mirrors last year's
19 budget in the sense of the programs we expect to
20 run and the cost.

21 Last year, I think the Commission initially
22 approved 185,200. This year, we're seeking
23 194,000, so it's a slight increase to take care of
24 what we expect will be increased expenses for the
25 medical, dental and optical care that we furnish.

1 with respect to the other items on the
2 proposed budget, I think they're fairly
3 self-explanatory. We'll have the same type of food
4 service program. The track kitchen is subsidized
5 by us. We pay the vendors I think \$6,000 to lower
6 the prices of the food. We also have a meal ticket
7 program where the chaplain gives out meal tickets
8 on the back side for those who need and want it,
9 which are redeemable in the kitchen, and we
10 occasionally have picnics and things of that sort.

11 Transportation. We have a 12-person van that
12 we lease every year and we have a driver and that
13 van is available seven days a week to take people
14 on the back side to Walmart, to the local grocery
15 stores, occasionally to places like Kings Dominion
16 and places like that.

17 The chaplain, we're lucky to have Chaplain Jay
18 Hurley returning for this must be his third year or
19 fourth year. He's excellent and he lives right
20 across the street from the back side so he'll be
21 back.

22 Other than that, everything is pretty much the
23 same as it was last year.

24 CHAIR NIXON: Thank you. Anybody have any
25 questions?

1 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: Frank, wasn't there a
2 carry forward from last year?

3 MR. PETRAMALO: Yes.

4 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: Where is that?

5 MR. PETRAMALO: If you look in the first
6 paragraph, we had a \$14,222 carry over from last
7 year.

8 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: Right. So is that part
9 of the 194 you're asking for?

10 MR. PETRAMALO: The total amount available is
11 \$227,544 and of that sum we're asking for 194,000.

12 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: I see. So it's not
13 adding in that - you're accounting for the 14,222
14 in your number?

15 MR. PETRAMALO: Yes. That's correct.

16 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: Okay. Thank you.

17 CHAIR NIXON: Any other questions? Hearing
18 none, do I have a motion to approve?

19 VICE CHAIR HUDGINS: Approved.

20 CHAIR NIXON: Commissioner Hudgins approves.
21 Is there a second?

22 COMMISSIONER BRAND: Second.

23 CHAIR NIXON: Commissioner Brand seconds.
24 All those in favor?

25 NOTE: Commission votes aye.

1 CHAIR NIXON: All those opposed?

2 NOTE: There is no response.

3 CHAIR NIXON: Thank you, Frank.

4 MR. PETRAMALO: Thank you.

5 CHAIR NIXON: Next is the request for approval
6 of Virginia HBPA withdrawal of administrative costs
7 from the horsemens purse account for 2023. I
8 believe Mr. Petramalo is going to present this as
9 well and answer questions.

10 MR. PETRAMALO: Thank you. By statute, the
11 Commission is authorized to approve up to 2% of the
12 purse account being paid to HBPA for administrative
13 costs serving the interest of the horsemen.

14 Last year, we requested I think it was 220,000
15 based on \$11 million that was paid out of the purse
16 account. This year, we're requesting 320,000 based
17 on a little more than 16 million that was paid out
18 in 2022.

19 In the second paragraph of the request, you'll
20 see an outline of what that money is used for. I
21 might say that oftentimes, we spend actually more
22 than the money that's allocated to us.

23 For example, last year, we spent close to
24 \$100,000 in upgrading the stalls by putting in new
25 hangers for buckets and feed tubs and stall guards,

1 et cetera. That was a big hit. We don't usually
2 spend that much money as part of our HBPA budget.
3 we don't expect anything like that this year will
4 happen. But who knows?

5 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: You spent over the
6 allocation for last year --

7 MR. PETRAMALO: Yes.

8 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: -- out of your own
9 funds?

10 MR. PETRAMALO: That's correct.

11 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: That's anticipated here?

12 MR. PETRAMALO: I'm hoping that we will be on
13 budget here.

14 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: What was the budget last
15 year?

16 MR. PETRAMALO: Two hundred twenty thousand.

17 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: So it's 100,000 more.

18 MR. PETRAMALO: Correct.

19 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: Okay. But you're not
20 expecting to have an expense quite like the hanging
21 in the stalls?

22 MR. PETRAMALO: That's correct.

23 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: So what's the need for
24 the additional 100?

25 MR. PETRAMALO: Well, what we do is pay for

1 professional fees; my salary, we have outside
2 accountants who do the audited financial, which by
3 the way, we sent to you with this request. We have
4 a lobbying firm on retainer. We also have an
5 outside bookkeeper, et cetera. So we in effect
6 have a payroll.

7 We also pay for insurance premiums that
8 constantly go up, general liability, commercial
9 liability, directors' and officers' insurance, fire
10 and disaster insurance. I think there's another
11 policy that we have.

12 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: But it's an additional
13 20-plus percent from last year?

14 MR. PETRAMALO: Right.

15 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: Have your expenses gone
16 up actually that much? Thirty percent, actually.

17 MR. PETRAMALO: I can't tell you off the top
18 of my head. All I can say is we seldom have a
19 reserve left over at the end of the year.

20 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: Okay. I think next year
21 it would be nice to see a break down of all that.

22 MR. PETRAMALO: Well, you might take a look at
23 the audited financial report which has a break down
24 of our expenses.

25 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: Okay. I'd like to do

1 that.

2 COMMISSIONER BRAND: Did it have the budgeted
3 item to this year? So your audited financials had
4 a history, but not a comparison of what the
5 estimates would be for going forward; is that
6 correct?

7 MR. PETRAMALO: That's correct. The audited
8 financial is for 2022 and it will show you what we
9 spent the money on and more importantly how much.

10 COMMISSIONER BRAND: So I think, Commissioner,
11 the question is of all of those items you've
12 listed, which of those will have a significant
13 increase or is there something else that's being
14 targeted for that additional 100,000 or 80 or 50 or
15 whatever it is that doesn't get eaten up by the
16 expenses that have gone up from one year to the
17 next?

18 MR. PETRAMALO: Just looking at the insurance,
19 insurance has gone up. The national HBPA dues and
20 sponsorships has gone up. Advertising information
21 and promotion of Virginia racing and breeding has
22 gone up in the sense that we're spending more and
23 we're going to spend more this year than we did
24 last year.

25 Non back stretch expenses, that's kind of --

1 we don't know what will happen during the meet.
2 For example, last year, we wound up renting what I
3 call a construction office trailer to come up with
4 six additional dorm rooms. We had to do something.

5 COMMISSIONER BRAND: So there is a place
6 holder for some monies available for the
7 unexpected?

8 MR. PETRAMALO: Yes.

9 COMMISSIONER BRAND: Then also, the
10 advertising and promotion of the Virginia racing
11 and breeding. Has that increased -- I mean I
12 understand the reasoning for it and stuff and
13 curious to know if that's being increased
14 significantly or substantially to meet the hopes
15 that we all hope we can do to promote the industry?

16 MR. PETRAMALO: Yes, because up until last
17 year we did little, if anything.

18 COMMISSIONER BRAND: Got you.

19 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: I think in the future,
20 Frank, it might be helpful for us rather than to
21 look at the history to show a comparison of this
22 year to next year, the current year we're approving
23 to the results versus budget on each item so we can
24 see where those costs are compared to the last
25 year.

1 MR. PETRAMALO: Oh, I can do that. Yes.

2 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: Okay.

3 CHAIR NIXON: Any other questions? Thank you,
4 Frank.

5 MR. LERMOND: Madam Chair, I will make sure
6 that I send everybody the audited financial
7 statements that Frank's referencing.

8 CHAIR NIXON: Okay.

9 MR. LERMOND: I sent you the ones from last
10 year. I will send this one as well.

11 CHAIR NIXON: Okay. I wrote it down, too, as
12 well. Any other questions for Mr. Petramalo? Do I
13 have your motion to approve?

14 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: So moved.

15 CHAIR NIXON: Commissioner Siegel approves.
16 Second?

17 COMMISSIONER BRAND: Second.

18 CHAIR NIXON: Commissioner Brand seconds. All
19 those in favor?

20 NOTE: Commission votes aye.

21 CHAIR NIXON: All those opposed?

22 NOTE: There is no response.

23 CHAIR NIXON: Thank you.

24 MR. PETRAMALO: Thank you.

25 CHAIR NIXON: Up next on the agenda is the

1 request for the approval of a final amendment to
2 11VAC10-130-10, definition of Virginia-bred
3 Thoroughbred horse. I believe Debbie Easter will
4 present this item and answer any questions.

5 MS. EASTER: Thank you very much. For those
6 of you who have been on the Commission, I think
7 you're familiar that Virginia over the years has
8 had one of the most lenient definitions of a
9 Virginia-bred of a state-bred program, only because
10 we didn't have the state-bred funds to compete with
11 other states around us.

12 So the current definition that defines a
13 Virginia-bred is a foal that's dropped in Virginia
14 and that's all that's required and it was in an
15 attempt to just get as many horses as we could to
16 drop here.

17 As you all know from past years, probably back
18 in the 80s, probably 500-plus foals were born in
19 Virginia a year and we're down to it has been level
20 at about 100 foals a year for the last at least
21 since I've been here ten years.

22 So luckily, two changes that we have coming
23 hopefully after your approval to the Breeders Fund.
24 One is that we have a budget amendment that we
25 passed two years ago that has more money coming in

1 to the fund. Previously, I think we were right
2 about \$1.2 million coming for the fund. Dave?

3 MR. LERMOND: Correct.

4 MS. EASTER: We think at the end of this year
5 we'll be about \$2 million or \$2.2 million,
6 somewhere in that neighborhood, and as Dumfries
7 comes online, upwards of \$4 million. So we're
8 starting to see some real money come into the fund.

9 So in that case, we would like to make sure
10 somebody has to do more than come drop their foal
11 in Virginia and leave the state. So we had
12 multiple committee meetings which included my
13 boards, Frank's boards, people that foal mares and
14 foals here in Virginia and we decided we'd like to
15 get the regs as close as we can to how a mare in
16 Virginia lives.

17 So unfortunately, our industry has changed and
18 many of these mares are now -- most of the mares
19 anywhere in the country are bred for the commercial
20 market.

21 Here in Virginia, most mares foal here, they
22 go to Kentucky or someplace else to be bred and
23 then they come back and the mare and foal lives
24 here until they're weaned and the mare goes back
25 and foals again.

1 So we decided we're asking, and I think this
2 is probably in your notebook, we would like to have
3 that a mare must reside here from September 1 of
4 the year of conception until she foals the
5 following year. That's how we'd like to change the
6 definition of a Virginia-bred.

7 MR. LERMOND: The exact language is under Tab
8 Seven.

9 MS. EASTER: I can read it if you'd like me
10 to.

11 MR. LERMOND: It's here.

12 MS. EASTER: Okay. Very simple change. Any
13 questions?

14 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: I would just suggest
15 that it's a good change.

16 MS. EASTER: It's a great change.

17 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: Obviously, part of the
18 mandate of this Commission, it fits very nicely
19 with that among other things. I would hope that as
20 time goes on it becomes a little more restrictive
21 and hopefully encourage more people to breed, to
22 foal their mares here and have them live here.

23 MS. EASTER: The only thing we have to allow
24 for now -- I agree 100% with you. It's just that
25 the reality of where mares go to get bred and

1 hopefully as we move along and more money comes to
2 the Breeders' Fund, our next step would be to try
3 to grow the Stallion business here in Virginia.

4 But in reality, when you look at the national
5 scene of breeding regional sires, it's real tough.
6 It's real tough making it and most of them don't
7 get many mares. We want to build up our mare
8 population and see if we can go from there.

9 CHAIR NIXON: I assume this is something we
10 will advertise and vote.

11 MS. EASTER: We will. Soon as we have your
12 approval, I think two things are going to be very
13 attractive. Well, I'm not sure this change is
14 necessarily something great, but what is great is
15 that during the General Assembly this year, while
16 it doesn't mean that we're paying out anymore
17 money, we're going to pay for wins for First,
18 Second and Third around North America where we'd
19 only been paying for wins before and I think that
20 will be very attractive to people that own mares.

21 CHAIR NIXON: Makes sense.

22 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: They have to learn about
23 it, to the Chairman's point.

24 MS. EASTER: Definitely. We're going to
25 advertise it. I just can't do it until we have

1 this little fix.

2 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: I understand. The
3 existing breeders as well as future breeders,
4 obviously, should be well informed.

5 MS. EASTER: Yes, sir. That's the plan.

6 COMMISSIONER BRAND: I have a question as
7 well.

8 MS. EASTER: Yes.

9 COMMISSIONER BRAND: What is the
10 infrastructure in the Commonwealth to support
11 hopefully an increasing number of mares and having
12 facilities or is this going to take a while to see
13 any impact as these facilities are built or
14 acquired?

15 MS. EASTER: Very good question. We certainly
16 saw one of the things is we've been building the
17 Certified program and we've done the five-year plan
18 with the Commission.

19 One of the things that has become very evident
20 when Colonial Downs, Mr. Jacobs shut down Colonial
21 Downs, we lost a lot of infrastructure, foaling and
22 mare care infrastructure.

23 The positive things are this has already been
24 trickling out that this is a change, so I do
25 believe that three, four places that want to accept

1 outside mares might step up and do some of this.

2 But it could be a problem at first, but I
3 think there could be worse problems because if
4 somebody calls up here and wants to send a mare and
5 there's no room at the inn, it allows for a lot of
6 great things.

7 Hopefully, it opens the marketplace for more
8 people, allows people to raise their rates, all
9 that stuff. So, yes. It could take a couple of
10 years to kick in, but there's a little bit of
11 benefit to that, too.

12 COMMISSIONER BRAND: Thank you.

13 MS. EASTER: Anybody else?

14 VICE CHAIR HUDGINS: You stole my question.
15 It was a very good question.

16 MS. EASTER: I think it's a very great thing
17 for Virginia and hopefully we'll grow breeding in
18 the next few years.

19 CHAIRMAN NIXON: Any other questions? Thank
20 you, Debbie.

21 Okay. I would like to look for a motion for
22 request to the approval of a final amendment to
23 11VAC10-130-10. Do I hear a motion?

24 VICE CHAIR HUDGINS: So moved.

25 CHAIR NIXON: Commissioner Hudgins. Do I hear

1 a second?

2 COMMISSIONER BRAND: Second.

3 CHAIR NIXON: Commissioner Brand seconds.

4 Thank you, Debbie. I believe that is all of
5 our action --

6 MR. LERMOND: Take a vote?

7 CHAIR NIXON: Thank you. All of those in
8 favor?

9 NOTE: Commission votes aye.

10 CHAIR NIXON: All those opposed?

11 NOTE: There is no response.

12 CHAIR NIXON: Thank you. Sorry about that.
13 Hearing none, now we're done with the action items.
14 Let's move on to our update on the Virginia horse
15 industry Strategic Planning Committee from Jill
16 Byrne I believe is going to present that.

17 MS. BYRNE: Thank you, Madam Chair and
18 Commissioners. As you know, the five year
19 strategic plan that all the Virginia horse industry
20 stakeholders were involved in painstakingly putting
21 together but came up with an excellent plan.

22 So one of the most important pieces to that
23 that we were beginning with is marketing and
24 promotion of the entire Virginia horse industry and
25 how important it is to the state of Virginia and

1 the economic impact that it has.

2 So to kick that off, what we started with was
3 taking advantage of some key story lines that are a
4 part of Virginia, which of course Secretariat, the
5 50th anniversary of his triple crown, Secretariat
6 being born and raised in Virginia and then Forte,
7 who at the time was the Kentucky Derby favorite
8 having been raised on a farm in Virginia, Amy
9 Moore's farm.

10 So we worked to push out these stories
11 specifically to a lot of media outlets to get
12 traction, get attention for them to come and tell
13 these stories and we had some great results for
14 that.

15 Of course none of us could have a crystal ball
16 to see that Forte would not get to run in the
17 Derby, but we certainly were able to get a lot of
18 understanding and interest in the state of Virginia
19 by acknowledging the importance of him having been
20 raised in Virginia, but more importantly, that one
21 of the reasons he is not a Virginia-bred, as Debbie
22 was just saying, was because of a lack of
23 infrastructure in the state of Virginia. At the
24 time, he had to be foaled in Kentucky.

25 So this gave us an opportunity to use

1 Secretariat and Forte to tell a story about where
2 Virginia was, the history of it, where it is now
3 and where it is going.

4 We got some amazing attention. I have a lot
5 of detailed analytics for all of you in some
6 packages I can give at the end that you can look at
7 when you need something to put you to sleep at
8 night.

9 Just some of the metrics are we've had over 40
10 individual pieces of coverage and that includes
11 broadcast, digital, online, local, national from
12 NBC local. TVG and FanDuel and NBC Sports picked
13 up the story on the Virginia farm and Amy Moore
14 with Forte.

15 We had over 20 unique outlets. Close to 20
16 million audience when you include TVG, FanDuel, NBC
17 Sports viewership of the story that ran three times
18 during the lead-up to the Florida derby and we
19 doubled views because of that as well with over
20 600,000 kind of unique views.

21 So it ended up being it has been a great
22 program to get us kicked off into this really
23 acknowledgment of Virginia, the importance of it in
24 the horse industry, but also where we're going and
25 awareness.

1 A lot of people don't even know that Colonial
2 Downs is back racing. Everybody knew when it shut
3 down, but not everybody knows it's back. It has
4 been back for four years and that it's at this
5 very, very high level and the Virginia Certified
6 program as well as the number of horses involved.
7 So it has been an awareness campaign.

8 So some of the other things that are involved
9 with that that tie in to the strategic plan are
10 youth equine leadership events that I've been
11 attending and speaking on, on behalf of the
12 Virginia horse industry with our youth. They are
13 our future.

14 I know our First Lady has really made this as
15 one of her important tasks, is to show the youth
16 how we support them in the horse industry, but also
17 how many careers are available to them. A broad
18 range of careers.

19 I also attended the legislative ride so I was
20 able to spend some time with a lot of our very
21 important legislatures in the state of Virginia.

22 The harness meet that just concluded in the
23 spring and I think Darryl and Deb will talk on
24 that. Infrastructure is part of our strategic plan
25 as well. The infrastructure improvements at

1 Shenandoah to the tents that they put in, but also
2 being able to broadcast and really quality video of
3 the races helped the viewership, helped get fans
4 out there as well, and then also increased the
5 pari-mutuel wagering on the harness meet.

6 So all of these things tying into what we
7 tasked ourselves with, with the strategic plan and
8 they did a phenomenal job. I got to go to
9 Shenandoah and actually got to ride in the little
10 starter car, so it was very exciting for me.

11 We've also partnered with the Virginia Tourism
12 Council to upgrade their website to make sure that
13 the Virginia horse industry was being represented
14 properly. So we did a lot to improve that and you
15 can go on there and see that it has really been
16 updated a lot to where we are now.

17 So then one of the biggest things that I have
18 been tasked with is creating a video awareness,
19 an awareness campaign for the entire Virginia horse
20 industry, the economic impact, and I will read to
21 you just kind of what we came up with as sort of
22 the mantra for it.

23 Provide an advertising plan that promotes the
24 economic and social impact and the community value
25 the Virginia horse industry generates for the

1 Commonwealth and its citizens. So that kind of
2 tells it in a broad perspective.

3 what I've done is I've gone out and secured a
4 great production company called BES that does a lot
5 of very high-end work in the state of Virginia and
6 we're going to be basically showing how jobs,
7 tourism, agribusiness, green space are all impacted
8 by the Virginia horse industry and how huge that is
9 for the state of Virginia.

10 we had our first shoot yesterday out at Eagle
11 Point Farm and we have our next one June 19th and
12 20th, and then we'll also be shooting at Audley
13 Farm as well.

14 So this is something that is going to have a
15 broad reach; television, digital, radio, Northern
16 Virginia, Southern Virginia. A real expansive
17 reach on a three-year program, basically, to really
18 get us that awareness out there of how important
19 that the Virginia horse industry is to the state of
20 Virginia. Questions?

21 VICE CHAIR HUDGINS: Yes. It's a wonderful
22 job you've done, Jill. You and your team have
23 really knocked this one out of the park. I feel
24 like I need you to bring up the elephant in the
25 room and how we address that because we need to

1 have a plan.

2 I think was it Santa Anita where the first
3 problems with horses being put down was and I
4 thought that was a one-off, but apparently not and
5 now we have it close to home.

6 How are we prepared and what should we think
7 about doing in advance of God forbid something
8 similar happens here?

9 MS. BYRNE: I'll let Colonial Downs and
10 Churchill Downs as the racetrack operator speak to
11 what their plan is, but I think for all of us as
12 stakeholders, and one of the things in marketing,
13 the industry, is being able to show positive
14 stories.

15 So you're not necessarily, I mean nobody
16 accepts or is condoning anything that happens, but
17 for me in a marketing and promotion side of the
18 industry is showcasing to people what we are doing
19 right; Thoroughbred after care, all of showing
20 these farms.

21 As far as our responses to situations that are
22 so unfortunate that happen, I do think it's
23 important that we have a plan going forward and
24 that everybody, you know, is well versed into how
25 to be proactive to react to situations like this.

1 But again, you know, I know Churchill and
2 Colonial Downs will have, you know, a very good
3 plan in place as well as very, very high level
4 safety and health initiatives for horses
5 and humans.

6 VICE CHAIR HUDGINS: They may need to share
7 that with those of us on the Commission because
8 honestly, we get asked this a great deal and when,
9 if something happens, not when, it's going to
10 increase and we should be prepared to address it in
11 an open and honest way and the best way to handle
12 it is one that you're prepared for. So I would
13 hope that Churchill Downs folks would let us know
14 what their plan is.

15 MS. BYRNE: That's a good opportunity for all
16 of the stakeholders to get together and make sure
17 we understand and are able to speak on it.

18 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: I just make a comment.
19 I suggested to Debbie how I thought this was a
20 great presentation that you guys put together for
21 this strategic plan. My wife says I'm a man of few
22 words; I just keep repeating them.

23 But literally almost every picture in this
24 strategic plan had horses racing, but there's very
25 little about racing here at Colonial, very little

1 about attendance, very little about the fan
2 experience here and this Commission cares about
3 that.

4 I'd like for you guys to care more about it
5 because I think it's a big part of why we're here
6 and I think the racing part of this job is
7 an important one and we need to focus more there.

8 MS. BYRNE: Yeah. There will be a lot of
9 focus in that part of this campaign, but also, you
10 know, I'm sure Churchill and Colonial Downs with
11 their marketing team also will be working to put
12 out a marketing campaign for the racing season
13 specifically.

14 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: The strategic plan is
15 absent on that issue pretty much.

16 MS. BYRNE: On?

17 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: On racing here at
18 Colonial and what it does for the Commonwealth.

19 MS. BYRNE: In our -- or in the presentation?

20 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: In the strategic plan
21 that I read that you sent out, there's very little
22 discussion about the mission of your group and in
23 creating a strategic plan about racing itself.

24 MS. BYRNE: There will be a lot of racing in
25 this campaign.

1 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: The report is absent
2 though in the plan that you presented.

3 COMMISSIONER TANNER: To be fair, if I may.

4 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: Sure.

5 COMMISSIONER TANNER: A good part of that is
6 the responsibility of Churchill Downs, Colonial
7 Downs, if they want that responsibility.

8 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: The horsemen have to be
9 in favor of it and support it.

10 COMMISSIONER TANNER: True.

11 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: The plan ought to
12 address that.

13 COMMISSIONER TANNER: True.

14 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: I realize the job has to
15 be done by Colonial and not the horsemen.

16 COMMISSIONER BRAND: So that kind of brings up
17 a point. Is Churchill willing to share a
18 communications plan of some sort without giving
19 away any trade secrets or anything so that we have
20 an understanding of the overall approach of what
21 Churchill's doing? What this group is doing and
22 that we are wiser with our money, time and efforts
23 because we're joined together and not sending,
24 hopefully not sending conflicting messages or
25 anything.

1 But it's obvious that there are things that
2 Churchill needs to do and promote that can help the
3 state's horse industry and racing. There are
4 things that this group has proposed to do as well,
5 and I just think it looks, there should be an
6 opportunity to do some sort of at least
7 collaborative effort in the sense that we
8 understand what each other's doing or even working
9 together on some things.

10 MS. BYRNE: Oh, absolutely.

11 COMMISSIONER BRAND: Is there somebody here
12 that can speak on behalf of --

13 MS. BYRNE: We're all stakeholders together
14 and all a team and Churchill is part of the
15 five-year strategic plan.

16 COMMISSIONER BRAND: Right.

17 MS. BYRNE: I'll let them speak on behalf of
18 exactly what Churchill's feeling is. Anymore
19 questions for me on the strategic plan?

20 COMMISSIONER BRAND: Before you sit down, I
21 did want to say that it's exciting to see the
22 opportunities the way I think everybody loves
23 horses and they like seeing them in public. So if
24 we could reach as far in the public as possible. I
25 live in Roanoke and we like horses, too, so I was

1 glad to see that some of the target markets were at
2 least in Roanoke, but don't forget southwest
3 Virginia.

4 MS. BYRNE: Oh, yeah.

5 COMMISSIONER BRAND: Then also, and I don't
6 know that you have, but I know the Horse Industry
7 Board has worked on promotions and stuff in the
8 past and what their plans are I'm not really sure,
9 but it would be nice to have again a collaborative
10 effort so that our dollars and their dollars can go
11 a lot further.

12 MS. BYRNE: We have reached out to them as
13 well as the Virginia Tourism Council, so it is a
14 collaborative project, but kind of being led by us
15 as the creators of the plan but everybody working
16 together.

17 COMMISSIONER BRAND: That's good. Thank you.

18 MS. EASTER: Bette, if I may interject there.
19 I'm on that board and you know the speed of how
20 things work there, so I think the greatest thing
21 about this is we have been able to put Jill on this
22 five-year plan and it makes things move which
23 doesn't always happen in government and they're
24 going to participate in what I'm hoping, I know
25 from being on that board, they're planning the same

1 kinds of things and if we take the lead, maybe
2 we're going to ask them for money and I think we'll
3 get some, but I'm hoping it will integrate and move
4 their whole thing even faster, but it's getting
5 slow there.

6 COMMISSIONER BRAND: I understand.

7 MS. BYRNE: And a lot of them don't have the
8 background that we have in the depth of this from a
9 broadcast perspective, from a marketing
10 perspective, so it's kind of helping it along.

11 COMMISSIONER BRAND: I appreciate that.

12 COMMISSIONER TANNER: Would you care to
13 comment, please, on the timeline?

14 MS. BYRNE: Yeah. So we had our first shoot
15 yesterday and then that will continue through the
16 end of this month and we'll be able to turn around
17 the first add by prior to when the race meet opens
18 is what the target goal is if everything is
19 approved to move forward. We'll be able to have
20 something ready to go by the end of the first week
21 of July, first part of the second week of July.

22 COMMISSIONER TANNER: So you mentioned
23 approval. Approval for?

24 MS. BYRNE: Just moving forward with the add
25 buys. But everything else is moving forward.

1 we're not delayed on anything and the only thing
2 that we were delayed on was waiting for the weather
3 so that we have beautiful green grass to shoot and
4 foals and mares and things like that so that we
5 represent virginia beautifully, as it should be.

6 CHAIR NIXON: Any other questions, comments
7 for jill? Thank you, jill. Great report.

8 Bette, I believe that Frank Hopf is up next
9 and maybe he can answer some of your questions, you
10 know, about the marketing on that.

11 COMMISSIONER BRAND: Can he do it now?

12 CHAIR NIXON: He's coming up. He's up next.

13 COMMISSIONER BRAND: Okay. So I wanted to
14 follow back up with Commissioner Hudgins' question
15 about -- I just drew a blank on it. It's not a
16 disaster recovery plan, but --

17 COMMISSIONER TANNER: Crisis management plan.

18 COMMISSIONER BRAND: -- a crisis management
19 plan for -- I'm sure Churchill has it. I'm sure
20 others, but I think the Commission needs to look at
21 that as well and we need to have a plan before
22 anything happens, whether it's an injury to an
23 animal or a person.

24 To my knowledge, I haven't seen anything like
25 that for us, the Commissioners, to be aware. Not

1 just -- we don't need to spend a bunch of time
2 second guessing what might happen, but some
3 scenarios such as who would take the lead within
4 the Commission. whose voice? what do we do when
5 someone approaches us directly and who else needs
6 to be at the table.

7 where does this information come from? who
8 are the experts between Churchill, the horsemen and
9 any of the other stakeholders and us?

10 So you do it now while you're clear-headed and
11 not under pressure and everybody keep it with them
12 and we will not look like we're running around like
13 chickens with our head cut off should something
14 happen.

15 CHAIR NIXON: I think that's an excellent
16 suggestion and perhaps something we can work on. A
17 plan together. I think that's a great suggestion
18 and I'll work on that with them.

19 COMMISSIONER BRAND: Probably needs to be done
20 before the meets starts, so there's not a lot of
21 time, but I think it's important enough that it
22 needs to be addressed.

23 CHAIR NIXON: Thank you.

24 MR. PETRAMALO: May I comment? Prompted
25 principally by Commissioner Hudgins' concerns about

1 the bad publicity coming from Churchill and it also
2 addresses Commissioner Brand's point about doing
3 something quickly.

4 The point is, Colonial Downs has a very good,
5 positive story to tell. In the past four years
6 since it has been reopened, there have been only
7 three racing-related fatalities at this racetrack.
8 That is way below the experience you see throughout
9 the country and that's the type of story that needs
10 to get out and get out quickly.

11 COMMISSIONER BRAND: I think that Colonial
12 Downs is to be commended for being partly
13 responsible for having a good safety record, both
14 with horses and humans and the current events that
15 have happened this last season of racing, well, now
16 it's going to follow anybody because no matter what
17 track you're on, they're going to say, yeah, but
18 it's contagious. So I think things are different
19 now and we need to be prepared, both the Commission
20 and the industry.

21 So I'm not saying Churchill wasn't or isn't,
22 but I think we need to coordinate and make sure who
23 is doing what, who is the spokesman for what so
24 we're not stepping on toes or giving out any kind
25 of contradictory message.

1 We have a responsibility to Virginians. I
2 could just say I really feel like a lot of times
3 I'm an outsider. I'm more the rest of the horse
4 industry than specifically racing and there's a lot
5 of opinions in the public about what happened, and
6 everybody is making decisions and I think you can't
7 stop people from coming up with their own judgments
8 and social media has exacerbated that completely,
9 but I do think that you can be a little bit
10 proactive and have that message out there so people
11 do have the information and if something should
12 happen, they have the information they need to make
13 sure that you can tamper that some.

14 COMMISSIONER TANNER: Which is why we need the
15 marketing campaign sooner rather than later and it
16 needs to be coordinated with Colonial, et cetera,
17 all the other groups.

18 COMMISSIONER BRAND: Exactly.

19 CHAIR NIXON: Okay. Thank you, everybody.
20 That was some good discussion. Thank you. Anybody
21 else?

22 COMMISSIONER BRAND: I do have a question
23 that's off the communications but not really. The
24 provisions that we have to report to HISA with
25 statistics of events that have happened during

1 races or training or anything like that, can that
2 be shared with the Commissioners?

3 I know we've gotten a report at the end of the
4 meet, but can that -- I don't want to make more
5 work, but since that's already being reported can
6 that be shared with Commissioners and if so, what
7 frequency is that available and can it be available
8 to us?

9 MR. LERMOND: Dr. Caruthers may be better to
10 answer that than I.

11 DR. CARUTHERS: Yeah. There's an equine
12 injury database that we report all our findings and
13 injuries that happen or deaths. That's completed
14 just about every day we enter. So we could print
15 that out or send you, you know, as often as you
16 like that report. It goes in to that database
17 and it's there, so there's a way we could send it
18 to you.

19 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: If you report it to Dave
20 he can distribute it.

21 DR. CARUTHERS: Okay. I'll send it to Dave
22 and then he'll send it out. How often would you
23 like it?

24 VICE CHAIR HUDGINS: Yearly annual summaries.
25 Can we get it of course as it happens, I suppose is

1 probably good. But at the end of the season each
2 year what you did last year, that was good, but you
3 know, just routinely send that out?

4 DR. CARUTHERS: Weekly or?

5 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: She's suggesting after
6 the meet.

7 DR. CARUTHERS: After the meet.

8 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: But I'm saying if
9 there's an incident that occurs, a serious
10 incident, we ought to know about it pretty quickly.

11 DR. CARUTHERS: Yeah. Okay.

12 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: So I think that would be
13 the exception. Maybe more often than the end of
14 the meet. Maybe a couple of times during, of
15 course with any exception that occurs we need to
16 know about that.

17 VICE CHAIR HUDGINS: I think we do both a
18 summary at the end of the season and as they
19 happen. Hopefully they won't.

20 DR. CARUTHERS: Okay. You're specifically
21 talking about fatalities?

22 VICE CHAIR HUDGINS: I think so.

23 DR. CARUTHERS: Okay.

24 VICE CHAIR HUDGINS: I think so. If we start
25 getting into bowed tendons or something, it's a

1 little too much.

2 DR. CARUTHERS: Okay. Great. Perfect.

3 MR. PETRAMALO: I think that's a good idea
4 with regard to fatalities because under HISA when
5 there's a fatality on the racetrack, Dr. Caruthers
6 convenes a meeting which includes the horsemen, the
7 racing secretary's office, the safety officer and
8 the chief steward and they go through the whole
9 history of the horse that suffered the fatality and
10 then make some conclusions and issue a report.

11 I think you might benefit from getting those
12 type of reports. Hopefully there won't be any. So
13 far there have been three fatalities, but
14 nonetheless, I think it would be worthwhile to do
15 that.

16 VICE CHAIR HUDGINS: The reports she sent last
17 year were excellent because it did give me the
18 history, so it was a little easier to understand if
19 the horse was mismanaged potentially.

20 There's a lot of gray areas in that and you
21 know just, well, the horse died because this
22 happened isn't really, it doesn't tell you as much
23 as the medical history background does in addition
24 to the fatal incident.

25 MR. LERMOND: Frank, we did send those reports

1 out to the Commissioners at the end of the meet on
2 the meetings that were held for the fatalities, I
3 think.

4 DR. CARUTHERS: The meetings don't always
5 happen the day after because you have to gather the
6 information and gather the people, so that could
7 happen the next week or the following week.

8 But if you would like a report as to the next
9 day that there was an incident, we can shoot you an
10 email or something like that just so you have it if
11 people start asking.

12 VICE CHAIR HUDGINS: That's great. I hate
13 being blindsided by horse friends.

14 MR. LERMOND: So in summary, if something bad
15 happens, we get something from Dr. Caruthers
16 and get it to you as soon as possible and we'll
17 continue to do the end-of-the-meet report with all
18 the numbers and everything.

19 VICE CHAIR HUDGINS: Yes.

20 CHAIR NIXON: Thank you, Dr. Caruthers.

21 DR. CARUTHERS: Sure.

22 CHAIR NIXON: All right. Next is our report
23 on plans for the 2023 Thoroughbred racing season at
24 Colonial Downs, to include marketing, improvements,
25 stall applications and racing surfaces, et cetera.

1 I believe Frank Hopf will report and answer
2 questions.

3 MR. HOPF: Thank you, Madam Chair and
4 Commissioners. Good morning, afternoon. Just to
5 address some of the questions that were brought up
6 when Jill was up here.

7 Obviously, the situation at Churchill is very
8 fluid. There are a lot of things going on, but you
9 know, to be proactive in the world that we live in
10 with horse racing, dating back to what occurred at
11 Santa Anita, being proactive, working with all of
12 the stakeholders here is important and we'll work
13 with Churchill's professional team over there as
14 well and make sure we're proactive.

15 Messaging is important. We can't be behind on
16 any type of situation, so I agree with that
17 and we'll certainly work with everyone here to make
18 sure that happens.

19 On the marketing side, again, it's a unique
20 situation here in Virginia where you have the VEA
21 that does so much for the industry here.
22 Obviously, on the racetrack side, we're going to
23 promote and market to the horse players, to the
24 guest experience, to the horsemen. Just
25 everyone's, you know, here to have a good

1 experience and opportunity and introduce people to
2 Colonial Downs.

3 But again, we can certainly work with Jill
4 and her group on how we're messaging what we're
5 doing here, what they're working on and just make
6 sure. We do work with some of the same partners so
7 that everyone is on the same page. So that's
8 something we can certainly do.

9 Again, it's a very unique situation and I'm
10 excited to be here. I do want to thank everyone
11 for welcoming me to Virginia.

12 Any of that stuff, I think it's important we
13 all work together being collaborative and
14 communicating with each other. So we'll do that
15 certainly from the Colonial Downs side. So
16 hopefully that answers those earlier questions when
17 Jill was up.

18 So again, we're getting ready for live racing.
19 The barn area opens up two weeks from yesterday.
20 Training starts June 22nd, so it's just right
21 around the corner. Opening day is July 13th.
22 We'll go six days of training. That will be Monday
23 through Saturday, six a.m. to ten a.m. with a break
24 from eight to 8:30.

25 So with the new schedule, it's Thursday,

1 Friday, Saturday. Post time will be 1:30 each day.
2 The plan is to have nine flat races every day
3 and then two jump races on Fridays. Those will be
4 races one and two and there's actually going to be
5 pari-mutuel wagering on the jump races. So that's
6 an exciting thing to have.

7 Some of the things that we're working on again
8 to continue. What has happened here at Colonial is
9 to continue to improve the stakes program and
10 obviously the national attention here at Colonial
11 Downs and obviously a big part of that will be
12 track safety.

13 Obviously, they've had a good track record
14 here at Colonial Downs. The track I came from had
15 a good history of that as well, so it's very
16 important to me how that continues and we continue
17 to improve on it and be a part of HISA and all the
18 stuff that the track team has been working on.

19 Continue to maximize marketing exposure to
20 horse players. That's an important thing. People
21 get to understand when we're racing these new days
22 and times. We want to make sure they know we're
23 out there and how we drive that is gonna be through
24 a variety of things.

25 Post time coordination and on-track handle is

1 something we will work hard on, obviously, with the
2 new schedule; Thursday, Friday, Saturday. I know
3 from what I've heard it's summertime. Traffic is
4 busy. A lot of people are out and about, but we're
5 certainly going to make every effort to drive them
6 here to the track and make sure that they have a
7 good time and make a few more bets than they might
8 do on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday.

9 Again, the other biggest thing for all of the
10 stakeholders is the experience of improving the
11 experience of horsemen, guests and our team
12 members.

13 I'm happy to see the staffing levels for the
14 racing side. I think we've got a lot of people
15 that have come back and that's a credit to the team
16 before me. Obviously, people want to be here, so
17 that's a good thing.

18 I'm looking forward to meeting a lot of the
19 team, but obviously, make sure that their
20 experience is good as well, that they want to come
21 back to work here at Colonial Downs so we have the
22 best people here during the live racing season.

23 Some of the improvements that have been going
24 on. Obviously, the barn area is always an ongoing
25 situation of improving, repairing, fixing, so a lot

1 of things that the team has done is getting the
2 clay in the stalls fixed and leveled. There are
3 hooks that were put in for fans that were put in
4 and that's in, so hopefully during the summertime
5 that will take care of providing the proper AC for
6 them.

7 Constant cleaning of the dorms, the wash
8 rooms. A lot of electrical work has been done, so
9 the barn area is looking pretty good and I think
10 there's a lot there afterwards we can certainly do
11 and if there are any questions or concerns, we can
12 address that there.

13 Again with capital expenditures there has been
14 a lot of work that's happened there. The inner
15 turf irrigation project is complete. That was a
16 significant project that was led by Harrison and
17 that is done and that's I think a very good thing.
18 It upgraded an original system that's going to keep
19 the turf track looking as good as it has been.

20 The finish line light pole has been removed.
21 The new light pole is now behind the tote board.
22 It's an LED light. So that is now completed, so
23 we're looking forward to having nice visual on the
24 tote board itself.

25 We purchased a new tractor for the main track

1 and we also got a new mower, Toro mower, that also
2 besides mows the grass nicely, it also has
3 something that helps put divots down and will keep
4 the grass a little bit fresher after we mow it and
5 make it look a little nicer with the striping and
6 stuff like that. So again, just trying to make
7 sure that we have the proper equipment to maintain
8 the track surfaces is important.

9 Again, another thing with capital expenditure
10 that is still in the works is continuing looking
11 into the new dorm room. That's been discussed in
12 the past.

13 I spoke with Churchill last week. They are
14 still in the progress of finding an architect firm
15 to go into contract with someone there. So that's
16 still to be determined. Still working on it. Once
17 I get information, I can certainly pass that along
18 to the stakeholders of where that progress is at.

19 So a big thing for us is the experience of the
20 guests. Obviously, we're looking at a new target
21 market with possibly more families with the
22 Thursday, Friday, Saturday schedule, so I think if
23 anyone hasn't had a chance yet, there's tents out
24 that have been set.

25 we're gonna have a family area for kids'

1 activities on Saturdays. There's a new horsemens
2 area with replays right outside the saddling
3 paddock there that will have TVs where the horsemen
4 can go and watch replays of the races and it'll
5 have some fans to at least keep them a little bit
6 cooler for a few minutes before they maybe go back
7 inside.

8 One other thing that we're working on
9 finalizing is a new food servicer. We are working
10 on finalizing a deal with OBG that will be the
11 concessionaire during the live racing season here
12 at Colonial Downs.

13 One thing that we wanted to make sure is that
14 we are able to provide the proper service of food
15 to all the guests here during the live racing, so
16 we looked to go to an outside provider on that and
17 we'll finalize that and that'll provide additional
18 concessionaire stations on the apron and the tent
19 and up in the seating areas, along with the third
20 floor and the fourth floor here at Colonial.

21 So I think that's gonna be a nice step for the
22 customers and the horsemen to have additional
23 options for service and food options that may not
24 have been here in the past.

25 Then another big change is that we've moved to

1 Ticket Master for Churchill Downs, so the ticketing
2 is now going through them. We are working on
3 having additional scanners to make sure we work on
4 crowd flow into the facility and how they get to
5 the suites, how they get to the third floor.

6 So there's a lot of things we're working on
7 how the customers have their experience when they
8 get to the track because it's not just during
9 racing. It's how they get into the place, how they
10 park and walk into the building and where it goes
11 from there.

12 So that's gonna be a big addition trying to
13 get people in, get them in quickly and make sure
14 they have an enjoyable day at the track.

15 As of yesterday, ticket sales are up 32%
16 compared to this time last year, so that's a
17 positive so I think there is a lot of excitement
18 with the upcoming meet.

19 Again, built on what has come from the past,
20 but Thursday, Friday, Saturday certainly changes
21 that dynamic so we're glad to see some reflexion in
22 that so far.

23 The stakes program for the Thoroughbreds will
24 be 23 stakes. Over 5.2 million is what I have.
25 Obviously, new for this year is going to be the

1 Arlington Million, the Beverly D and the
2 Secretariat stakes coming here. The Beverly D is
3 going to be a Breeders' Cup race for the filly and
4 mare turf, so we'll have national coverage with
5 that race. Just got that agreement to the
6 Breeders' Cup last week, so we're looking forward
7 to having that.

8 Again, we'll have some national coverage with
9 that so we'll have to coordinate with TvG and how
10 that's going to all work with the post times and
11 stuff like that. But that's looking to be a very
12 strong day.

13 It's nice to have additional graded races.
14 They're hard to come by and hard to keep, so
15 obviously that's gonna be another focus, is to make
16 sure we keep that level and build on those races as
17 well.

18 That will be Saturday, August 12th, and then
19 obviously, the closing day will be the Virginia
20 Derby day, which is a really nice card over all
21 with the Derby and the Oaks and races under that.

22 So obviously being closing day, we'll make
23 sure that we build up that and we're really trying
24 to pair up opening day, Million day and Virginia
25 Derby day kind of on the same level with our

1 marketing and our experience and the spin and stuff
2 like that.

3 So we're really gonna put a lot of focus on
4 those two racing days and opening weekend and as we
5 move forward through the season, probably on
6 Thursdays to really kind of jump start the week so
7 people understand what we're doing here at
8 Colonial.

9 Wagering format. That was approved and I
10 appreciate that. We are gonna add another Pick-5.
11 It'll be in the first five flat races each day and
12 in addition to the late Pick-5 that was offered
13 last year and in addition to the Pick-6 again.

14 As I think Mr. Lermond mentioned, I don't
15 believe it takes away from the wagering. I think
16 it adds a different group of betters out there,
17 from my experience. So if they're playing the
18 Pick-6, then they'll go play the Pick-5 and they'll
19 play the Pick-4, but they have handicapped the
20 races.

21 So just again adding a wager to the format
22 that I don't believe pulls from any other
23 particular wager. I think it just drives another
24 customer that may be interested in playing those
25 types of wagers.

1 Again with marketing, we will have a
2 partnership with FanDuel, which was TVG. I talked
3 to them yesterday. All races will be shown either
4 on FanDuel TV, which is the old TVG, or FanDuel
5 Racing, which was TVG2.

6 All races will be shown from Colonial. So
7 again, with our post time coordination, we'll make
8 sure they're shown live and the people have time to
9 actually see them not as a replay.

10 Working with TwinSpires, obviously with CDI
11 and working with Woodbine. They have an account
12 wagering program up there that's pretty significant
13 that I worked with in the past, so we will work
14 with them to get the signal up to Canada as well.
15 That's a nice market that I've always felt to be
16 untapped.

17 There will also be a variety of marketing from
18 TV, social media and groups like that throughout
19 the industry. We'll work with everyone to make
20 sure we're all on the same page.

21 So that's kind of a quick update of where
22 we're at with everything and I'm happy to answer
23 any questions.

24 CHAIR NIXON: I have a few. How are the stall
25 applications coming in?

1 MR. HOPF: Yes. So stall apps are going well.
2 Sorry. I forgot to mention that.

3 CHAIR NIXON: That's okay.

4 MR. HOPF: So if you ask me, I think we're at
5 about 900, 950 stall applications, so more than
6 what we have. They are still coming in. I was
7 getting text messages last week from Houston asking
8 for stalls, so I said give me an application, we'll
9 put you on the list and Stan and his team are
10 working on that.

11 I think right now we're full and hopefully
12 everyone shows up and if they don't then we'll find
13 spots to fill those stalls up.

14 CHAIR NIXON: That's great. I see you've been
15 having a lot of advertising for the job fairs.
16 How's that coming as far as filling in what you
17 need?

18 MR. HOPF: Yes. So the job fairs are going
19 pretty well. I think most departments are filling
20 up pretty well. We're still going to work on
21 getting more people to help on the turf. Obviously
22 it's a little bit more school-driven, but right now
23 I think we're sitting better than we have and we'll
24 continue to do that, but I think over all security
25 has done well.

1 Our main track team has filled up. The racing
2 team has filled up and then obviously, we are doing
3 EVS on the back side now where we handle that
4 internally through the facilities and I believe
5 that team is filling up.

6 So right now I think from the racing side,
7 we're looking pretty good right now. So we've got
8 a couple more weeks, but I think we'll have all the
9 spots filled.

10 CHAIR NIXON: Other Commissioners?

11 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: I would just -- first of
12 all, welcome to Virginia.

13 MR. HOPF: Thank you, sir.

14 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: Nice to have you here.
15 I think everyone's optimistic about Churchill being
16 here and taking over and it sounds like you have
17 exciting plans. I, for one, am excited to see
18 everything moving forward. I look forward to
19 opening day.

20 MR. HOPF: I really am coming from another
21 track, another state, and I'm really looking
22 forward to this opportunity here. Not too many
23 states have this, so I think there's some buzz even
24 outside of, you know, this room where this program
25 is going so I'm excited to be part of it.

1 COMMISSIONER TANNER: Do you have a Daily
2 Double on the jump races?

3 MR. HOPF: Yes. The Daily Double and then
4 we'll also offer Pick-3 on the jump race so it will
5 include the first two races on Fridays as well.

6 COMMISSIONER TANNER: I heard you talk about
7 the family area, children's area and that's great.
8 You also talked a lot about getting the word out to
9 the horse players.

10 I apologize if I missed it, but could you
11 speak to how you will grow the horse players in
12 Virginia? There's been also a lot of talk about
13 the national coverage, which is awesome. It'll be
14 super. I'm glad to hear that we have so many stall
15 applications coming from Houston. Maybe my Buddy
16 JR or somebody like that.

17 MR. HOPF: Not yet. Not yet.

18 COMMISSIONER TANNER: But what about growing
19 the horse players?

20 MR. HOPF: So I think part of that is working
21 with Dave Zenner. Really, the second phase is to
22 go to the OTBs and interact with those customers
23 that do go, not on the account wagering, but
24 actually go to the physical properties themselves
25 and interact with them to make sure that they're

1 engaged with not only simulcast play, but also with
2 what we're doing here at Colonial.

3 So that's another thing that I want to make
4 sure that we do address and make sure the customers
5 here in Virginia are having a positive experience
6 when they come to a Rosie's or one of OTBs here in
7 the state.

8 So we'll make sure that we come up with some
9 things, some small things. You know, usually it's
10 a t-shirt or just letting them know what our
11 schedule is, what our wagering format is and just
12 try to drive that small, low hanging fruit type
13 items them. So that's part of the goal as well.

14 CHAIR NIXON: Go ahead.

15 COMMISSIONER BRAND: Just one question. The
16 last meeting there was a discussion about the fan
17 experience from an individual that had been a long
18 time I guess a guest or coming here to the races
19 and I heard you mention like getting fans in
20 quickly and that sort of thing.

21 But if you've never been to a racetrack before
22 or you're trying to come in and learn, getting them
23 in quickly would be great, but it could also rush
24 them through where they felt like they didn't know
25 what was going on.

1 As result of the discussion that was made at
2 the last meeting, have you all made any additional
3 changes to be responsive to those concerns?

4 MR. HOPF: Yeah. So one thing that we were
5 able to get approved is we're gonna have a little
6 bit more marketing interns or racing ambassadors
7 that we're gonna work with to make sure that, A,
8 they can answer the basic questions for the
9 customers and have, you know, basic Wagering 101
10 classing or at least they can drive or direct
11 people to where those people are going to be
12 located.

13 So again, the guest experience is pretty vast
14 and from my experience, you just want to make sure
15 that, A, your team members know and can answer
16 basic questions because you ask a team member and
17 they don't know where the restroom is or the A Team
18 is or how to make a bet or where to make a bet,
19 that's not a good start.

20 So yeah. We're gonna continue to work on
21 making sure that those team members that we have
22 and all team members on the property can at least
23 answer basic questions and find those of us who can
24 answer them.

25 COMMISSIONER BRAND: Good. Thank you.

1 CHAIR NIXON: Anyone else have any questions?
2 Thank you very much.

3 MR. HOPF: All right. Thank you guys. I
4 appreciate it.

5 CHAIR NIXON: I believe the last thing on our
6 agenda before Commissioners' comments is the update
7 on the historical horse racing study that we talked
8 about at our last meeting and I believe Dave
9 Lermond is going to report on that.

10 MR. LERMOND: Thank you, Madam Chair. As you
11 said at our last Commission meeting, I think it was
12 kind of based on the results of the JLARC study,
13 the Commission directed staff to look into hiring
14 our own independent consulting firm to look into
15 how we regulate historical horse racing.

16 In Virginia, that would fall under the
17 procurement laws, which are as Kimberly can attest,
18 not easy. There's a lot of things to do, but
19 Kimberly Mackey has reached out to DGS and is
20 working with somebody, a new person there, to get
21 this done.

22 We've determined the best course of action is
23 to put it out to what's called a solicitation for
24 bid that would go on the state procurement site
25 called EVA.

1 We have determined a statement of needs which
2 includes a requirement of a final written report to
3 be done, as well as a presentation to the
4 Commission at the conclusion of the study. So
5 we've got that. I've shared that with
6 Commissioners.

7 Kimberly, I believe, submitted everything to
8 the person at DGS that's helping us on Monday. I
9 believe later this week that they're going to get
10 together, she will help Kimberly put it into the
11 system. It will be out there for ten working days.

12 I believe there are a few firms that I know
13 that are interested in this and once the bid closes
14 and we look at the bids, then we have to follow the
15 state rules for picking the best person. That's
16 really based on their qualifications and also the
17 price comes in to it.

18 So we're very close to putting that out there
19 and hopefully they can work on that this summer and
20 maybe have a presentation for the August 17th
21 meeting, or if not, definitely by December.

22 CHAIR NIXON: Thank you, Dave.

23 MR. LERMOND: You're welcome.

24 CHAIR NIXON: Do any other Commissioners have
25 any questions about this? Thank you.

1 COMMISSIONER TANNER: When it's put out for
2 bid can we get notice?

3 MR. LERMOND: I'm sorry. I didn't hear you.

4 COMMISSIONER TANNER: When it's put out for
5 bid can we get notice?

6 MR. LERMOND: Absolutely.

7 COMMISSIONER TANNER: Thank you.

8 MR. HANNUM: Madam Chair, can I ask a
9 question?

10 CHAIR NIXON: Certainly.

11 MR. HANNUM: So in terms of paying for the
12 study, is that going to come out of the
13 Commission's budget or does that come from the
14 budget monies that are pending that were discussed
15 in the last legislative session?

16 MR. LERMOND: It will come out of our regular
17 operating budget.

18 MR. HANNUM: Thank you.

19 MR. LERMOND: You're welcome.

20 CHAIR NIXON: All right. That concludes the
21 agenda. I'll go with Commissioner comments. Does
22 anyone have any comments?

23 VICE CHAIR HUDGINS: It's a great working
24 team.

25 CHAIR NIXON: Absolutely.

1 VICE CHAIR HUDGINS: I'm very positively
2 impacted by the way everybody has jumped in and
3 taken their piece and worked together instead of in
4 prior times and I really appreciate that. I hope
5 the racing season is the best it has ever been. I
6 suspect it will be and that we continue on that
7 path. So good luck, everyone.

8 CHAIR NIXON: Any other comments?

9 COMMISSIONER TANNER: I'd like to congratulate
10 Shenandoah on the great spring meet. That was
11 fabulous results. To the rest of the team, well
12 done.

13 COMMISSIONER BRAND: I second that
14 wholeheartedly. It was great to see in Roanoke
15 even word about the racing up in Shenandoah and
16 people that I didn't even know cared about any type
17 of racing were talking about going to visit.

18 I know it's a different community than it is
19 down here, but it's just great to get the word
20 across the whole state.

21 Also, you know, we're getting ready to go into
22 a great meet here in just four or five weeks on
23 July 12th, so it's exciting. It's exciting to see
24 the rest of the Commonwealth get to learn more and
25 know more and appreciate horse racing and the horse

1 industry here in Virginia and I think with all the
2 plans and talking that we've done today and
3 collaboration that certainly this is a great
4 opportunity. So I appreciate everybody's input and
5 engagement and enthusiasm. Thank you.

6 CHAIR NIXON: Commissioner Siegel, anything
7 else to add?

8 COMMISSIONER SIEGEL: I've spoken enough.

9 CHAIR NIXON: Well, thank you, everybody. I
10 just want to thank Dave again and his staff for
11 putting the agenda together and also to thank my
12 fellow Commissioners for all of the great comments
13 and questions and I think in the long run it'll
14 make us all better. I as well am looking forward
15 to a great race season.

16 If there is no closed session, then I believe
17 we are going to set our next meeting for Thursday,
18 August 17th at eleven o'clock.

19 MR. LERMOND: Madam Chair.

20 CHAIR NIXON: Yes.

21 MR. LERMOND: The hopes of that is that all
22 the Commissioners will go to the races next month.

23 CHAIR NIXON: Oh, absolutely. Of course.
24 Yes. I hope so. I hope I don't need to add that.
25 It's a race day so we all can go to the races after

1 that.

2 All right. If that's everything, I call the
3 meeting in adjournment. Thank you very much.

4
5 NOTE: The meeting of the Virginia Racing
6 Commission is concluded at 12:30 p.m.

1 CERTIFICATE OF COURT REPORTER
2

3 I, Sandra G. Spinner, hereby certify that I,
4 having been duly sworn, was the court reporter for the
5 meeting of the Virginia Racing Commission on June 6,
6 2023, at the time of the meeting herein.

7 I further certify that the foregoing
8 transcript is, to the best of my ability, a true,
9 accurate and full record of the incidents of the meeting
10 herein.

11 Given under my hand this 7th day of August,
12 2023.

13
14 *Sandra G. Spinner*
15 _____

16 Sandra G. Spinner
17 Court Reporter
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