

WHRC Commission Meeting
February 10, 2023
At Emerald Downs
Meeting called to order at 9:30 a.m.

Item #1. Approval of the meeting minutes of January 13, 2023.

Mr. Ragle move to approve, Mr. Moore 2nd- Motion carries.

Item #2. Commissioners' reports.

Chairman Lopez- Attended recent ARCI meeting .

Mr. Moore- Testified on February 7, 2023 in support of SB 5598, the testimony went well and there were 225 signed in with a position on the bill, 188 for the bill and 37 against.

Item #3. Legislative Update

Mr. Moore- testified on Monday morning with a large group of people who were for the bill.

Only 37 against the bill out of 225, all testimony was in favor of the bill. Executive action has not happened as of yet and HB has not been moved yet.

Item #4. Industry Reports

a. Emerald Downs report;

Phil- Working on the legislation. Everyone in the industry that has pulled together for this which is great and he wouldn't be surprised if there are amendments to this. First day of training 2/27, will have a ceremony for the first horse on the track. Tickets on sale for the season on 3/1. Opening day is May 6th which is Kentucky Derby Day, possibly a new tradition for EMD. There is some noticeable impact to simulcasting handle with sports betting legalized in the state.

Chairman Lopez- Someone asked him if we could increase the number of OTB's to have one in every county and is King County the only one allowed to have more than one OTB? Phil- There are some OTB's that are facing closures due to lack of wagering. It looks like some of the handle that shifted from OTB's to ADW's during Covid has not shifted back. If there any requests, we would like to know. Mr. Moore- There is a small ADW firm that wants to come back, do you think this is due to sports wagering? Phil- Possibly

b. WHBPA Report-

MaryAnn O'Connell- Nothing new

c. WTBOA Report-

Dana Halvorson- Congratulations to Doug Moore on new assignment on the Commission and thank you to Everett Macomber for his time with the commission.

Annual awards banquet on February 25th- Contact the breeders office for tickets.

d. Sun Downs Report

Item # 5. Sun Downs Dates request and officials

Sun Downs has requested to run April 22, 23, 29, 30 and May 6,7

Shorty Martin-

Spoke with Nancy, she has the insurance and will have the information soon. The insurance company mailed it to the wrong location at the county office, it was there on 2/2 but was not noticed so there was a delay.

Amanda Benton sent a message to the fairgrounds manager and county commissioners because the fairgrounds manager wants to cancel the contract with Tri-Cities Horse Racing Association

Mr. Moore move to approve race days, Ragle 2nd, motion carries.

Item #6. Distribution of Donahue Fund

Has not been disbursed for four years due to the pandemic so there is \$11,082.29 in funds to be given to Sun Downs for maintenance and upgrades to the facilities.

Item #7. Approval annual WHRC year-end report

Mr. Ragle move to approve, Mr. Moore, 2nd. Motion carries.

Item #8. Category 1 Interference Rules

Informational item- Currently running under category 2 standard. Oklahoma is the first state to adopt a category 1 rule.

Mr. Moore- Will be on the agenda at the ARCI meeting in March. This is a topic that will gain some support.

Item #9. Executive Secretary's Report

- a. Wagering Recap (January 2023); and
- b. Monthly Financial Statement (December 2022)

In-state handle for January was down 7.6% which combined with the decrease in pari-mutuel tax to 1.3% impacted the revenue by over \$20,000. ADW handle for December was down 3.6%. The overall impact to revenue from both sources was a reduction of just over \$46,000. The projections for our fund balance through the biennium now sits at \$886,285. We are expecting an increase in expenses as costs and salaries continue to rise and the legislature is currently considering salary increases of 9% over the next biennium.

Item #10- Sun Down Grant Request

Shorty Martin- Requesting a grant for \$35,000 because Sun Downs needs assistance to get going after being closed through the pandemic.

Mr. Moore, move to approve for \$35K, if the legislation passes we will not need to do this again and it is vital to take that extra step to keep horse racing in eastern Washington.

Mr. Moore, move to approve, Chairman Lopez 2nd, motion carries.

Item #11. Travel – February Breeders Awards Banquet

Saturday, July 25th at Emerald Downs.

Mr. Moore move to approve, Dr. Ragle 2nd. Motion carries

Sun Downs travel for commissioners-

Chariman Lopez, move to approve, Dr. Ragle 2nd. Motion carries.

Item #12. Discussion items – Commissioners

Dr. Ragle- is there a plan to recognize Dr. Macomber? Chairman Lopez- A plaque was presented to Dr. Macomber at the last commission meeting. Ann-Kathrin Zemann- Will talk to the WTBOA board about presenting the Agnew special award Dr. Macomber.

Mr. Moore- Was part of a meeting with representatives of HISA and the Jockey's Guild regarding the HISA Crop Rule and there may be some changes to the penalties but the crop rule will stay the same.

Item #13. Any other business that may be properly brought before the Commission

Meeting adjourned at 10:08 am.


Amanda Benton, Executive Secretary