

WHRC Commission Meeting  
January 13, 2023  
At Emerald Downs  
Meeting called to order at 9:32 a.m.

Item #1: Approval of the meeting minutes of November 18, 2022, and Special meeting December 7, 2022.

Dr. Macomber, move to approve, Dr. Ragle, 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion carried.

Item #2. Commissioners' reports.

Item #3. Industry Reports.

a. Emerald Downs report.

Phil Ziegler reported that they are working with stakeholders on the new legislation. Phil Ziegler thanked Mr. Moore and Dr. Macomber for their service to the horse racing industry.

Emerald Downs is working on final promotion schedules and getting ready for next season.

The track is expected to open on February 27<sup>th</sup> for training. They are expecting less horses early this year because of overlap with Turf Paradise in Arizona if three race days. They will have more idea of the impact towards the end of February or early March.

b. WHBPA report; and

Pat LePley- Legislation is getting closer to being introduced for next session. We are not sure the path of the bill this time. Most likely the Senate bill will go to Commerce, as it is a budget item.

The strategy is to move the two bills at the same time in the Senate and House.

They are running stats on jobs and economic impact of the horse industry in Washington State. A landing page is being created so people can take our handout and will see the video we made with all areas of the economy this will impact. The campaign will look different this year, contacting all aspects of the equine industry in the state, (saddle clubs, 4-H, rodeo clubs, etc.), with information on how to access this page.

The HPBA is still monitoring what is going on with HISA, there have been no information on where the court cases stand. The 5<sup>th</sup> District Court hasn't commented on whether Senator McConnell's "fix" in the omnibus budget billed addressed their concerns on the constitutionality of the legislation. The 6<sup>th</sup> District Court has still not rendered a decision on the appeals filed there.

Chairman Lopez- The Chairman of Senate Ways and Means committee last year had concerns about the use of purse accounts. Pat LePley- We worked hard to have a bill without any direct contribution to purses. They have been working on signing up sponsors. Once the bill is dropped, they will send out bill numbers and names of legislatures who have indicated they are in support of signing the bill.

c. WTBOA report.

Ann-Katherine Zemen provided the report.

Thoroughbred Stallion auction will be open until January 19<sup>th</sup>. The WTBOA Awards Banquet is scheduled for February 25<sup>th</sup> and more information will be given at the February meeting.

d. d. Sun Downs report.

Shorty Martin informed the stewards he has been working with Nancy Sorick. They will be taking over the grounds on February 1 and intend on applying for dates at the February meeting. Shorty also told the commission that due to personal reasons; he would not be taking on the duties of Racing Secretary, Paddock Judge, and Starter this season. They are working on finding replacements for those jobs. He also expressed his thanks to Mr. Moore for his service to the horse racing industry.

Item #4. Class C Purse fund update. (Informational Item)

Mr. Moore reported that a total of \$50,292.98 was generated in 2022 for the Class C purse fund. That, along with the carry overs from 2020, 21, and 22, would be more than sufficient to ensure the \$15,800 per day allowed by statute.

Item #5. Request to appear before the commission – Dale Norwick

Mr. Norwick appeared via Zoom and requested the commission consider amending the order that denied him access to all grounds that was issued in 1996. After hearing from Mr. Norwick and considering documents provided, his request was denied.

Item #6. Year End Report – Equine Medical Director

Dr. Ron Friedman presented his end of the year report and answered questions from the commissioners. The full report is located on our website.

Item #7. HISA Update/Voluntary Agreement

On 12/4/22 Mr. Moore and Amanda Benton met with HIWU Director, Ben Mosier regarding their long-term plans for sample collection and staffing. Mr. Mosier was asked what would be the benefit to the WHRC to sign an agreement to staff the Equine Medication program when the employees would be working direction for HIWU. At this time the medication rules have still not been approved by the FTC. A follow up meeting had been scheduled for January 20<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Moore asked the commission if they felt it would be appropriate to cancel meetings until the courts decide whether HISA/HIWU have been deemed constitutional and the FTC has approved the rules. The commission felt that was the appropriate thing at this time.

Item #8. Approval of Split Sample Laboratories/Tentative.

Regardless of whether HISA/HIWU are operational this summer, split sample labs needed approval for any non-covered races conducted in the state. The list of all RMTC approved laboratories were provided.

Dr. Macomber, move to approve, Dr. Ragle, 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion carried.

Item #9. Executive Secretary's Report

- a. Wagering Recap (November/December 2022); and
- b. Monthly Financial Statement (October/November 2022)
- c. Legislation update

Handle for November and December 2022 remained even with the same months in 2021. Novembers ADW handle was down 7%, which decreased revenue by \$29,000. The fund balance showed an overall reduction for October and November of \$4000. The fund balance projection for the end of the biennium is now \$934,000. With the negotiated salary increases for represented employees, staff expects operating costs to increase 13% in 2023.

Item #10. Travel - March ARCI General Membership Conference

Estimated expenses were provided for attendance to the joint HBPA/ARCI general membership meetings in New Orleans on March 6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>. A motion was made to approve travel for two individuals to attend.

Dr. Macomber move to approve, Dr. Ragle 2<sup>nd</sup>- Motion carried.

Item #11. OFM biennial salary review

A memo was provided to the commissioners that was generated by Office of Financial Management indicating a salary study had been completed that recommended a 5% salary increase for exempt administrative staff.

Dr. Macomber, move to approve the increase, Dr. Ragle 2<sup>nd</sup>- Motion carried.

Item #12. Discussion Items - Commissioners

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

Chair Lopez expressed his gratitude and thanks to Dr. Macomber who's term expires on January 16<sup>th</sup>. At this time no replacement has been named, but if a successor is named this would be Dr. Macomber's last meeting as a commissioner. The benefit of his guidance and expertise in the industry was echoed by all stakeholders attending the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 11:17 a.m.

  
Amanda Benton, Executive Secretary