

THE STATE HORSE RACING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

January 31, 2023

A public business meeting of The State Horse Racing Commission was held at the following date, place, and time: In-Person PDA Room 309 and Via Telephonic Conference Call on Tuesday, January 31, 2023 at 1:00 P.M.

Commissioners in attendance: Chairwoman Cook, Darryl Breniser, Salvatore DeBunda, Dr. John Egloff, Thomas Ellis, Russell Jones, C. Edward Rogers, Dr. Corinne Sweeney and Michelle Ruddy, Russell Jones and Robert Lark. Also present were Standardbred Bureau Director Anthony Salerno, Thoroughbred Bureau Director Thomas Chuckas and Commission Counsel Jorge Augusto.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A quorum of the Commission being present, Chairwoman Cook called the meeting to order. Chairwoman Cook noted that the meeting was properly advertised in accordance with the Sunshine Law. By way of notice, the Commission conducted an executive session to engage in quasi-judicial deliberation to be adjudicated at the public meeting and engaged in attorney client privilege communication.

Chairwoman Cook welcomed everyone to the meeting.

PUBLIC MEETING

1.) MINUTES OF THE November 29, 2022, Meeting:

Motion By: Commissioner Sweeney
Second By: Commissioner Ellis
Decision: Passed by unanimous vote.

2.) MINUTES OF THE December 20, 2022, Meeting:

Motion By: Commissioner Ellis
Second By: Commissioner Jones
Decision: Passed by unanimous vote.

PRESENTATIONS

3.) Racing Fund December Financial Report – Presented by Director Chuckas. Director Chuckas provided a detailed financial analysis of the State Racing Fund, Commission and Testing Revenues and Expenses, Promotional Expenditures, a Comparative to FY 20/21 and an overview of the Breed-specific funds for the month of December.

4.) PTHA Marketing Report – Presented by PTHA Executive Director Jeff Matty and Bruce Casella. Mr. Casella stated that the PTHA takes marketing the sport very seriously, as well as Agriculture in the state of PA. He also complimented the PHRA and their staff for their

tireless efforts to support Racing statewide. The PTHA has engaged in a higher level of social media on all platforms, as well as several campaigns to boost interest in horse racing in the Philadelphia market. One of those was college scholarship day at the races, 5 scholarships for \$500.00 and one scholarship for \$2500.00 were awarded, there were also guest speakers and other giveaways. Another campaign was "I want to win a Racehorse" which took place on Pa Derby Day, over 5000 people entered the contest, and 1 lucky winner became a 1% owner of a two-year-old horse named "Winning Team."

Mr. Casella highlighted the activities during Pa Derby Day, which included a 2-hour Live broadcast by PHL 17, hosted by Dick Jeradi and Neil Hartman as well as National Racing reporters Caton Braydar and Maggie Wolfendale. The broadcast garnered approximately 8,500 households, which tops Fox Sports America's Day at the Races. The Pa Derby Day handle was a record \$18.9 million, far exceeding the previous record of \$13.2 million set in 2021.

Mr. Casella reported that the PTHA plans to continue its social media campaigns as well as weekly shows "Watch the Races" hosted by Dick Jeradi and Dani Gibson, and a Saturday morning show on SiriusXM Radio. They will also continue the "I want to win a Racehorse" campaign. In 2021 Parx raced 124 days and the average handle was \$2.72 million per day, in 2022 Parx raced 148 days and, the average handle was \$2.8 million, an increase of \$100,000 a day.

Executive Director Jeff Matty stated that he is very proud of the work that was done in 2022 and looks forward to 2023. His main message for the coming year is going to be a new, fresh look, a new message. We are in the process of redesigning our entire website, to make it more interactive, to make it more user friendly. The PTHA will also highlight our after-care program "Turning for Home", by providing additional funding to help the program. We will be looking to expand our partnership with Chickie's and Pete's, to try and attract a younger demographic.

Mr. Matty took time to thank outgoing President Sal Debunda for his tireless support and dedication to horse racing in the state of PA, as well as his years of service and support to the horsemen at Parx.

5.) MSOA Marketing Report - Kim Hankins Executive Director of the MSOA and Jennifer Miele thanked former Marketing Director Dawnelle Mock for her guidance and dedication for the past several years and announced that Tasha McCormik will assume the duties on February 6th. They also thanked the Meadows management for all its cooperation in 2022 and look forward to working with them in 2023.

The strategy over the past year was to cast a wider net, by trying to reach new fans through evolving mediums and engaging content. The MSOA has been advertising on Fan Duel, Draft King, and Barstool in hopes of reaching a younger demographic, and so far, the website traffic has increased nearly 70 % since we began running those ads.

The Family Fun nights that the Meadows has been putting on during the summer have been well received, and we look forward to working with Meadows management to promote those events again in 2023. The MSOA has also given away \$ 30,000 in scholarship awards in 2022. The MSOA also plans to take amore active roll in promoting racing during the Fairs in western PA.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS

6.) Motion to approve Simulcast Calendars for February 2023, for Harrah's Philadelphia, Mohegan Sun at Pocono Downs, and the Meadows.

Motion By: Commissioner Breniser
Second By: Commissioner Ellis
Decision: Passed by unanimous vote

7.) Motion to approve the Simulcast Calendars for February 2023 for PARX, Penn National and Presque Isle Downs.

Motion By: Commissioner Rogers
Second By: Commissioner Ellis
Decision: Passed by unanimous vote.

8.) Motion to ratify the Standardbred Bureau Director's approval for Pocono Downs to move their Sunday Post Times in February and March to 1:00 pm and Sunday Post Times for April through August to 6:00 pm

Motion By: Commissioner Breniser
Second By: Commissioner Rogers
Decision: Passed by unanimous vote

ADJUDICATIONS

9.) Thomas Lurito, DVM, Appeal of Ruling No. 22057PP, Docket No. Racing PX-2022-NM-8.

Motion to Affirm the Decision of the Parx Stewards:

Motion By: Commissioner Ellis
Second By: Commissioner Jones
Decision: Motion passed. Commissioner Sweeney abstained.

10.) Paul Corey, Appeal of Ruling No. 22041M, Docket No. RACINGME-2022-M-12

Motion to Affirm the Decision of the Meadows Judges:

Motion By: Commissioner Ellis
Second By: Commissioner Jones
Decision: Passed by unanimous vote

INDUSTRY REPORTS

11.) General Reports

Director Chuckas gave an update on the Out of Competition Testing. Since the last Commission Meeting, the staff conducted 49 OOCT's bringing the total of Out of Competition Testing for 2022 to 1,088 tests - Standardbreds had 549 and Thoroughbreds had 539. Director Chuckas gave an update on the Equine Hotline. Since the implementation in March 2022, the Commission has received 115 calls, 99 of them have been closed and 16 remain

open. 30 of the calls were Standardbred and 85 were Thoroughbred related. In General, the implementation has been beneficial, and the Commission will continue to investigate every call.

Director Salerno recognized the following Industry participants:

- Scott Lishia, Director of Racing at the Meadows, reported that the month of January handle figures have been very solid with a 75% increase over the same month in 2022. They did run an additional 30 races this January. The Meadows has been able to increase the purses approximately 20% over the last 6 months and that has brought in some fresh horses and new trainers.
- Mike Zullinger, Director of Racing Mohegan Sun, Pocono Downs, is excited to get ready for our 2023 Season. Qualifiers start on February 13th and our first live race day is February 18th. It's been a mild winter here in Northeastern PA, and we hope that will continue.
- Barry Brown, Director of Racing Harrah's Philadelphia, reported that Harrah's will be wrapping up our season on December 31st and now everyone gets a well-deserved rest. We look forward to getting our 2023 season under way on April 2nd.
- David Osojnak, Director of Racing for Parx, reported weather caused Parx to lose our last 3 days of the meet, which was disappointing, but we are looking forward to 2023. Parx is currently working on its Stakes schedule for 2023 and hope to have that available shortly. We are looking forward to our Parx March Madness, which will feature seven Stakes races and four Starter handicaps. I also wanted to acknowledge jockey Jose Antonio Gomez, who won the Eclipse award for apprentice riders.
- Eric Johnston, Director of Racing Penn National had no report.
- Mike Harant, Executive Director PHHA, just wanted to support what both Barry Brown and Mike Zullinger said earlier and the PHHA is looking forward to getting the 2023 season kicked off at Pocono on February 18th.
- Jeff Matty, Executive Director PTHA, reported that the PTHA recently held their elections. There are several changes to the Board of Directors positions. Robert Hutt is the new PTHA President, new Owner Directors are John Julia and John Fanelli. The new Trainer Director is Robert Butch Reed. The PTHA is looking forward to working with the staff and Parx management on the 2023 Stakes schedule and racing season.
- Kim Hankins, Executive Director of MSOA, had no report.
- Matt Ennis, Director of Racing, informed the Commission that Presque Isle will be opening our backside in mid-April and look forward to getting our 2023 season underway in Mid-May.
- Brian Sanfratello, Executive Director PTBA reported that the revenue transfers for year ending 12/22 totaled \$ 17,339,000. The slot revenue was down about \$72,000 which doesn't seem like a lot, but there is a concern with more Category 4 openings

that slot revenue will continue to decline. He welcomed new Breeders John and Colleen Fabriziani who recently purchased a farm and some broodmares.

- Mike Simpson, Standardbred Breeders, had no report.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dr. Bryan Langlois had several requests for the Commission. He asked that the Commission strongly consider creating a regulation that would require a chase vehicle, with a veterinarian mandated to follow the field of horses during the race.

He also asked that the Stewards notes be made available on the Commissions website.

He also requested the Commission to consider changing the infraction rule for interference from category two to category one. He stated that several jurisdictions are switching to the category one rule.

Dr. Langonis also encouraged the Commission to investigate the Stride Safe program. This is something that has been in development for several years and has a 90% success rate in determining if a horse may be prone to catastrophic injury before that injury occurs.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairwoman Cook announced that the next meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 28, 2023, at 1:00 pm. The Meeting location will be Room 309 and on Teams.

- Executive Session 11:00 a.m.
- Regular Session 1:00 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY: Commissioner Ellis
SECOND BY: Commissioner Sweeney
DECISION: Passed by Unanimous vote

The meeting was adjourned at 2:11 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas F. Chuckas Jr.
 Bureau Director
 Bureau of Thoroughbred Horse Racing

Anthony Salerno
 Bureau Director
 Bureau of Standardbred Racing