

**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
HORSE RACING ADVISORY COMMISSION**

Constitution Hall
VanDeusen Conference Room, 6N
525 W. Allegan St
Lansing 48933

Option to Join via Remote Technology
Dial: 1-248-509-0316; Conf. ID 880 074 920#

**MEETING MINUTES
March 14, 2024**

PRESENT IN PERSON:

Brian Nielsen, Chair, Horse Racing Advisory Commission
Thomas Barrett, Member, Horse Racing Advisory Commission
Michael Carlo, Member, Horse Racing Advisory Commission
Sylvia Renteria, Member, Horse Racing Advisory Commission

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Nielsen called the meeting of the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Horse Racing Advisory Commission (MDARD HRAC) to order at 2:00 p.m. on March 14, 2024. Roll call was taken by each member introducing themselves.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: COMMISSIONER BARRETT MOVED TO AMEND THE AGENDA BY ADDING PROPOSED GRANT REQUEST TO THE AGENDA FOLLOWING THE LEGISLATIVE UPDATE, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER CARLO, MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: COMMISSIONER CARLO MOVED TO APPROVE THE MEETING AGENDA, AS AMENDED, FOR MARCH 14, 2024. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BARRETT. MOTION CARRIED.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: COMMISSIONER CARLO MOVED TO APPROVE THE OCTOBER 26TH, 2023, MEETING MINUTES. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BARRETT. MOTION CARRIED.

Chairman Nielsen informed the committee that a correction to the July 2023 minutes was needed.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER CARLO MOVED TO AMEND THE JULY 2023 MINUTES BY UPDATING COMMISSIONER RENTERIA SUPPORTED THE MOTION TO ADJUST THE COMMISSION CALENDAR. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BARRETT. MOTION CARRIED.

Proposed 2024 Meeting Schedule:

MOTION: COMMISSIONER CARLO MOVED TO ADOPT THE PROPOSED 2024 MEETING SCHEDULE. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BARRETT. MOTION CARRIED.

PERFORMANCE ENHANCING DRUG DISCUSSION:

Chairman Nielsen informed the commission that after the commission's prior discussion on the topic, he sent a letter and follow up email to Heather Gaunt, from the Michigan Gaming Control Board. The chair had not heard anything in response, he will make attempt to contact Ms. Gaunt again. The chair brought up the original concern about the use of performance enhancing drugs in the horse racing industry. Commissioner Carlo said his hope was that the Michigan Gaming Control Board would respond that a plan was in place and was quietly executed amongst the industry.

LEGISLATION UPDATE:

David Ladd, lobbyist for the County Fairs Horse Racing Industry, explained he was working on two areas of legislation. One was working on getting purse money from the Ag Equine Fund for a temporary location if Northville Downs doesn't get a permanent location and another was racing at a parimutuel track. Senate Bills 411 through 414 hasn't had any movement, but he was hopeful movement before summer. Commissioner Carlo said he didn't have any update on Northville Downs legislation but was hopeful for movement to keep equine racing in the state of Michigan.

PROPOSED GRANT REQUEST:

Commissioner Barrett brought a series of six grants to place before the commission. The first grant request was for a funding request of \$24,800 to Michigan Harness Horsemen's Association (MHHA) to help maintain the county fair track surfaces. This grant would include calcium chloride and maintenance cost.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER CARLO MOVED TO APPROVE THE GRANT TO MHHA FOR COUNTY FAIR TRACK MAINTAINCE AT \$24,800. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BARRETT. MOTION CARRIED.

The second grant request was from MHHA on general maintenance for the starter car. The cost of maintenance is \$4,693.21.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER CARLO MOVED TO APPROVE THE GRANT TO MHHA FOR STARTER CAR MAINTAINCE AT \$4,639.21. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BARRETT. MOTION CARRIED.

The third grant request was from MHHA on marketing and promotion cost for the Michigan summer colt stake season. This funding would include the Facebook Livestream and YouTube page production. The grant request total was for \$23,500.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER CARLO MOVED TO APPROVE THE GRANT TO MHHA FOR MARKETING AND PROMOTION AT \$23,500. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BARRETT. MOTION CARRIED.

The fourth grant request was from MHHA to assist the Fowlerville Horseman Association on advertising cost for the 2023 season. Commissioner Renteria informed the commission that the grant request cannot be supported as expenditures were from a prior fiscal year. She did suggest a RFIP for future funding.

The fifth grant request was from MHHA to purchase new racing fair number back pads. The grant request was for \$5,120.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER BARRETT MOVED TO APPROVE THE GRANT TO MHHA TO PURCHASE BACK PADS FOR \$5,120. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER CARLO. MOTION CARRIED.

The sixth grant request was from Winner's Circle Speed Sale requesting \$36,500 for the cost of their October 20, 2024, sale. The request for was facility rental, advertising, pedigree pages, printing, labor, insurance, and the purchase of bark.

MOTION: COMMISSIONER CARLO MOVED TO AWARD WINNER'S CIRCLE SPEED SALE \$8000 FOR ADVERTISING COST. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BARRETT. MOTION CARRIED.

NORTHVILLE DOWNS UPDATE:

Commissioner Carlo informed the commission that Northville Downs the company is operating, but the Northville Downs property has been sold. The next steps to continue racing is taking the proposal for a temporary location to the Michigan Gaming Control Board. Mike Krombeen joined the commission to give an update on Senate Bills 411 through 414.

UPDATED REPORT (HHR IMPACT STUDY) FROM CIVIC ECONOMICS:

Chairman Nielsen informed the commission that the final version of the report from Civil Economics was available. The report found that the Historical Horse Racing would bring a large financial impact to the state.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

Commissioner Carlo thanked Ashton Jordan, a student from MSU, for joining the meeting today.

ADJOURN

MOTION: MR. CARLO MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. MR BARRETT SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:08 P.M.