

**MICHIGAN HARNESS HORSEMEN ASSOCIATION  
BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MINUTES OF MEETING AUGUST 24, 2023  
@ NAGE MANAGEMENT OFFICE 2501 JOLLY RD, OKEMOS, MI**

**PRESENT:** Scott Altizer, Tom Barrett, Brett Boyd (by zoom) Claudia Cary Davidson, Teresa Marotta, Kim Pluta, Charles Taylor, Crystal Terrell, Greg West, Legislative Rep David Ladd (by zoom) and Nage Management Katy Stanke.

**ABSENT:** Jerry Earls

**GUEST:** Carrie & Rob Marotta

**CALL TO ORDER:** President Tom Barrett call the meeting to order at 4:15 pm

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Motion:** Teresa Marotta moved to accept the agenda and suspend the standing committee reports, supported by Greg West. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

**LEGISLATIVE REPORT:** David Ladd reports there is support in the Senate for Legislative Transfer 2023-3 and anticipates it will voted on during the first week the Legislature is back in session in September. Senator Sue Sink head of Agricultural Committee and Senators Cherry and Hertyl are bill sponsors of 411-414 . We will need people to testify when the time comes, no date is scheduled. The Governor speech in the fall will outline her agenda for the House and Senate. The legislation may adjourn early in November, that makes for less working days.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. COLT STAKES 2024:** Crystal Terrell reported on the Board's ask from the July board meeting of a 2 Tier program for Michigan Sired program of a Platinum 6 weeks with \$12,000.00 purse and Silver 8 weeks with \$5,800.00 purse for 2- and 3-year-old MI sired and \$11,000 for MI Bred 2- and 3-year-olds. Great Lakes of \$20,000.00, Spartan \$25,000.00 and Sire Stakes of \$90,000.00. Terrell reminded the board of the communication that was made to the membership at the January 2023 annual banquet regarding no changes to the program for the Mi Bred if funding was available. Brett Boyd presented a counter proposal 8-week Gold for \$10,000- and 8-week Silver for \$8,000.00- and 8-week Michigan Bred program for \$4,000.00. Discussion took place regarding the proposals. Tom Barrett to continue with the program as is, Charles Taylor suggests a two-tiered program. Kim Pluta suggests a two-tiered program, Scott Altizer suggest Sired program of \$12,000.00 and Bred program of \$10,000.00 and Fall Final open to everyone for 2-year-olds, the 3-year-old stay the same as the 2023. Greg West suggests waiting a year, too early for a two-tiered program. Claudia suggests a two-tiered program for 2-year-olds for \$12,000.00, Bred program for \$5,000.00. Teresa Marotta suggests no two-tiered program. Bred program for less, sired program for more. Crystal Terrell suggest no two-tiered program, wait until 2025 for the two-tiered program. A survey will be placed on the MHHA website for membership to make their suggestions and comments. **Motion:** Brett Boyd proposal

for a 8 week 3 year old program with an \$11,000.00 purse, a two year old program of a two tiered program with a purse of \$11,000.00, a two year-old program of a two tiered program with a purse of \$11,000.00 and \$5,000.00 purse, and a Bred Program of \$8,000.00, supported by Kim Pluta. Motion carried by roll call vote, 1 nay, 8 yes votes, motion passed. This proposal is NOT approved by MDARD and will not be discussed with MDARD until December 2023 due to the timing of the state budget closure. This proposal also has to have additional venting for available funding. Will be added to the annual meeting agenda.

**B. NORTHVILLE DOWNS 2024:** Tom Barrett reports the track owners Carlos and Driving Club has sold the facility and take position on March 1, 2024. Extending the race dates for this year into January and beyond are possible. The new owners could lease the facility to Carlos until the construction starts and they proceed the project. Applying for race dates in 2024 will secure future racing, to allow racing in 2024 at ND. The loss of simulcast monies is a major concern. Final site approval at the new facility is pending, and a public benefit agreement is not completed. Some public are objecting to the new facility in Plymouth township. The August 23 letter from the MGCB to Tom Barrett in response to our request for the Michigan Fall Final and the Breeders Stake races to be held at ND. The Fall Final has been approved the Breeders Stake has been denied as the date for the Breeders Stakes (October 7<sup>th</sup>) is outside of the Northville Downs scheduled race meet. The location of the Breeders Stakes is still pending and the survey of membership will factor into the final decision.

**C. SIRE STAKES 2023:** It is hoped that the transfer is completed before the sire stakes, overage monies to be used to back fill the state money for a Sire Stake purse of \$90,000.00 per division. **Motion:** Kim Pluta moved to support the Sire Stakes purse of \$90,000.00 per division using the transfer/ overage monies, supported by Brett Boyd. Motion carried by unamoius voice vote. The state will pay out Sire Stake checks by the end of September. Some of the races will be included on the nights card, no detention and testing of the winners, second place and a random test for each race. Post time 5 pm for early races, 7 pm regular post time for carded races. . Fall final is pending for September 23, 24<sup>th</sup> .

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Carrie and Rob Marotta suggest no two-tiered program, to wait another year, and lower the Bred program funding. Rob suggests a call to the membership for a campaign to promote the passing for the bills.

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:** Kim Pluta suggested that the Spartan Stakes be moved to various fair location and not stay at the same fair year over year.

**ADJOURNMENT: Motion:** Kim Pluta moved to adjourn at 7:15 pm, supported by Charles Taylor. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

**NEXT MEETING:** September 21, 2023 Ngage Management Office

Minutes prepared by Secretary Claudia Cary Davidson, August 25, 2023 Pending board approval.