

**MICHIGAN HARNESS HORSEMEN ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MINUTES OF MEETING JULY 20,2023
@ NAGE MANAGEMENT OFFICE 2501 JOLLY RD, OKEMOS, MI**

PRESENT: Scott Altizer, Tom Barrett, Brett Boyd, Claudia Cary Davidson, Jerry Earls, Teresa Marotta, Kim Pluta, Charles Taylor, Crystal Terrell (Late 4:35pm), Greg West. Legislative Rep David Ladd (by zoom), Ngage Management Katy Stanke.

ABSENT: None

GUEST: Steve Wing, Julie DeMull, Marilyn Bertera

CALL TO ORDER: President Tom Barrett called the meeting to order at 4:10 pm, with a moment of silence for Tom Sweeney and Walter Bellows. No absences to excuse.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Motion: Brett Boyd moved to accept the agenda, supported by Kim Pluta. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Minutes of June 15, 2023 reviewed. **Motion:** Brett Boyd moved to accept the minutes as read, supported by Kim Pluta. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

STANDING REPORTS:

1. **PRESIDENT REPORT:** Tom Barrett reports the Advisory Committee meet today and approved five grant requests for fair funding, radio advertising, Winner Circle Sale, and Owner Seminar. The t-shirt campaign was denied due to policy advocacy the shirts represent. **Motion:** Claudia Davidson moved to reimburse Brett Boyd from the MHHA general fund for the T-Shirt orders, supported by Charles Taylor. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote. The Gaming Control Board and Director Henry Williams has denied the request for Breeders Futurity and Fair Final at Northville Downs. Response to the letter we believe is a misunderstanding and Tom will follow up discussion with MGCB to help clarify the request. Racing these events at Northville Downs is consistent with prior years.
2. **TREASURER REPORT:** Crystal Terrell reports average purses through July 11, 2023 are \$66,000.00 per night, live handle is up through July 11, 2023 is \$37,000 compared to \$31,740 in 2022, simulcast handle through July 91, 2023 is \$24,871,680.10 compared to \$29,651,244.30. The Colt Stakes payments due to the fairs from the MHHA will be utilizing ACH for the 2023 season. License track to fund the Great Lakes Stakes. Ludington Spartan Futurity funded out of the overage monies. The Colt Stakes funding are direct deposit to the fair accounts.
3. **LEGISLATIVE REPORT:** David Ladd reports by zoom: we did not secure the transfer of the TB line to STB line, nor the broiler plate language change. Due to new staff and overabundance of business done, we got lost in the process. The Senate Appropriation Committee to act on the transfer in August, Chair Person Senator Sarah Anthony, Senator Bumstead, Senator John Cherry, and Senator Boring are key leaders, Tom and Brett will meet with them. A letter to Senator Sarah Anthony will

be written and sent to request the transfer and address the urgency to the summer fair race program. Bill Hamilton is overseeing the MDARD budget.

4. **PARI-MUTUEL REPORT:** No report
5. **COLT STAKES REPORT:** No report
6. **HORSE RACING ADVISORY REPORT:** Reported in President report
7. **MHHA MEMBER CONCERN REPORT:** Jerry Earls reports the concerns are being filed and logged on the phone log and expressed frustration that there are not actionable items taking place to address the issues due to the nature of the issues being reported. Many of the issues are out of the Association control, no real responses or conclusions. No horsemen representative to address the concern with the Carlos. Many problems are not fixable, we have no control over management to comply with the concern issues.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. **TROT AND PACE UPDATE:** Teresa Marotta reports the live streams are up and running, and there has been positive feedback from the horsemen. Brett Boyd is assisting Trot and Pace with special stories to air during the livestream at each fair. Advertising is still in process of being finalized.
2. **MINIMUM PURSE STRUCTURE:** Pending
3. **MEMBERSHIP REPORT:** Katy reports many new and renew memberships are complete. 15 are left to pay, next year a membership application will be available at the February payment and better enforcement. **Motion:** Kim Pluta moved to allow fractional ownership groups membership by the group manager, supported by Charles Taylor. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote. **Motion:** Kim Pluta moved to enforce the Program Service Fee / Membership fee of \$50.00 due prior to entry of Harrison Fair week, if not paid no entry will be accepted, supported by Charles Taylor. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
4. **PHONE LOG:** reviewed

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP:** Teresa Marotta reports request for Don Harmon, June DuRussell, Geoff Howles, and Julie DeMull. **Motion:** Brett Boyd moved to accept the lifetime membership for June DuRussell, Julie DeMull and Geoff Howles supported by Claudia Davidson. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote. Don Harmon not eligible due to age requirements. Hall of Fame and Rathka award people would also need to meet the age requirements.
2. **RACE SECRETARY CONCERNS:** On going issues
3. **MHHA ADVERTISING IN WINNER CIRCLE SPEED SALE CATALOG:** **Motion:** Greg West moved to purchase a color ad for \$200.00, supported by Teresa Marotta. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote. Brett Boyd, there are 100 horses entered to date and the night before will be a sale preview of the colts with a dinner planned.
4. **FFA NATIONAL CONVENTION:** Crystal Terrell reports the USTA will have a booth at FFA National Convention in Indianapolis Indiana, November 1-4. **Motion:** Brett Boyd moved to support the convention with \$500.00 donation, supported by Teresa Marotta. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

MHHA MEMBER COMMENTS: Marilyn Bertera suggest to encourage the horseman to complete the Equine Survey. Add it to the website. Ed Sayfie wants to know the future of the Mich Sired and Mich Bred program.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS: Tom Barrett reports the new race track has not got final approval with Plymouth Township. There is organized opposition by private citizens regarding the development which is putting pressure on the Board of Trustees. Northville Downs continues to move forward with the PUD. Northville Downs has committed to apply for race dates in 2024 at the current facility.

Kim Pluta ask Crystal to investigate the future colt stake program for 2024 and beyond for the possibility of two division 8-week series for Michigan sired program, a Blue Circuit for \$8,000.00 purse and Platinum Circuit for \$12,000.00 purse. Each division to split at 8 horses and a maximum of two trailers per race. To include overnight races. Crystal to report back at next meeting.

Crystal Terrell addresses the Board regarding the contents of the email communication that took place with Trot and Pace Marketing over the 4th of July holiday over the July invoice including the memo that was left in the invoice. She expressed concern over the nature of the email discussion and lack of board member ownership in the relationship.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion: Brett Boyd moved to adjourn at 7:40 PM, supported by Jerry Earls. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

NEXT MEETING: September meeting TBA at this time, may be a zoom meeting

Minutes prepared by Secretary Claudia Cary Davidson, July 20, 2023 Pending board approval