

**MICHIGAN HARNESS HORSEMEN ASSOCIATION  
BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MINUTES OF MEETING MAY 18, 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, Crystal Terrell, Greg West, Legislative Rep David Ladd, Ngage Management Katy Stanke and Riley Van Sickle

**ABSENT:** Charles Taylor

**GUEST:** Steve Wing, Skip & Julie DeMull, Joe Stevens, John Goodyear, Don Harmon, Frank Marotta DVM.

**CALL TO ORDER:** President Tom Barrett called the meeting to order at 4:05 pm. A moment of silence for Randy Edmonds, Hughie McCann, John & Dorothy Johnson and prayer for Tom Sweeney. A horsemen walk is scheduled for Randy Edmonds at Northville Downs June 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Motion:** Brett Boyd moved to excuse Charles Taylor, supported by Crystal Terrell. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

**GUEST COMMENTS:** Riley Van Sickle reviewed the new website design. Board suggestions of tabs for Memorial page, Hall of Fame & Rathka Awards page, and Concern Form page all to be added.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Add to agenda under New Business minimum purse discussion, credit card fee, and executive session on NVD 2023-2024 race schedule. **Motion:** Crystal Terrell moved to accept the agenda with the additions, supported by Teresa Marotta. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Minutes of April 20, 2023 reviewed. **Motion:** Crystal Terrell moved to accept the minutes as recorded, supported by Teresa Marotta. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

**STANDING REPORTS:**

1. **PRESIDENT REPORT:** Tom Barrett reports May 3<sup>rd</sup> planning meeting was tabled due to zoning concerns of the Plymouth township land site. Carlos have applied for a PUD. Delays of this nature are typical with this size of an agreement. The committee is showing good support for the project and the delays should be a few weeks. Early March of 2024 NVD will close. The banking business is in turmoil as the economic future is uncertain. **Motion:** Tom moved for the board to have summer meetings as needed, June 15, supported by Brett Boyd. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
2. **TREASURER REPORT:** Crystal Terrell reviews all the accounts, the sweep account earned \$1,200 the first month, and moving some money into a money market account. **Motion:** Brett Boyd moved to approve the financial report as recorded and place on file for future audits, supported by Kim Pluta. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote. Simulcast is down 17% and live commission is up. Bank statements will delivered to the board by e-mail to cut down on printing cost.

3. **LEGISLATIVE REPORT:** David Ladd reports the FY 24 budget has passed the House and Senate, goes to conference committee later this month. FY 23 budget needs two things, 1. Remove the Boilerplate language of the TB line, changed due to Hazel Park closing to add to the STB line. 2. The TB funding to transfer to the STB line. Hope for the budget to pass by June 15, Senator Cherry is the leader to champion this action. The general fund will add 3 million to the budget, and MAFE will be removed from the Agi Equine Fund and go to the general fund. MAFE will support by sending letters to the legislators. The budget process is moving very slow.
4. **SCHOLARSHIP REPORT:** Claudia reports in executive session
5. **PARI-MUTUEL REPORT:** The 2023 NVD meet opened April 7, 2023 racing Fridays and Saturdays. Though May 9, 2023 simulcast handle was \$17,216,110.50 compared to \$20,002,054 in 2022. Average live handle through the first four days was \$38,993.27, compared to \$31,740 in 2022. Kim Pluta reports the race secretary has been sick, the assistant race secretary and Mike Carlo are doing the draw. Many concerns of procedures and the non-licensing of the race office personal. Race office errors are many and causing hardship for the horsemen. Not using the correct race dates and missing the on-line entries. 80% of the entries are taken on line. Tom & Kim will talk with Heather to help resolve this on-going concern.
6. **COLT STAKES:** Yearling forms are due June 30<sup>th</sup> \$25.00. Fair schedule pending budget finalization.
7. **HORSE RACING ADVISORY COMMISSION:** Tom Barrett reports next meeting is June 15<sup>th</sup>. The Economic Impact Study is half completed. MDARD is facilitating the track license procedure. The MOB races purse paid by purse pool, the Non-MOB races paid by Agi Equine Fund.
8. **MEMBER CONCERN FORMS:** Jerry Earls reports some of the horsemen concerns have been addressed, grading of the parking lot road and some of the pot holes have been filled. Concern forms have been turned in and need a designated person to manage the issues and follow thru. Teresa Marotta did a concern form regarding the dusty stalls, possible solution of cleaning the stalls, adding new sawdust and watering the stalls down. The process is working and needs a management person

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

1. **PROPOSED FAIR SCHEDULE:** Crystal review the fair schedule. **Motion:** Brett Boyd moved to approve the schedule for 2023, supported by Greg West. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote. Breeders Futurity is pending and not scheduled at this time. Fair Final could be cancelled, pending budget. **Entry Box Schedule:** All colt stakes and fair overnights races will have a three (3) entry box, enter on line only.
2. **TROT & PACE UPDATE:** Teresa Marotta reports no conclusion of the contract at this time. Advertising for live coverage is pending and contract finalization is to be determined. A credit of \$4,000.00 to the MHHA due to less race dates, less video, and loss of service. This budget is paid by Advisory Commission of 50% and Advertising pays the other 50% of the live streaming contract. A commentator is needed for the live show, possibility of Marty Adler and Brett Boyd. Teresa will send a letter to Trot & Pace for confirm the contract negotiations.
3. **BLANKET UPDATE:** Teresa Marotta reviews the blanket orders for fairs.

4. **PHONE LOG:** Katy Stanke reviews the phone log; calls are being answered and issues are resolved. Ngage summer hours to start May thru September, the office closes Fridays at noon.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **ONE TIME COLT STAKES PAYMENT:** Kim Pluta suggest a one-time payment schedule for the colt stakes. This would be more efficient and less office work. **Motion:** Kim Pluta moved to support a two (2) payment schedule February for colt stakes and March for Futurities, Sire Stakes , with late payment due April of \$1,500.00, supported by Brett Boyd. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
2. **SPONSORSHIP FOR BANQUET:** Katy presents a sponsorship package to generate funds to support the banquet. Board approved.
3. **HUNTINGTON BANK CREDIT CARD:** The MHHA credit card to remain in the Nage office at all times.
4. **GATE SCHOOLING COMPENSATION: Motion:** Brett Boyd moves to fund gate schooling at Fowlerville, Caro, Big Rapids and Centerville at \$1,000.00 each fair, supported by Crystal Terrell. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.
5. **MINIMUM PURSE:** Tabled to next months meeting. Pending Budget
6. **CREDIT CARD FEE :** Tabled to next months meeting.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION: Motion:** Tom Barrett moved to go into executive session, supported by Jerry Earls at 7:40 PM. Motion carried by voice vote. Claudia discussed of scholarship applications and scores. **Motion:** Kim Pluta moved to accept the scores and final decision of \$5,000.00 to Drew Thacker, \$1,875.00 to Brylee Boyd, \$1,875.00 to Samuel Sarro, and Brett Sugg \$1,000, supported by Tom Barrett. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote. **Motion:** Crystal Terrell moved to come out of executive session at 7:50pm, supported by Jerry Earls. Motion carried by voice vote. Scholarship committee of Claudia Davidson, Kim Pluta and Mike Way. Total budget spent \$9,740.00.

**DIRECTOR COMMENTS:** Tom Barrett address his concern to the future race dates at NVD for 2024. Major concern with the new facility being ready late 2024 or spring of 2025, this could lead to no live racing and a hardship for the horsemen. We could be without live racing for 12-15 months. Possible extension to race dates this year to race in January, February and March. NVD closes in March of 2024. Simulcast needs to remain open to continue to generate funds, and off-site building is projected. **Motion:** Jerry Earls moved to allow Tom Barrett to negotiate an agreement with the Carlos to extend the 2023 race meet, supported by Kim Pluta. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote. Gaming Control is tracking the overpayment purse monies. Crystal Terrell asked for transparency with directors that attend industry meetings with out board acknowledgment.

**ADJOURNMENT: Motion:** Kim Pluta moved to adjourn at 8 pm, supported by Jerry Earls. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote. Next meeting September 18, 2023 4pm @ Ngage Management Office.

Minutes prepared by Secretary Claudia Cary Davidson May 22, 2023 Pending board approval