

**MICHIGAN HARNESS HORSEMEN ASSOCIATION  
BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MINUTES OF METING OCTOBER 19, 2023  
@ NAGE MANAGEMENT OFFICE 2501 JOLLY RD, OKEMOS, MICH**

**PRESENT:** Scott Altizer, Tom Barrett, Brett Boyd (Call In), Claudia Cary Davidson, Jerry Earls, Teresa Marotta, Kim Pluta, Charles Taylor, Crystal Terrell, Legislative Rep David Ladd (Zoom), and Ngage Management Katy Stanke.

**ABSENT:** Greg West

**GUEST:** Steve Wing, Rob Marotta, Don Marotta, Frank Marotta, Marilyn Breuer-Bertera

**CALL TO ORDER:** President Tom Barrett called the meeting to order at 4:05 pm. with a moment of prayers for a speedy recovery for Greg West, Brett Boyd, and Ron Merritt. **Motion:** Crystal Terrell moved to excuse the absence of Greg West, supported by Teresa Marotta. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Move the Legislative Report first. **Motion:** Claudia Davidson moved to accept the agenda, supported by Jerry Earls. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Correction to New Business, Colt Stakes motion by Brett Boyd. **Motion:** Kim Pluta moved to accept the minutes with the correction to the Colt Stakes motion, supported by Jerry Earls. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

**STANDING REPORTS:**

1. **LEGISLATIVE REPORT:** David Ladd reports the Natural Resource Committee introduced bills 411-414 on October 10<sup>th</sup>, with unanimous support from MAFIE, TB's, and Northville Downs. Bills are opposed by the Casino's, MDARD and MGCB, with no real reason or response. Opposition for the temporary facility, and infrastructure monies going to Northville Downs to rebuild, and out of state Breeder Award monies for both disciplines. An October 31<sup>st</sup> a meeting is scheduled to address these issues. MDARD wants the MGCD to govern horse racing and control the regulations over the equine industry. MGCB is worried about the increase of work load and staffing that will be needed. Senator Cherry and MDARD are working together for a solution. Legislative session ends November 9<sup>th</sup> until after the first of the year, so timing is very short only 12 working days left on the calendar. The Governor could introduce an Executive Order to transfer MDARD horse racing to MGCB. The MHHA opposes this transfer of duties strongly and will write letters to the authorities to prevent this transfer. After discussion the board advised David Ladd to proceed with the bills that allow lifting of the caps to add money to the Agi Equine Fund, and allow the overage payment to the MHHA and Northville Downs. All other bill items will be addressed in 2024. Senator Bilino visited Brett Boyd's farm with very positive feed back and support.
2. **PRESIDENTS REPORT:** Comments below
3. **TREASURER REPORT:** Crystal Terrell reports year end filing with Manor Costeria are in the works. Live handle is down, simulcast is down 13%, ADW

unchanged, overall, a 13-15% down, due to fall sports and weather. Live purse of \$62,000.00 per night.

4. **PARI-MUTUAL TRACK REPORT:** Kim Pluta made suggestions for the condition sheet, funding available for 8-9 races nightly.
5. **COLT STAKES:** Crystal Terrell reports November will have final report for the fairs. She will meet with Dept of Agi for 2024 colt stake forms, and fair forms to be sent to the fairs on line.
6. **HORSE RACING ADVISORY COMMISSION:** Tom Barrett reports Grants for Race Track Maintenance, Michigan Horse Sale and others have been paid. Brian Nelson will write a letter to MDARD and MGCB from the Advisory Commission.
7. **OPEN MHHA MEMBER CONCERNS:** No report

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

1. **TROT AND PACE UPDATE:** Teresa Marotta reports Trot and Pace credits of \$14,000 are due. Looking for another vendor to do next years videos.
2. **PHONE LOG:** Katy reports calls are being responded to.
3. **BANQUET UPDATE:** Katy reports Claudia and her went to the Radisson for a review of layout and options available. Dinner menu is planned, rooms, and hospitality room is available for additional cost. Extra liability insurance is needed for the hospitality room and alcohol cost to consider. Board decided to not have a hospitality room and use the existing bar and lounge area. Claudia discussion on awards to present, a quote of \$2,040.00 from Albright Precision for the metal awards that are 9'x8' (Half of last year). Renae Photograph to print the pictures are \$95.00 each. Discussion on getting sponsors for the Breeder pictures from the breeders.  
**Motion:** Crystal Terrell moved to budget the awards at \$5,000.00, supported by Kim Pluta. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote. Claudia will work on.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **PARI-MUTUEL TRACK CANCELLATION STIPEND:** Crystal Terrell reports that we may need a policy in place for the upcoming winter weather. Funding to each horseman and a race day makeup date. Crystal will look into a policy.
2. **ADDITIONAL BACK PAD NUMBERS:** Teresa Marotta would like another set of numbers to accommodate the two-tiered race program. Tom Barrett, suggest she send a grant request to the Advisory Board to pay for two sets of numbers for 12 races, 8 horse fields.
3. **FAIR FEEDBACK SURVEY RESULTS:** Katy reports 17 responses came back, low participation. These results will go to the fair meeting in January at convention. Scott Altizer suggests to resend out for better input. Review of survey answers, complete results pending.
4. **COLT STAKES NOMINATIONS FORMS:** Katy ask for a policy on NSF check and Credit Card declines. One phone call by her to resolve the issue if not completed at that time, they are denied.
5. **MHHA LOGO WEAR:** Katy has MHHA shirts with our logo for \$35.00. order thru her.

**MHHA MEMBER COMMENTS:**

Don Marotta reports the standardbred sale went good, horse numbers were up, sale money was down some and Fowlerville fairgrounds worked out nice. Horsemen were happy with the pre view day and sale day. Next year will go to all yearling.

Rob Marotta asked questions on the legislation timing and what's next.

Marilyn Bertera reports that she has attended all the Plymouth Township Board meetings in support of the Northville Downs at Plymouth Township development. Township residents in opposition have formed a group called "Stop the Racetrack", and provide comments at each meeting. Their disapproval includes animal rights concerns, human trafficking, noise and environmental issues. At the October 10<sup>th</sup> meeting, Plymouth Township Supervisor, Kurt Heise, stated that he expects the Board to vote on final approval by the end of the calendar year.

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:**

Nomination for new board of directors is Aaron Colley, Jessica Stevens and Techia Lohmann. Re-election of directors for a three-year term are Jerry Earls, Greg West, Teresa Marotta and Claudia Cary Davidson. Ballots go out in November.

**ADJOURNMENT: Motion:** Jerry Earls moved to adjourn at 6:20 pm, supported by Crystal Terrell. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

**NEXT MEETING:** November 16, 2023 at 4pm @ Ngage Management Office

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