

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

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

ABSENT: Greg West

GUEST: Joe Stevens, John Goodyear, Tim Roach, Carrie & Rob Marotta, Steve Wing, Marilyn Breuer-Bertera, Frank Marotta Jr D.V.M.

CALL TO ORDER: President Tom Barrett called the meeting to order at 4.05 pm, with a moment of silence for Joe Hollenbeck. **Motion:** Teresa Marotta moved to excuse the absence of Greg West, supported by Charles Taylor, motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Add to New Business Banquet update and MSU Expo plans. **Motion:** Claudia Davidson moved to accept the agenda with additions, supported by Brett Boyd, motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Minutes of July 20,2023 and August 24, 2023 reviewed. **Motion:** Jerry Earls moved to accept both minutes as read, supported by Kim Pluta, motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

STANDING REPORTS:

1. **PRESIDENT REPORT:** Tom Barrett reports the MGCB has approved a 16-day extension of race dates at Northville Downs for a fall meet. Northville to remain open for a temporary simulcast facility. Carlos have come to an agreement for the public benefit plan that includes a soccer field, pickle ball court, and fireworks. The PUD is approved. Plymouth township meeting with public is scheduled for October 2, 2023. Date hearing to submit application for race dates in January, February and March is possible. Must apply for 30 days to comply and secure race dates for 2024.
2. **TREASURER REPORT:** Crystal Terrell request to transfer \$300,000.00 from the overage account to the purse pool account, to keep the account healthy. After discussion, **Motion:** Teresa Marotta moved to approve the transfer of funds, supported by Charles Taylor, motion carried by unanimous voice vote. Crystal working with Dept of Agricultural to secure a refund of purse monies from Hart and Ludington to refund purse, reimbursement to MHHA. Live handle is up 25% at 1.6 million in 2023, compared to 1.0 million in 2022. Simulcast is down 5%. Average purse \$62,000 per night. ADW is doing OK,
3. **LEGISLATIVE REPORT:** David Ladd reports Bills 4011-4014 slow moving, no date hearing is scheduled. The last day of session is November 9th, he pressing hard to get a date hearing before then. Senators Hertyl and Cherry support the bills and are the key leaders in support. A meeting with MDARD, Dept of Treasury, and MGCB to meet next week. Marily Bertera and Tom Barrett will write letters to Senator Sue

Shink in support of the bills passage. David Ladd will help with language for the letters.

4. **PARI-MUTUAL TRACK:** No report
5. **COLT STAKES:** Crystal Terrell reports the line item transfer from the TB account to STB account has been completed and transferred on September 7th. Allegan and Centerville purse accounts have been transferred.
6. **HORSE RACING ADVISORY COMMISSION:** Tom Barrett reports the Grant request are in process and paid out soon. The Winner Circle Sale grant request will be considered in next years budget. Tim Woodard has requested a grant funding (\$5-10.000) for the maintenance of the starting gate. Tim will bring back an estimate of repair cost.
7. **OPEN MHHA MEMBER CONCERNS:** Jerry Earls reports most of the complaints are the race office secretary issues and racing conditions. Tom Barrett will write a base condition sheet with earning caps and ask the race office to comply.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. **TROT AND PACE UPDATE:** Teresa Marotta suggest not to renew the contract for 2024. Account credits are due, Katy is working with them to complete the contract.
2. **MINIMUM PURSE STRUCTURE UPDATE:** Pending
3. **PHONE LOG:** Katy Stanke reviewed, calls answered and issues resolved.
4. **STALLION DIRECTORY:** Katy reports the directory deadline for entries is December 1st, and any unpaid invoices from 2023 will not be accepted for the 2024 directory. Must be paid in full and pay for 2024 before accepted. Claudia will help proof read the directory and work with Katy.
5. **ELECTION UPDATE:** Member up for re-election are; Claudia Davidson, Jerry Earls, Greg West, and Teresa Marotta. New member form are on line.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **LIFE TIME MEMBERSHIP:** Katy reports: Ed Hennessy has request life time membership, after discussion Ed Hennessy was denied due to lack of membership history.
2. **COLT STAKE SURVEY RESULTS:** Katy reports survey results of 117 responses, a 35% membership response. Results of the Breeder Futurity location if Northville will not accept was Fowlerville with 53 votes and Hasting 38 votes, several other fairs will minimally vote. Colt Stakes survey results were many different responses. After much discussion, **Motion:** Brett Boyd moved to accept a Michigan Sired 2 yr old program of 8 weeks two tiered, the first tier at \$10,000.00 and second tier at \$5,000.00, Michigan Sired 3 yr olds at \$11,000.00. The Michigan Bred at 8 week program for 2- and 3-year-olds at \$8,000.00, and the Great Lakes and Spartan Futurity at \$20,000.00, supported by Kim Pluta. Motion carried by voice vote, two opposed votes (Terrell & Altizer). Will need MDARD approval.
3. **MHHA LOGO WEAR:** No action taken
4. **BANQUET UPDATE:** Katy reports plans for January 21, 2024 at the Crown Plaza are in the works and online forms will be available with a deadline of December 15th. Sponsorship opportunities are set up for banquet, stallion directory and on-line. Board approved the purchase of a jog cart for the raffle, Claudia will secure. Claudia

- will secure the Auctioneer, and Master of Ceremonies. On line bidding for the stallion breeding that are offered at the banquet will be available, to encourage more bidding.
5. **MSU EXPO:** Crystal reports: The Expo is March 10-11, 2024, 1 stall and two 10x10 area for \$850.00. To borrow a simulator from the USTA. **Motion:** Teresa Marotta moved to accept the expo plan, supported by Kim Pluta. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

MHHA MEMBER COMMENTS: Marilyn Bertera comments that the colt stakes 2-tiered program will generate short fields. Fair overnight monies should support futurities and licensed track monies should support the races at Northville Downs. More money to support the race way horses, not the fairs.

Tim Roach addresses the board on the concern of the Fair Overnight program future. The Northern Fair Association (John Currey) and MAFIE wants some security that the program will not be eliminated in the future. The MHHA, MDARD, MAFIE, and Advisory Commission are committed to the future of Fair Overnight races will continue in the future, and will not be eliminated. **Motion:** Charles Taylor moved the MHHA is committed to support the Fair Overnight programs future, supported by Brett Boyd. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMMENTS: Claudia asks if the Code of Conduct policy is going forward, we should also consider a Conflict-of-Interest policy. Katy is working on it. The Fowlerville Fair board has approved purchasing lime stone for the race track, should go down this next week. This will resurface the track surface and be ready for next year. Todd Hacker is working on it.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion: Charles Taylor moved to adjourn at 8:25 pm, supported by Scott Altizer. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

NEXT MEETING: October 19, 2023 at 4pm @ Ngage Management Office

Minutes prepared by Secretary Claudia Cary Davidson, September 26, 2023 Pending board approval.