



MASSACHUSETTS GAMING COMMISSION
PUBLIC MEETING #294

March 20, 2020
10:00 a.m.

Massachusetts Gaming Commission
Via Conference Call Number: 1-646-741-5292
Meeting I.D. Number: 112 018 5086



Massachusetts Gaming Commission

101 Federal Street, 12th Floor, Boston, Massachusetts 02110 | TEL 617.979.8400 | FAX 617.725.0258 | www.massgaming.com



NOTICE OF MEETING and AGENDA
March 20, 2020

PLEASE NOTE: Given the unprecedented circumstances resulting from the global Coronavirus pandemic, Governor Charles Baker issued an order to provide limited relief from certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law to protect the health and safety of individuals interested in attending public meetings. In keeping with the guidance provided, the Commission will conduct a public meeting utilizing remote collaboration technology. If there is any technical problem with our remote connection, an alternative conference line will be noticed immediately on our website: MassGaming.com.

Pursuant to the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §§ 18-25, notice is hereby given of a meeting of the Massachusetts Gaming Commission. The meeting will take place:

Friday, March 20, 2020
10:00 am
Massachusetts Gaming Commission
VIA CONFERENCE CALL NUMBER: 1-646-741-5292
MEETING ID: 112 018 5086

PUBLIC MEETING - #294

1. Call to order
2. Racing Division – Dr. Alex Lightbown, Director of Racing/Chief Veterinarian/Operations Manager
 - a. Postponement of Opening of Live Racing at Plainridge Park Casino – Dr. Lightbown; Steve O’Toole, Director of Racing Plainridge Park Casino; Bob McHugh, President, Harness Horsemen’s Association of New England; Alice Szpila Tisbert, Managing Director, Harness Horsemen’s Association of New England **VOTE**
 - b. Plainridge Park Racecourse Request for Promotional Fund Reimbursement – Chad Bourque, Chief Financial Analyst; Steve O’Toole, Director of Racing Plainridge Park Casino **VOTE**
3. Other business – reserved for matters the Chair did not reasonably anticipate at the time of posting.

I certify that on this date, this Notice was posted as “Massachusetts Gaming Commission Meeting” at www.massgaming.com and emailed to: regs@sec.state.ma.us, melissa.andrade@state.ma.us.

Date: March 18, 2020

Cathy Judd-Stein, Chair

Date Posted to Website: March 18, 2020 10:00 a.m.



Massachusetts Gaming Commission



TO: Cathy Judd-Stein, Chair
Gayle Cameron, Commissioner
Eileen O'Brien, Commissioner
Bruce Stebbins, Commissioner
Enrique Zuniga, Commissioner

FROM: Alexandra Lightbown, Director of Racing

CC: Karen Wells, Interim Executive Director
Todd Grossman, Acting General Counsel

DATE: March 18, 2020

RE: Postponement of Live Racing Opening at Plainridge

Dear Commissioners:

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, on March 16th, 2020, Steve O'Toole, Director of Racing for Plainridge Park Casino; Gayle Cameron, Commissioner for the Massachusetts Gaming Commission; and I met by phone to discuss the opening day of live racing at Plainridge. The opening was originally scheduled for April 6, 2020. On March 15th, Massachusetts Governor Charles Baker issued an order prohibiting gatherings of over 25 people through April 5. The Center for Disease Control recommendation at the time of our call was for cancelling events of more than 50 people for the next eight weeks throughout the United States. As everyone is aware, State and Federal guidelines are being adjusted as needed. Horsemen gathering in the paddock with their horses would exceed both numbers, putting themselves and personnel from Plainridge Park Casino and the Massachusetts Gaming Commission at risk.

Once the risk of COVID-19 is over, the horsemen must prepare their horses for racing, and the track and the Division of Racing must also be able to prepare. With this in mind, Mr. O'Toole and I are proposing that, out of an abundance of caution, and with the best interests of the participants, employees, patrons and horses, the opening day of live racing at Plainridge be postponed until June 1, 2020, with a status update around May 1, 2020. Then it could be determined if Qualifying races could take place on May 25, 2020.

Mr. O'Toole has discussed this with Robert McHugh, President of the Harness Horsemen of New England. I have discussed this with Alice Szpila Tisbert, Managing Director of the Harness Horsemen of New England. Please see the letter Ms. Szpila Tisbert submitted, detailing their position.

This is a very fluid and rapidly changing situation and will be re-evaluated as needed.



Massachusetts Gaming Commission

Recommendation: That the Commission postpone the April 6, 2020 opening of Plainridge Racecourse to June 1, 2020.



Massachusetts Gaming Commission

101 Federal Street, 12th Floor, Boston, Massachusetts 02110 | TEL 617.979.8400 | FAX 617.725.0258 | www.massgaming.com

Steve:

I am sending this to you as a follow-up conversation on the afternoon of March 16, 2020 where you wanted to move opening day from April 6th to June 1st. I preliminarily agreed with your recommendation given the seriousness of the corona virus which has yet to peak. I concurred with your thoughts since my understanding is the delay would be in line with the opening of the casino. You also believed as a former horseman, it would be best for trainers to have a known start date so they could get their horses ready.

After contemplating this issue further and reviewing the situation, many trainers have been jogging and getting their horses ready to race since January. When the Governor of the Commonwealth determines that businesses are safe to open, I think it is more than fair to expect racing to commence on or when the Casino opens, and you can be sure the trainers will have their horses ready to race. The Federal Government is providing a stimulus to assist people that are not receiving pay checks; for every lost day after April 6th that the track is idle, the horsemen and women are not able to earn purse money that will never be recovered and there has been no racing since the end of November which results in many individuals being in a desperate financial situation. There is no stimulus available to assist these horse men and women.

On behalf of the HHANE, this is to request that Plainridge open as soon as it is clear to open the Casino. Thanks in advance for your review and understanding.

Bob



P.O. Box 1811, Plainville, MA 02762

Website: www.hhane.com

March 17, 2020

Dear Dr. Lightbown,

Thank you for your call regarding the potential date to open the harness racing season in Massachusetts, which may be delayed from April 1, 2020, given the COV-19 coronavirus flu emergency. In order to guide the Massachusetts Gaming Commission, this letter will serve to document the Association's position on that topic.

In essence, the Association states that if the casino is able to open for the public, that the racetrack should also open at that same time. The Harness Horseman's Association of New England, Inc. (HHANE) fully supports all decisions by our Governor, the MGC, our local, state and federal officials. To that end, we feel when it is safe for patrons to return to the Casino, so will conditions be safe for horse racing and the betting public. The lead time in announcing the opening of the Casino is sufficient time for Trainers to have their horse ready, as they and the track were prepared for the first qualifier that was scheduled for next week. Trainers are willing to maintain the fitness and safety of horses for that opening date as soon as it is appropriate to do so.

Many people think of the race tracks as the only business entities involved in the operation of racing, but the truth is that there are hundreds of small businesses throughout the state, owned and operated by Massachusetts horsemen and women, including jobs associated with the racing division of the MGC.

We will continue to keep members informed as new information comes forward and look forward to working with the MGC and PNG on implementing a successful live racing meet whenever that might be possible.

Sincerely,

Alice Tisbert

Alice Tisbert

Managing Director, HHANE, Inc.



Division of Racing

MEMORANDUM

TO:	Massachusetts Gaming Commission
FROM:	Chad Bourque, Financial Analyst
SUBJECT:	Request for Reimbursement Harness Horse Promotional Trust Fund
DATE:	March 05, 2020

In accordance with General Laws of Massachusetts, Chapter 128A, Section 5g.

The trustees may expend without appropriation all or any part of the promotional trust funds to the appropriate track licensee in proportion to the amount deposited in each fund for use in promotional marketing. The following promotional fund request has been reviewed.

HHPTF

- # 2020-01: Winter Wonderland Handicapping Contest \$5,000

Total Request for Reimbursement: \$5,000

Promotional Trust Fund Balance (a/o 03/04/20) \$143,526

All financial statements required under section 6 shall be accompanied by a statement signed under the pains and penalties of perjury by the chief financial officer of the licensee setting forth the promotions completed with funds obtained under this section.

The request for consideration was approved by the Commission on 01/23/2020. After review and confirmation of the request for reimbursement, with your authorization, we will make payment to the track.

Encl. plainridge_rfr_hhptf_2020_1

Cdb



Massachusetts Gaming Commission



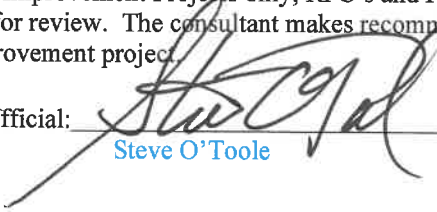
PLAINRIDGE PARK
CASINO

Massachusetts Gaming Commission
Harness Horse Capital Improvement Trust Fund
Harness Horse Promotional Trust Fund

1. Date: 3/5/2020
2. Association: Plainville Gaming & Redevelopment, LLC
3. Project #: Plainridge HHPTF 2020-1
4. Project Description: Winter Wonderland Handicap
5. Type of Request: RFR - HHPTF
 - Request for Consideration / RFC
 - Request for Reimbursement / RFR
 - Harness Horse Capital Improvement Fund / HHCIF
 - Harness Horse Promotional Trust Fund / HHPTF
6. Total Project Amount: \$5,000 RFR
 - Estimate / RFC
 - Actual / RFR
7. RFC – Provide a detailed description of the promotional or capital improvement project including the project objectives, how it will enhance the operations of the association and / or improve attendance and handles at your racetrack:
Engaging the racing patrons with free entry to the contest will enhance the excitement of the simulcasting day on Saturday, February 1, 2020. More importantly, encouraging attendance and participation in the contest will drive higher handle while accommodating the existing customers and create some new racing fans in the process.

RFR – Requests for reimbursement must contain a listing of all project expenditures by date, paid to and check number. A copy of the invoice and cancelled check must support each expenditure:

Copies of Winner's Acknowledgement forms attached for proof of payment to winners.

8. For Capital Improvement Projects only, RFC's and RFR's must be submitted to the Commission's architect engineer consultant for review. The consultant makes recommendations to the Trustees relative to the cost and nature of the capital improvement project.
9. By Track Official:  Title: Director of Racing Date: 3/5/2020
Steve O'Toole
10. Trustee Approval and Date: