



Division of Racing

## Massachusetts Horse Racing Committee Meeting Minutes

**Date/Time:** May 2, 2017 – 2:00 p.m.

**Place:** Massachusetts Gaming Commission  
101 Federal Street, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, Massachusetts

**Absent:** Shawn Collins, Member

**Present:** Stephen M. Reilly, Jr., Chairman  
Commissioner Gayle Cameron, Member  
Frank Frisoli, Member  
Peter Goldberg, Member

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Catherine Blue, General Counsel  
Dr. Alexandra Lightbown, Director of Racing  
Enrique Zuniga, Commissioner  
Cecelia Porché, Paralegal

### Call to Order

Chairman Stephen Reilly called the Horse Racing Committee (“Committee”) meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

### Approval of Minutes

*Gayle Cameron moved for the approval of the June 20, 2016 Horse Racing Committee meeting minutes subject to any correction of typographical errors. Gayle Cameron requested to strike the word “postponed” in the third paragraph on page 2. Motion seconded by Peter Goldberg. Motion passed 4 to 0.*

### Update by Dr. Alexandra Lightbown on the 2017 Racing Applications

Dr. Alexandra Lightbown, Director of Racing, provided an overview of the 2017 racing applications. She reported that the Commission approved 125 days of racing at Plainridge Park Racecourse and 6 racing days at Suffolk Downs. She also reported that Suffolk will race two



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days each month in the months of July, August, and September. She noted that Suffolk may add a fourth weekend. Director Lightbown stated that she drafted a document, Horse Racing in Massachusetts, that includes racing data. She stated that she will distribute an updated version to the Committee members next week. She also noted that the annual report isn't complete but she will provide the data that we have to date. She stated that a full report may be ready at the end of May.

Frank Frisoli stated that he is looking for fund distributions for the thoroughbreds and standardbreds, attendance and wagering data, and other racing track comparisons. He stated that he will send out an email to the Committee members with this request. General Counsel Catherine Blue stated that we will look at the request for information. Gayle Cameron stated that we may not have all of the information that Mr. Frisoli is looking for, but our staff will look into it. Director Lightbown stated that we may not have race track attendance data. Peter Goldberg stated that most of the numbers for track comparisons are available through the US Trotting Association. Frank Frisoli stated that he struggled on getting the information from the US Trotting Association. Peter Goldberg offered to help Mr. Frisoli find the data.

Peter Goldberg stated that HHANE (Harness Horsemen Association of New England) has already requested information but he will put a request together if he needs more information.

### **Update by the Standardbreds and Thoroughbreds on any changes within their industry or legislation they may have pending before the General Court.**

Frank Frisoli introduced Paul Umbrello and stated that he will address the Committee on the status of the horse park. Paul Umbrello stated that it has been a long and enduring process but they have made progress over the last few months. He reported that a feasibility and land study was conducted. He stated that they have had positive conversations with towns of interest. He also reported that he is working with a Kentucky group to develop a master plan, costs, and timeline. He stated that they are pursuing a horse park concept to keep up with the times. He stated that he expects to make a presentation to the legislature and hopes that there will be a vote this year. He stated that they have full support from the University of Massachusetts, Tufts, 4H, unions, and more. He stated that this horse park will be an economic stimulus for Massachusetts. Gayle Cameron stated that part of the request to the legislature will be to change the race horse development fund. Peter Goldberg inquired about the cost of the horse park. Mr. Umbrello stated that it is estimated to be about \$150 million. Peter Goldberg inquired about the timeline for getting a horse park built. Mr. Umbrello stated that they built Suffolk Downs in 65 days. He stated that the project may need to be done in phases.

Peter Goldberg stated that there is no legislation being proposed by the standardbred industry.

### **Discussion of next meeting date**

Chairman Stephen Reilly stated that we do not have a request to change the split of the fund. Peter Goldberg stated that we should meet in October and he inquired about a motion to reconsider the split. Frank Frisoli stated that he would like to see if the standardbreds have a need for more funding. Peter Goldberg stated that we know that nothing is going to change in



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2017. Frank Frisoli stated that in the legislation being proposed they are looking for a split change and the legislature could mandate that the Commission look forward to the needs of a horse park.

Chairman Reilly proposed getting reports from each industry by the end of August. Peter Goldberg stated that this schedule would be a problem and he proposed waiting until the end of the racing season when we can evaluate the metrics. Chairman Reilly asked Director Lightbown if this could happen. Director Lightbown stated that if we change the split we can make it retroactive. General Counsel Blue stated that if we make it retroactive there will be impacts. Chairman Reilly inquired about doing a vote in August. Frank Frisoli stated that he would be fine with that. Peter Goldberg stated that Plainridge will still be in the racing season. Chairman Reilly stated that he wants to start the process. General Counsel Blue reported that this is the year that racing expires and there are 7 or 8 racing bills that are pending in the legislature. General Counsel Blue provided an overview of the pending bills. Frank Frisoli stated that in light of General Counsel Blue's comments – he would propose we have a meeting in August when the racing landscape is leveled. He stated that he hasn't heard from the standardbreds on their need for more money. Gayle Cameron stated that it may be helpful to look at a report from each industry and look at their needs. Peter Goldberg stated that there is extensive need for more funding for the standardbred industry and he will be prepared to show the data. Chairman Reilly proposed the following schedule to keep things moving: June 30, 2017 for the submission of industry papers; July 28, 2017 for the submission of supplemental industry papers and public comments; and a Committee meeting on August 15, 2017.

*Gayle Cameron moved that the Committee accept the following schedule: industry papers will be due on June 30<sup>th</sup>, supplemental industry papers and public comments will be due on July 28<sup>th</sup>, and the next Committee meeting will be held on August 15<sup>th</sup>. Motion seconded by Peter Goldberg. Motion passed 4 to 0.*

### **Other Business Not Reasonably Anticipated**

*A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Frank Frisoli. Motion seconded by Gayle Cameron. Motion passed unanimously.*

The meeting adjourned at 2:37 p.m.

### **List of documents and other items used at the meeting:**

1. Massachusetts Horse Racing Committee, Notice of Meeting and Agenda, dated 5/2/17
2. Massachusetts Horse Racing Committee, Draft Meeting Minutes, dated 6/20/16

/s/ Cecelia M. Porché

Cecelia M. Porché, Paralegal/Legal Division



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