

laHHA Board Meeting

Tentative Minutes

April 18th, 2009

The laHHA Board of Directors met at 1:22 pm on April 18th, 2009 in Ankeny, IA. All directors were present with Mark Holtan arriving shortly after the start of the meeting. laHHA lobbyist Matt Eide was also present.

Matt presented the legislative update first. The legislature is working on a large omnibus bill to finish things up. It's easy to hide things in that kind of bill and the casinos are going to try to get their referendum language include. We are working with the other breeds to include minimum numbers of race dates. There were a number of democrats who were supportive during the session.

The racing commission had a new appointee who is a UAW union person from Des Moines. They replaced Diane Hamilton of Storm Lake who was a pro-horse racing commissioner.

The board discussed with Matt the public hearing held at Prairie Meadows, as well as the meeting prior to the hearing where some of the directors met with the committee privately. Matt thought it would be good to try to get more harness people to attend the May public hearing. He was also going to work on setting up some private meetings with some of the committee members.

Dan Roland presented the minutes from the prior board meeting for approval. **Motion by Mark Holtan, seconded by Jeff Carey, to approve the minutes. All Ayes.**

Jim Reese presented the Treasurer's Report. **Motion by Bob Kohlwes, seconded by Mark Holtan, to approve the treasurer's report. All Ayes.**

2009 Fair Program

Royal said 10 horses that staked in February were not staked in April and 11 that were not staked in February paid the penalty in April to get in. There were 22 aged pacers and 9 aged trotters.

Mark led a group that met with ISU on our drug testing program. We will be using a new test that costs slightly more but covers more things even than Prairie Meadows test for. It was agreed that the membership currently favored strengthening the program. There was some concern about the results not being made public last year. Mark took the blame for that in his first year heading the program and committed to keeping a binder with all of the results for the year at the entry table for each stakes meet. **Motion by Mark Holtan, seconded by Bob Kohlwes, that we proceed with the current drug testing policy with the change to pick two random check earners per day for TC02 and illegal drug testing (blood only). All Ayes.**

Officials Committee

At least one judge is lined up for each place. We are struggling to find the second judge for some fairs due to distance of travel. Mark and Bob are working to set up a program for getting retired high school sports officials who could work as associate judges to learn how to be presiding judges. The thought is that they are familiar with the skills needed for officiating and have shown a commitment with other sports to learning a rule book.

Charting will be done at the Oskaloosa fair, Sioux Center on August 7th and 8th, and all meets after the State Fair.

Promotion Committee

Copies of the new newsletter that Mary Lou had been working on were distributed. They should be mailed and anyone needing extra copies can contact their local director. Mark has been continuing work on hiring a firm to manage and expand the web site.

Awards Committee

Motion by Larry Jenson, seconded by Jack Wilkening, to start an Iowa Registered Horse of the Year award with criteria to be determined by the committee before the end of the year. All Ayes.

The Iowa Harness Racing Association has taken over the scholarships and Mark will talk to them about taking over the flowers for funerals, hospitalizations and such. Currently Mark is the contact for those things.

Membership Communication Committee

Bob is working with a subgroup of his committee and Jill Paxton at the Department of Agriculture to set up more joint breed meetings to improve relations. Bob had been having problems contacting Jill so he has asked Lesa Peters to pursue that.

Finally the board discussed the changes to the USTA whipping rules. Fines and suspensions are now set in the USTA rules for county fair racing and it will be a point of emphasis for our judges. The board discussed other options such as requiring two hands in the hand holds at all times and agreed to see how what the effects of the USTA rule changes were before making any further changes.

Motion by Jack Wilkening, seconded by Jeff Carey, to adjourn the meeting at 4:20pm. All Ayes.