

IaHHA Annual Membership Meeting

Tentative Minutes

January 16th, 2010

The IaHHA Annual Membership Meeting began at 2:05 pm on January 16th, 2010 at the Best Western Inn in Marshalltown, Iowa.

IaHHA President Royal Roland began the meeting with the President's report. Thursday the IRGC affirmed a schedule of 10 racing days at Prairie Meadows for 2010 beginning October 1st. Prairie Meadows is still offering fair funding but wants to lower it by the cost of converting the track. The board feels it is imperative to keep days at Prairie Meadows to stay under the jurisdiction of the IRGC.

There were no minutes available for the 2009 annual meeting.

Jim Reese presented the Treasurer's Report. The PAC currently has \$7,303.55 with some checks to legislators not cleared yet.

The next item on the agenda was election of directors. **Rick Huffman was elected from District 1. Royal Roland was re-elected from District 3.**

There was one at-large director with an expiring term.

Bob Kohlwes was nominated by Jim Reese, seconded by Gary Hafner.

Motion by Lorenza Gooch, seconded by Judy Roland, that nominations cease. All Ayes.

Bob Kohlwes was re-elected to a three year term.

IaHHA Lobbyist Matt Eide gave the legislative update. All our work in past years has got us to the point where we can block harmful legislation. Our next step we are working for is to be able to get what we need passed. Our main focus for this year is getting our county fair money to count under the required purse pool Prairie Meadows pays. The first funnel date this year is February 12th.

Jill Paxton of the Iowa Department of Agriculture spoke. The department continues to do anything they can to help and support the horse industry but is constrained by budget cuts from the state.

Royal began the open discussion period by mentioning the association has retained Jeff Lamberti as our new lawyer to assist in negotiations with Prairie Meadows. He felt this has already had an impact just by the demeanor of the Prairie Meadows people during meetings Jeff has attended. Jeff is also the former Iowa Senate Majority Leader.

The group discussed continued problems with getting the quarterly newsletter out. Mark Holtan asked anyone interested on working on the newsletter to meet with him after the meeting. Mark is the chair of the Promotions Committee.

The group discussed the option currently presented by Prairie Meadows to have \$1 million of fair funding and race the Prairie Meadows races on a packed track or to get \$750,000 of fair funding and scrape the track. They have committed to doing bids for the scraping but the board is pessimistic that the management of Prairie Meadows won't put restrictions on the project to drive up the cost to at least the \$250,000 level. The board is continuing to negotiate to try to lower the cost. Member comment supported both options so it was asked for a show of hands. The member preference was 29-12 in favor of scraping the track and taking a lower fair supplement if it came to that.

Given the likely hood from the prior vote that there would be reduced funding for the fairs Royal led a discussion to garner input from the membership on preferred targets for reductions. The options are essentially limited to reduced dates or lower purses, with there probably being a combination of the two. At the end of discussion a show of hands was a narrow margin of 19-15 in favor of lower purses over reduced racing dates.

Mark Holtan brought up the subject of the Humboldt County Fair winning the contest to get the track redone by Coons Brothers. It would require about \$50,000 of funding to get the work done.

A topic from membership was discussion of the possibility of racing the Prairie Meadows dates as non-betting races somewhere other than Prairie Meadows to avoid the cost of resurfacing the track. The board agreed to explore this idea but is pessimistic that this could be done. The Commission has ruled the races have to take place at Prairie Meadows to be counted within the 11% and because the Commission has set the \$550,000 of funding of purses for harness races it is believed those funds would have to be distributed at Prairie Meadows. Royal had a specific concern about code language that says a licensee could not conduct races at two different locations on the same day so if it was allowed the races would have to either still be after the regular Prairie Meadows meet or on days they were dark.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15pm.