

**MINNESOTA RACING COMMISSION  
FULL COMMISSION MEETING**

**Wednesday, August 15, 2007  
4:00 p.m.**

**Canterbury Park  
President's Suite  
1100 Canterbury Road  
Shakopee Minnesota 55379**

**MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Hitesman called the meeting to order at 4:05 P.M.

**ROLL CALL:** Present: Commissioners Hitesman, Kozitza, Leegard, McArdle, Sundberg:  
Absent: Commissioner Preece.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA:** Chair Hitesman moved the agenda be revised to move item No. 5 (Election of Officers) to No. 10 on the agenda, prior to the Canterbury Park Status report. Commissioner Leegard moved that the agenda be amended with the revisions recommended by the Chair; seconded by Commissioner McArdle. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – July 12, 2007:** There being no additions or changes to the minutes of July 12, 2007, Commissioner Leegard moved that the minutes be approved as presented; seconded by Commissioner McArdle. Motion carried.

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO PUBLISH REQUEST FOR COMMENTS FOR RULEMAKING:** Deputy Director Manney reminded that the Commission had spent time reviewing the proposed 2007 rule changes at its last Work Session on August 7 at Columbus City Hall. Ms. Manney summarized the changes that had been made as a result of discussions at the Work Session meeting.

Commissioner Leegard recommended that a change be made to M.R. 7875.0100, subpart 6, to include the words "but not limited to". Commissioner McArdle recommended that a change be made to M.R. 7879.0200, subpart 2(L) to change the word "all" to "any"; and that a change be made in M.R. 7877.0180, subpart 1, paragraph 6, to change the position of the word "or" within the sentence.

Following discussion, Commissioner Kozitza moved that the Executive Director be authorized to publish a Request for Comments covering the rules, including the recommendations made by Commissioners Leegard and McArdle; seconded by Commissioner McArdle. Motion carried.

**CHAIR'S REPORT:** Chair Hitesman reported that progress was being made in getting new Commissioners appointed to fill the three vacant seats. She stated that she would keep the Commissioners and staff informed as to the status of the appointments. The Chair stated that she, and Commissioners Sundberg and Leegard, had participated in an appeal hearing held on August 14<sup>th</sup>, and that a decision would be rendered by the panel within the ten day statutory requirement.

**STEWARDS' REPORT:** Mr. Hank Mills, Chief Steward, spoke to the Commission. He stated that 55 rulings had been issued so far during the 2007 meet, and the majority of them dealt with failure to complete licensing requirements. He stated that there were 16 medication violations.

Mr. Mills stated that the "Extreme Races" held on July 22<sup>nd</sup> had been very successful, and that smooth and efficient cooperation had been achieved by all participants to insure a successful

day. Commissioner Leegard stated that she had attended the event, and had been very impressed with how it was handled, and how the patrons responded to the races. Commissioner McArdle stated that it was not a coincidence that the event was well-planned and well-handled. She commended the Canterbury Park staff and Commission employees on the way they conducted themselves and the races on "Extreme Day".

**VETERINARIAN'S REPORT:** Dr. Hovda stated that the Veterinary Department had enjoyed a quiet year so far with the 2007 meet. She stated that two medication violations had resulted in requests for split samples, and that there had been ten traumatic breakdown injuries on the track. She explained that 23 horses had been rescued and placed in permanent homes through the animal rescue program, and added that Dr. Bowman, one of the Commission Veterinarians, had placed some of the animals on his ranch in North Dakota. She stated that the dual races conducted on Extreme Day had worked very well, and commended Canterbury Park staff and Commission employees on their contributions to making this a successful day.

**ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRS:** Chair Hitesman reminded that the Commission By-Laws required that Vice-Chairs be elected every year at the August meeting of the Commission. Commissioner Sundberg moved that Commissioner Leegard be elected to fill the position of 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair; seconded by Commissioner McArdle. The motion was carried. Commissioner Sundberg moved that Commissioner Kozitza be elected to fill the position of 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair; seconded by Commissioner McArdle. The motion was carried.

**CANTERBURY PARK MATTERS:** Mr. Randy Sampson spoke to the Commission. He stated that the new computer system had been installed in the Card Room, and that it was operating smoothly and the remaining bugs were being worked out. He explained that simulcasting was down again this year, but not as much when compared to the same time period last year. He stated they were still feeling the effects of internet wagering on the downturn in simulcast revenues.

Mr. Sampson explained that they were encouraged by the increase in attendance at the live races in 2007. He stated that Thursday nights were their most successful race days, and contributed to the 6% overall increase in attendance at the track. He stated that per capita wagering was not as high as at other tracks across the country, but added that as the younger betters became more comfortable with the sport, he expected that per capita wagering would increase.

Mr. Sampson stated that they were currently struggling with short fields as they attempted to write races, and that the short fields would continue through the end of the meet on Labor Day. He stated that competition from North Dakota, and from Remington Park where slots were allowed, was a big factor in luring horsemen to their tracks from Canterbury Park. He stated that the number of breakdowns on the track was probably due, at least in part, to the hot and dry weather which created a harder racing surface. Mr. Sampson stated that he was pleased with the events on Extreme Day, and thought that everything went very well.

Commissioner Sundberg commended Mr. Sampson and the Canterbury Park staff on their marketing and public relations efforts. She stated that Canterbury's success in raising attendance, and the success of Extreme Day, did not just happen, but came as a result of hard work and good planning by those involved. Commissioner Sundberg added that she hoped this would be noticed by Legislators when the next session convened in 2008.

Mr. Sampson stated that two Arabian races had been held on the August 11<sup>th</sup> program, but that they had failed to meet expectations in terms of generating interest in the breed, and betting on the races. He stated that perhaps another venue could be found for the Arabian horse people to showcase their breeds. Ms. Manney added that a request from staff would probably be coming to the Commission to allow the monies in the Arabian Breeding Fund to be spent on other breeds, as is currently permitted by Statute. Commissioner McArdle agreed, stating that there not enough racing Arabians to create competitive races. Mr. Sampson pointed out that the Thoroughbred and Quarter Horse breeders funds were also experiencing problems with

purses, but added that it was because there were more Minnesota-bred horses racing for the same amount of purse dollars, resulting in smaller payouts.

Commissioner Leegard expressed her hope that recent tours of Canterbury Park by Legislators and their staff members would result in a better understanding of the needs of the industry during the next Legislative session. Mr. Sampson agreed, stating that any time that a Legislator toured the track, it always resulted in that person having a better understanding of how the industry worked together as a whole, and the number of people that would benefit from a healthy industry.

**RUNNING ACES HARNESS PARK UPDATE:** Jeff Halpern spoke to the Commission. He stated that their facility was under construction, and was now easily visible from the freeway. He said that Kraus-Anderson, their General Contractor, was doing a wonderful job and they fully expected to be able to start racing in April of 2008. He stated that the Commissioners had toured the facility prior to the Work Session meeting on August 7<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Halpern stated that preliminary meetings had taken place between their staff and Canterbury Park staff to identify areas where they could cooperate jointly, such as Legislative interfacing, and they hoped to have a positive working relationship between the two tracks. Mr. Halpern thanked the Commissioners for attending the tour on August 7<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Sundberg thanked Mr. Halpern for the hospitality extended to Commissioners and staff, and added that she was impressed with the progress being made at the new track. She reminded both licensees to let the Commission know if it could be of any help in 2008 legislative efforts.

**BUDGET UPDATES:** Ms. Manney presented the budget updates to the Commission, stating that there was no change in the updates since they were presented at the work session on the 7<sup>th</sup>. She explained that the State was closing its books on Fiscal Year 07 on August 25<sup>th</sup>, and that the next reports furnished to the Commissioners would have more information on the year-end budget figures.

**OTHER MATTERS:** Ms. Manney explained that the July licensing report was available for review by the Commissioners.

Ms. Manney explained that the Running Aces Harness Park Card Club Plan of Operations was being presented to the Commissioners at this meeting, and that it would be reviewed in detail at the next work session of the Commission. She stated that staff had prepared "side by side" documents of the Running Aces Card Club Plan and the Canterbury Park Card Club plan, to make it easier for the Commissioners to review the plans. These documents will be sent out to the Commissioners with the agenda for the next work session.

**ANNOUNCE FUTURE MEETINGS:** It was announced that the next work session meeting of the Commission would be held on Tuesday, September 11, 2007 at the Columbus City Hall at 4:00 PM. It was announced that the next meeting of the Commission be held on Thursday, September 20, at 4:00 PM at the Columbus City Hall. It was announced that the October work session, October 2<sup>nd</sup> at 4:00 PM, and the October Commission meeting, October 18, at 4:00 PM would both be held at Canterbury Park.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business of the Commission, Commissioner Leegard moved that the meeting be adjourned at 5:15 PM; seconded by Commissioner Kozitza. Motion carried.

Adopted this 20th day of September, 2007 by the Minnesota Racing Commission