

**Minnesota Racing Commission**

**FULL COMMISSION MEETING**

**MINUTES**

**November 15, 2007**

**4:00 PM**

**Columbus City Hall  
1619 Kettle River Blvd  
Columbus Minnesota 55025**

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

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

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA:** There being no deletions, additions, or changes to the proposed agenda, Commissioner McArdle moved that the agenda be adopted as presented; seconded by Commissioner Overton. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – There being no additions, deletions, or corrections to the minutes of October 18, 2007, Commissioner Overton moved that the minutes be approved as presented; seconded by Commissioner Buhler. Motion carried.

**REVIEW ASSIGNMENT OF RACING DAYS:** Executive Director Krueger explained that the Commission had previously received Canterbury Park's Request for Assignment of 2008 Race Days, and that today they had received the request from Running Aces Harness Park. Deputy Director Manney stated that the request from Running Aces differed somewhat from the draft request, in that they were requesting an additional three days, from 50 to 53.

In response to a question from the Chair, Commission Legal Counsel, Joan Eichhorst, explained that the Commission was required to hold public hearings on each of the requests, and the items could be scheduled for discussion at work session meetings, prior to the Commission taking action on the requests at its December meeting. Commissioner Hitesman urged the Commissioners to ask any serious questions and get resolution on the matter prior to the meeting scheduled for December 20<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Overton noted that the Race Days Request from North Metro was not signed by a member of the Board, adding that it would be helpful if the request could be signed by a member of the Board of Directors, in that the request should come from an officer of the corporation the Commission was dealing with. It was explained that the request was signed by Tom Snook, with authority delegated to him by the Board of Directors.

Rosemary Williams spoke to the Commission about Running Aces' Race Days Request. She explained that they had gone back and looked at the calendar, and had decided to make the request for four days a week across the board, and that after discussion had decided on 6:00 PM post time for July 4<sup>th</sup>.

In response to Commissioner Buhler, Ms. Williams stated that other than the changes noted, the request did not differ from what had been previously submitted to the Commission in draft form. She stated that they did not think there would be a problem with filling all the races. She added that they planned to package Running Aces' simulcast program with the live racing at Mountaineer Park. She went on to explain that they were in the process of soliciting job

applications from the best possible people they could find to fill the racing officials' positions at Running Aces. She added that she would be attending a trade show in Arizona, and that they would be manning a kiosk to actively solicit personnel. Commissioner Overton asked how they planned to handle equal employment opportunity issues. Ms. Williams stated that they would be adopting a policy in conjunction with the State's model, and that the General Manager would be in charge of implementation of the program.

Ms. Williams went on to state that they were actively pursuing off-site stabling and training facilities, and that they had been reaching out to local stables to assist in this effort. She stated that they were currently looking at a site in Rice Lake, Wisconsin for stabling and training. She adding that limiting the number of five-day weeks to two for the season would also help with the on-site stabling issues. In response to Commissioner Preece, Ms. Williams stated that there should not be a problem with insurance issues and off-track stabling. In response to Commissioner McArdle, Ms. Williams stated that they were exploring the issue of cost sharing for off-track training and stabling with the horsemen.

**RULES REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION:** Executive Director Krueger stated that the Chair had been furnished with a draft resolution that would authorize the publication of a Request for Comments and the Proposed Rule Language in the State Register. He reminded that these rule amendments had been in process for the past several months and involved changes to definitions, televised horse racing days, assignment of horse racing days, pari-mutuel rules, facilities and equipment, stabling, class C licenses, Stewards, horse races, harness races, and horse medication. Following discussion, Commissioner Hitesman moved that the resolution be approved; seconded by Commissioner Sundberg. Motion carried.

**REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION OF CHANGES TO CANTERBURY PARK CARD GAMES:** Mr. Fuller from Canterbury Park explained that the request before the Commission was for the addition of a new game, Champion Poker and Pai Gow Plus. He added that the Gaming Entertainment company was licensed by the Commission. Commissioner Duncanson noted a discrepancy in the request, pointing out that Championship had been substituted for Champion. Mr. Fuller clarified that it should be Champion Pai Gow and Poker Plus. Following discussion, Commissioner Buhler moved that the game of Champion Pai Gow and Poker Plus be approved and added to the Card Club Plan of Operations; seconded by Commissioner Sundberg. Motion carried.

**CHAIR'S REPORT:** There was no report from the Chair.

**VETERINARIAN'S REPORT:** Dr. Hovda stated that copies of the Poisonous Plants Booklet had been given to the Commissioners. She stated that work on the ethanol project at the University was continuing. In response to a question from the Chair, Dr. Hovda stated that another request for funding from the University would be brought to the Commission at its December work session.

**CANTERBURY PARK MATTERS:** Randy Sampson spoke to the Commission. He stated that the Fall Poker Classic Tournament had been completed, and had helped to insure a good month in the Card Room. He stated that the smoking ban had been detrimental to the casino games section, resulting in a downturn of 20%. He stated that overall for the year, the card room was down, and sales were basically flat.

He stated that simulcasting was down 8% since the end of the live meet, and that they were down 20% from last year on Breeders' Cup day. He added that the downturn was consistent across the country, and not just at Canterbury, because of rainy and sloppy conditions at the track.

With regard to the race day request, he stated that they were finalizing their request for pools and officials, and would be ready for the Commission to act on that request at its December

meeting. He added that they were proposing one less day of live racing in 2008, but that the purse structure would be relatively identical to the 2007 purse structure. He stated that they were still working on finalizing the Stakes Program for 2008.

Mr. Sampson stated that the number of catastrophic breakdowns in 2007 was down overall. He stated that they had hired a new consultant to make recommendations on track maintenance, and were committed to spending a fair amount of money to resolve the issue.

In response to Commissioner Overton, Mr. Sampson stated that they were requesting the same number of quarter horse races as in 2007. He stated that the increase in Thoroughbred Foals was leading to more participation in the Minnesota-bred program. In response to Chair Hitesman, Mr. Sampson stated that the camel and ostrich races had been successful in 2007 and would likely be back in 2008. In response to Commissioner Preece, he stated that they had no contact with the Arabian Racing group.

**RUNNING ACES HARNESS PARK MATTERS:** Mr. Druck spoke to the Commission. He stated that they were on schedule and on budget for the project. He stated that a lot of time had been spent on the racing days schedule, and that they were looking forward to a successful year. He stated that they would be submitting a preliminary contract request to the Commission for a poker tournament sponsored by the Heartland Poker Tour, to be held in November, 2008.

Chair Hitesman reminded that public hearings would be held on both Racing Days Requests prior to the December 20<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Commission.

**OTHER MATTERS:** There were no other matters to come before the Commission.

**OCTOBER LICENSING REPORT:** Executive Director Krueger stated that the October licensing report was available for review in the Commission office. He stated that 90 licenses had been issued in October.

**ANNOUNCE FUTURE MEETINGS:** It was announced that a work session and Public Hearing on Canterbury Park's Request for 2008 race days would be held on December 11, 2007 at a location to be announced.

It was announced that a work session and Public Hearing on Running Aces' Request for 2008 race days would be held on December 18, 2007 at Columbus City Hall.

It was announced that the Commission would hold its December meeting on December 20, 2007 at the Shakopee Police Department.

**ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business of the Commission, Commissioner Overton moved that the meeting be adjourned at 5:20 PM; seconded by Commissioner Preece. Motion carried.

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