

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, APRIL 19, 2021 – 1:00 PM
AMERICAN LEGION HALL, SPRINGFIELD IL.

Directors Present: Fairley, Hansen, Williams, Husted, Grummel, Teefey, Searle, Chupp

Directors Absent: Coleman, Leonard, Beals, Engel, Franco, Rath, Zawistowski.

Others: Somone, Watson, Brubaker, Gary Mack, Doc Walker, Bill Wright, John Pritchard, Doug Graham.

Approval of April 2021 Agenda: Motion by Williams seconded by Searle All in favor. Motion passed.

Approval of March 2021 BOD Minutes: Motion by H. Williams, seconded by Hansen. All in favor. Motion passed.

Executive Directors Report: An update/reminder was given on the Horseracing Integrity Safety Act (HISA). What it means, who opposes it, current legal challenges etc. At the March Illinois Racing Board meeting, Alan Henry, a new commissioner, chastised Arlington Park and Churchill Downs for their lack of commitment to Illinois Racing. Trophies and Plaques for year-end Horse of the Year and divisional winners as well as leading breeder's awards have been received and a small Facebook presentation will be announced soon. The 2nd membership mailing has gone out. Angie Coleman has told me that she will not be returning this summer to race at Hawthorne. Mike Hoffmann wrote a complimentary thank you note to the board. Have had a few legislative meetings, some remote, some live. Steve B. will expand. Working on getting the IRB licensing office hours at Hawthorne. Hope to have something concrete soon. Hawthorne is anticipating getting the construction on the casino back up and going soon. Once that gets started, all attention will be on securing a location for a second Standardbred track.

ACTION ITEMS:

Legislative – Six weeks remain for Spring session. No gambling bills have moved so far. We have meetings scheduled within the next few weeks with leadership. Internet Gaming and sports betting are noteworthy issues. We will continue to oppose until purses get a share from both revenue streams. Because of Covid, there are disagreements among sports betting operators on whether sign up should remain as live only or return to mobile sign up as well. Also because of Covid, access to legislators is very limited. To meet with them you are required to have a negative Covid test within three days of meeting. A lengthy discussion ensued regarding what we can do to expedite the process for the second racetrack. An update on our website to help our membership understand what the future of Illinois harness racing may look like was discussed.

Grassroots and Membership – Current membership stands at 319. There will be membership forms available at Springfield and Hawthorne.

County Fairs – Spring Preview is scheduled for Saturday, April 24. 168 nominated for fairs. Nine pacing colts paid double to nominate. If the County Fairs will take place this summer will be up to each individual Fair.

Race Track Condition and Backstretch – Balmoral has been sold to a trucking company and there are discussions that it could be turned into a training facility.

Legal – Nothing new to report.

Purse Account – Nothing new to report.

Payment of Bills – Fairley motioned to pay bills, Searle second, Motion passes.

Finance – Nothing new to report.

Public Relations/Social Media – Discussion ensued regarding offering free programs to horsemen and fans. The IHHA would pay a flat rate fee and then have the programs available on their website, as well as Facebook and Twitter. Grummel motioned that we pay for eight weeks of service and then see at that point if it is well received. Williams second. Motion passes. Discussion ensued about paying for a six month subscription for our members for the “Midwest Harness Report. Teefey motioned to pay it, Husted second, motion passes.

Breeders – Nothing new.

Motion to adjourn by Williams, seconded by Teefey. Meeting adjourned at 3:20 pm.