

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, July 19, 2021 – 1:00 PM
Oakbrook Terrace OTB

Directors Present: Fairley, Hansen, H. Williams, Husted, Searle, Beals, Brink, Rath, Engel, Leonard, Grummel, Franco, Chupp.

Directors Absent: Teefey, Zawistowski

Others: Somone, Brubaker, Watson, Gary Mack, Jeff Davis

Approval of July 2021 Agenda: Motion by H. Williams, seconded by Engel, all in favor. Motion passed.

Approval of June 2021 BOD Minutes: Motion by H. Williams, seconded by Engel, all in favor. Motion passed.

Executive Directors Report: Everyone was reminded that the August meeting will be held on Monday, August 23 at the IHHA office. The Springfield BBQ in the paddock is back on and volunteers to help will be appreciated. The leading trainer, driver, owner and breeders at the County Fairs are being tallied with a trophy/plaque presentation scheduled for the DuQuoin State Fair. The Federal Horse Racing Integrity and Safety Act (HISA) is still being discussed on a national level and many components of the Act are still unclear. The Association for Racing Commissioners International (ARCI) recently referred to it as a “legal quagmire.” The 2021 IHHA BOD election is progressing with ballots scheduled to go out on Friday, July 23. Return deadline is Friday, August 20. They will be counted on Saturday, August 21 by Legacy Professionals, the accounting firm hired to run the election. A recap of the meeting with Tim Carey was discussed. A recent story in the Daily Herald by Jim O’Donnell was discussed. Specifically, his opinion of what Hawthorne might do if Arlington Park’s requested zero dates for 2022. We will learn more when the dates are officially requested on July 30.

ACTION ITEMS:

Legislative – There is plenty of speculation that the gambling package (which included our breeder fix) will move in this year’s Veto session, scheduled for Oct 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, and 28. Internet Gaming is still being pushed by casinos but unless the VGT operators find a way in, it is likely to stall. Our horse racing industry is also opposed and looking for a way to be included. Other gambling issues that could negatively affect us continue to pop up and we will keep a close eye on them as well.

Grassroots and Membership – Current membership stands at 404, with 386 having voting privileges.

County Fairs – Overnight races and IHHA races continue to be a critical piece of County Fair racing. The Il. Dept. of Agriculture requested financial support for testing at the Fairs. After a lengthy discussion Beals motioned and Hansen seconded the motion to give them \$2,500 for testing. The motion passed unanimously. Further discussion ensued addressing the future of funding for testing at the Fairs once the slots money begins to flow.

Race Track Condition and Backstretch – Although the track is currently in good shape the concern for no working conditioner at the track was discussed. There has been varying stories on the current status of when that conditioner (or parts for the conditioner) will actually show up. The board was reminded that this was important enough to be put into this year's (2021) contract. It was agreed that we have given every benefit of the doubt to Hawthorne on this matter. Hansen motioned and Beals seconded a motion that we were to immediately send a letter to Hawthorne and the IRB spelling out the contract breach and overall voicing our displeasure with this situation. After a lengthy discussion the motion was voted on with 5 voting yes and 7 voting no, the motion failed. An amended motion by Grummell and seconded by Husted saying that we were to give Hawthorne one week, (Tuesday, July 27) to have a working conditioner or we would need to write a letter to Hawthorne and the Illinois Racing Board explaining the contract grievance and why it was critical to be addressed. This motion passed. The current breathalyzer testing was discussed.

Legal – A brief overview (reminder) of our many different insurance policies was given.

Purse Account – Hawthorne would like to use a twelve horse field on Saturday night for a mandatory “Hi-Five” payout. They agreed to raise the purse and pay out all 12 places. Discussion followed. Williams motioned and Grummell seconded to allow this on a one time basis as long as no two-year-olds or green horses were included in the race. Motion passes.

Payment of Bills – Beals motioned to pay bills, G. Hansen second, motion passes.

Finance – Audit is complete and copies are available for directors. No substantive issues were reported.

Public Relations/Social Media – Brink spoke with Wendy Ross about the best way for us to increase our social media presence. He also looked into the future of streaming our County Fairs on Facebook in the future. Discussion regarding e-mailing the IHHA accomplishments document to members and/or potential members took place.

Breeders – No report.

Motion to adjourn by Beals, seconded by Brink, meeting adjourned at 3:15 pm.