

**2016 ASHA AGM  
Century Downs Racetrack and Casino  
Calgary, AB  
Saturday, March 26, 2016**



President Norm Kennedy called the meeting to order with quorum reached.

In attendance on the Board of Directors are Norm Kennedy, Bill Andrew, John Hind, Diane Bertrand, Jamie Gray, Rod Starkewski, Ryan Grundy, Sam Johnson, and Jim Rhodes. Absent Connie Kolthammer

Prior to the regular proceedings of the AGM, Paul Ryneveld, General Manager of Century Downs Racetrack and Casino conducted a Question and Answer period to the attendees about racing and the facility.

**Jamie Gray** asked about increasing betting, and attendance on race days.

**Paul** response:

- Portable tellers available at various spots including two on the apron, and self serve tellers.
- Improved teller access on big days such as Mothers Day and Fathers Day

**Jamie G.:** "With the anticipation that the weather gets better as it's supposed to, and the tarmac is packed like it was numerous times last year, what about the idea of walking around with hand-held machines and tellers walking around to people so they don't have to stand in line and so forth?"

**Paul:**

- Currently, the equipment with AmTote is not available to do that but it's possible to bet through MBet on your cellular devices.
- Additionally, we want more staff (and ASHA members) explaining betting to the public to reduce the questions asked at the betting booths.
- Fiber Optics have been added to the barn areas allowing for cable (the races), surveillance and cameras, which will be implemented at the end of April.

**Diane Bertrand** asked, when is the third barn going in?

**Paul:** The third barn requires approval by Century and permits, and financing, but within five years.

**Diane B.:** "How important is the handle to Century Downs? I am hearing a little bit of conflict that because you have the slot program that the handle is not important to you.

**Paul:** Live handle is very important. Comparatively, live handle is currently below OTB in revenue. He continued to explain the percentages and where the anticipated growth is and that the industry looks very positive to grow, especially if the 10-year deal is reached with the government.

Paul thanked everyone.

Shirley McClellan addressed the attendees and expressed her pleasure on behalf of HRA, as a year to celebrate with the opening of Century Downs'. She commended Paul on a job well done with all his hard work and persistence to assuring that it was done right, and improvements could be seen on the grounds with each passing week. She spoke to the horsemen thanking them for their patience while waiting for the opening of Century Downs, and how it will be nice to have a track to call home once again. Shirley addressed the Memorandum of Understanding; although racing is vital to the horsemen, it was not among Minister Ceci's top 10 priorities, as he wrestles some very difficult provincial matters. Despite this, he gave us his time and took the opportunity to learn, and upon completion provided an MOU because "it was the right thing to do.". It would have been nice if the funding had been higher, but given the economic times of our province we have much to be grateful for. She continued by thanking the members of the ASHA Board who also had a voice on the HRA Board; Norm Kennedy, Bill Andrew and Jim Rhodes. We are fortunate to have their combined and valuable experience to assist the HRA Board. Shirley opened the floor to questions:

**Question** – has there been any talk about asking Tim Reid to step down, given what has happened at Northlands?

**Shirley:** Although Tim offered to step down, it's important he remain while Northlands and HRA work through the next while. Any conflicts of interest will be handled accordingly just as with any board member.

**Diane B:** You mentioned you've had a lot of calls, emails etc. from members surrounding security etc., and changes in the industry. Can you expand on that please?

**Shirley:** We had a good regulatory meeting chaired by Jim Rhodes. Expressive and helpful questions regarding consistency in rulings, and improvements to security were raised by two horsemen who came to HRA. Along with 24-hour barn surveillance, sign in at the gate will provide better protection for both the horses and people, along with a total of five well thought out points for implementation. Shirley assured everyone she is prepared to hear from anyone who has not yet been able to talk to her and provided her phone number. Fred Gillis concluded the forum by requesting the attendees thank Shirley as we couldn't do this without her.

**Norm Kennedy** – Call the meeting to order.

- 1) **Approval of the Minutes** - Moved by John Hind and seconded by Sam Johnson for approval of 2016 AGM Minutes.

**Motion Carried.**

- 2) **Approval of the Financial Report** -

John Hind presented the financial report, with the following notes highlighted.

- Improved cash position due to racing at Century Downs.
- There was an error with funds held in trust due to forgetting to transfer \$32,000 to purse account which was transferred in March.
- ASHA loaned Olds Agricultural Society \$40,000.00 to develop their training center for our horsemen. Repayment is \$15,000.00 per year with 2015 repaid, no interest.
- Through discussion with Century Downs, they agreed to purchase some of the barns that we bought for Alberta Downs for \$60,000.00. This was placed into a term deposit for future emergencies.
- Accounts payable are down due to stall rent paid to Northlands for \$25,000.00 with no balance owed this year.
- Our operating assessments are up due to assessments to both Northlands and Century Downs, enabling \$160,000.00 into the 2015 purse account. We recovered Rent and Stabling Revenues from Northlands with little subsidy from ASHA.
- Memberships are up this year due to the liability from Century Downs. With the purchase of a group liability insurance the members would not be required to purchase their own (very expensive) liability coverage.
- The Yearling Sale was again successful and made a small profit of \$2000.00.
- Salaries are up this year due to our agreement of hiring a horseman's book keeper since Century Downs, as a public corporation, cannot do the horsemen's bookkeeping,
- Professional fees went up due to hiring a firm with the insight allowing us to communicate favourably with the new government.
- ASHA ended up with a surplus of about \$30,000.00 this year as opposed to a deficit of about \$250,000.

Moved by John Hind and seconded by Carl Archibald for approval of 2016 AGM Financial Report.

**Motion Carried.**

- 3) **President's Report – Norm Kennedy**

With a new track, a hundred days of good racing, and very good purses. We had young talent on the track, young horses, and superb speed everywhere. Congratulations to Carl Archibald with a two-year-old home grown who won it all, and who could forget Kelly's performance with his good horse. We cannot forget the loss of some very dedicated horse people. I speak of Gord Rumpel, Lynn Kowalevsky, George Sears, Jim Rogers, just to name a few, they will be missed. We've had excellent cooperation from HRA for which we are grateful. With people like Bill Andrew, Brian Alexander, John Brennan Jim Rhodes handling various committees we are sure of the fact that our welfare will be looked after. While our new agreement with the provincial government

will see our share of slot revenue reduced, we feel that our committee did a very good job in negotiating and we must give them a round of applause, and to come up with a ten-year deal was the key. So, they had to give up a little to get the ten-year deal. If we could figure out the OTB network, we've had a heck of time with that, if we could get that even partially straightened out, we'd have no trouble recovering any loss we had to give. It is a pleasure to deal with Paul and the senior executive at Century Casinos; they've been a great partner. In closing this is my last term as President and I will not stand this year. For health reasons I have to curtail things a bit and I'm not going to run again. I've had tremendous co-operation from people in the association and I think I've been on the board for about 18 years. Thank you to Bill for bailing me out lately and special thanks to Fred, Michelle and Colleen for their help.

Bill thanked Norm for being our President and previously the Treasurer for so many years and for his many years on the HRA board.

Jim Rhodes spoke to the audience by discussing two issues within HRA

- Alberta Downs' application for TB dates when conditions have yet to be met.
- He appreciated members addressing the grave concerns of (lack of) fair racing ("the white elephant in the room") within the STB race industry of late.

With these open concerns, Jim encouraged the membership to run for positions on the board so more views can be heard from the members. He also talked briefly about his position in HRA, since he is stepping down, and commended all the work put forth from them.

Bill added he was asked to chair the HRA breeder's committee. The major decision is trying to determine the allocation and how much money will get cut out of the funding to improve the breed. There will be an initial meeting of the breeder's committee the next board meeting. Connie will be included in that meeting as the ASHA breeder's chair, and we will need one more. In addition, there will be two TB breeders on that committee, and then we have two QH and at least one or two from the other breeds and end up with about 7 or 8 on the committee. With a little less money, we are going to have to figure out how much money we have and what we do with the money.

#### **4) ASHA Breeders – Connie Kolthammer**

Sam Johnson read the breeders report for Connie Kolthammer in her absence.

*Good evening everyone, and thank you for coming. I'm sorry that I am not able to be there this evening, thank you for your understanding.*

*Of course, it's a very busy time of year for the breeders in our province. We are currently in the "busy season" if you could call it that. With foaling, and breeding happening, and for many still racing right through it, people are on the go, on the road and working hard.*

*I want to thank Shirley McClellan and all those at HRA who have helped get this MOU completed, and for the positive outlook that a ten-year deal gives us to this industry. For quite some time, we have been uncertain as to what the future holds, and though we never know what the future may hold, we do know that a ten-year deal gives us a great foundation, and starting point, as well as some stability that will help breeders make future plans. Thank you, Shirley, for all the hard work that I am sure went into making this happen.*

*I also want to thank our breeders. You've really "hung in there" through all the uncertainty that has been part of the industry for some time now. Together, we have met the challenges we have faced and are now looking at a more positive future for our industry. We know that things are not perfect, and as always there is a lot of work to be done. But relationships take work, and it is no different in an industry like ours. But we also know that if we stick together, and work hard, we will, as we have seen, prevail in the end. So, thank you for putting in the work necessary, and for your perseverance.*

*I look forward to the months ahead, seeing new foals on the ground and everyone preparing for another yearling sale in September. Applications will soon be available from the ASHA office for the sale, and again remember that the deadline for applications will be May 1, 2016, so don't miss out if you have yearlings you want to bring to the sale.*

*Thank you for all of your support, this past year, in my position as Breeders Chair, and good luck to everyone, for what looks like a promising future for Horse Racing in Alberta.*

#### **5) Owners Committee - Diane Bertrand**

As the owner's chair, I just want to say that any questions and concerns that have come forward, they have gone on to the ASHA and HRA board, I take my position very seriously. With the ten-year deal going forward, I am hoping that we can continue to build, and continue more groups like Century has started. I believe that the Century Racing club is almost full with new owners putting in \$250 each and that's really exciting to see going forward. Also, want to hang on with the SC board 2017 for world driving challenge. HRA, Shirley and Fred, have worked hard to get that going here. They are working on a commitment to host that. And it's my understanding that we are very close to hosting the first leg of the driving challenge here in Alberta in August 2017. So, we will have people from Australia, France and New Zealand, and then they will slowly go east to PEI. And that's all I have for the Owners Chair.

#### **6) Driver/Trainers Representative - Rod Starkewski.**

Things have been quiet as the Driver/Trainer rep. I would like to thank Monk for all the hard work he and his crew have put into the track. It's much better than last year, with the concrete. Now that horses are getting qualified, hopefully we can fill classes and let Jackson get creative on conditions. That's about all.

#### **7) New Business/Question Period**

❖ **QUESTION from Nancy Tamblyn:** We need to address concerns of fair racing ("the white elephant in the room"). What HRA is doing and when, before some of the smaller barns start running out of money. It is very frustrating, and we are tired of racing for 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup>. We know that a security company has been hired, but its not right when they get bullied and intimidated so that they leave that barn.

**ANSWER (Shirley):** Security will not be intimidated to leave any barns. Paladin Securities are a private security that specializes in security and their role was to provide 24-hour barn security. Security that we are providing in those barns is for each and every one of you with horses in the barns. We have our own HRA security as well, one on site all the time and a second if necessary, to be in any part of the barn area, and will be.

❖ **QUESTION from Jamie Gray:** At the last meeting, I questioned the board regarding allowing us to race on Lasix. I have a petition in hand in support of the program and I am asking the board to take it to HRA or whomever we need to, to take the steps to start this program.

**ANSWER (Bill):** Yes, bring it to the next board meeting and it will be on the table.

**Jamie:** Since GiGi Van Ostrand is on HRA salary already, she would be willing to run it. She would just have to hire a tech and work with the test barn.

**Bill:** Ours is a funny province, TB's can race on Lasix, but STB's cannot. Jamie has a petition that will be brought to the new board and then move from there. As with security, testing, all lies with HRA, we sort of just pass it on. So, if there is a consensus to do something with the horse men, just bring it to us. Of course, this one must be regulated, and go through HRA for rules and regulations.

❖ **QUESTION from Nancy Tamblyn:** Will we have a 48-hour retention barn?

**ANSWER (Bill):** That is up to HRA and the Century Downs, not ASHA.

(Shirley): It is difficult to do when there is a shortage of stalls. We are hoping that 24-hour barn surveillance will help. It is difficult working with shortage of stalls and also difficult with so many shipping

- A retention barn will be more possible when the third barn is built. Also from the floor were concerns around professional security with knowledge of the industry, and up to date emergency contact information. Signing in and out of the stabling gates will also be enforced.

#### **8) Elections**

##### **Nominations for ASHA President for two-year term**

Blair Corbeil - acclaimed

**Nominations for Owners chair for two-year term**

Nominated - Nancy Tamblyn

Nominated - Diane Bertrand

Nominated - Rachel Andrew

*Elected -Diane Bertrand.*

**Nominations for Driver/Trainer Representative for two-year term**

Nominated - Jamie Gray

Nominated – Kelly Hoerd

*Elected - Kelly Hoerd.*

**Nominations for Director for a two-year term.**

Nominated - Jamie Gray

Nominated - Don McDougall

Nominated - Harold Haining

Nominated - Peter Morris

Nominated - Don McNeil

Nominated - JF Gagne

*Elected - Jamie Gray.*

**Nominations for Breeders Committee for a three-year term.**

Nominated - Harold Haining

Nominated - Karen Bannister

Nominated - Diane Bertrand

*Elected Harold Haining, Karen Bannister, and Diane Bertrand.*

**Moved by** John Hind and seconded by Carl Archibald for approval of 2016 AGM Financial Report.

**Motion Carried.**

**Moved by** Ryan Grundy to terminate the meeting.

**Meeting Adjourned.**