

**2014 ASHA AGM
Northlands Park – Paddock Theatre
March 9, 2014**



President Norm Kennedy called the Meeting to Order at 12:10pm.

Norm Kennedy advised there was quorum of voting members.

Moved by Sam Johnson and Seconded by Georgina Terry that the Minutes of the 2013 ASHA AGM held on March 3, 2013 be approved as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

Financial Report

John Hind reviewed the Audited Financial Statements ending December 31, 2013 and advised ASHA is in good financial position and has a \$30,000 surplus. He also advised that the Yearling Sale was a huge success – in fact, it's the best one ASHA has had in the past 4 or 5 years. Office Salaries are up as a third person has been added to the office staff.

Motion by John Hind and Seconded by Derek Jones to accept the Audited Financial Statements ending December 31, 2013 as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

President's Report

Norm Kennedy began his report by saying 2013 was another challenging year. Track conditions and Stabling were an issue with our Track partners. We did however, have 95 days of racing and we are the envy of other Provinces. We did pretty well if you compare our race meets with those at Tracks across Canada. We are very excited about Century Downs and won't say much more on this as Darcy Marler will be giving an update later in the meeting.

The 2013 ASHA Awards were an overwhelming success. Congratulations to two of our own, Kelly Hoerd and Travis Cullen for winning their respective O'Brien Awards. Well done!

Simulcast and Stabling continues to be issues.

Looking forward to working with our new Partner – Century Downs.

Lastly, would like to see the membership numbers rise in 2014. Please contact the office for memberships.

HRA Breeders

Jim Rhodes began his report by talking about distributing money back into the breeding industry. We all know how important the breeding industry is and as such, ASHA is working hard to hold the money similar to the past year.

The ASHA board has voted to try and hold the monies for the Sire Stakes and the Open Stakes where they were in 2013. With early warning from Norm Kennedy who is on the Finance Committee at HRA, Fred has been able to already put aside some funds to compensate for the loss of funds coming from the BIP Program at HRA. John and Fred will be working together throughout the year to balance the distribution of funds as HRA will be re-evaluating their budget throughout the remainder of the year.

HRA Representatives

Jim Rhodes gave an update on activities with HRA. As there was a significant revenue downfall this past year with the slot numbers being down 4.7% and as such, there will be a revised distribution of funds. HRA had a meeting with all the Stakeholders (ASHA, HBPA, Other Breeds, and All Alberta Tracks) and presented a proposal which was – \$1 million to Breed Improvement Program; \$.5 million cut to Purses and \$.5 million cut to marketing. After discussion at this meeting, and after a follow up meeting with the HRA Audit and Finance Committee, the proposed cuts will be: \$200,000 from BIP; \$300,000 from Marketing and \$1 million from Purses – about \$400,000 from Standardbreds. These numbers will be re-evaluated in May.

HRA is still working towards a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Government and has had meeting with Deputy Ministers and Minister Horner. Meetings have gone well to date. The current MOU expires in 2016.

All Agreements between HRA and Tracks have been completed.

The HRA Board Members are working on completing a Self Assessment of the Board Members as well as a review of both the Chairman and CEO's contracts.

HRA has been working on a new and improved model for OTB/Simulcast. There have been quite a few meetings on this as well as consultation with stakeholders. It is hoped that this will be concluded prior to the end of the year.

Erwin Haitzmann is the new "A" Track Representative on the HRA Board of Directors. Erwin is with Century Casino.

Jim concluded by asking the members to stay positive about the new track and casino at Century Downs.

There were no questions for Jim.

ASHA Breeders

Connie Kolthammer thanks the breeders for hanging in and although we are in survival mode again this year, there is a light at the end of the tunnel with Century Downs. Once Century Downs is up and running, it is hoped that there will be more money to play with and they can reintroduce premier stake races and open stake races. Things can only go up from here.

Owners Committee

Dianne Bertrand began by saying she is very much looking forward to Century Downs being up and running as she believes it will bring back owners. She wanted the members to know that she will continue to take any and all issues back to the Board.

Drivers and Trainers Committee

Rod Hennessy advised that these were trying times with the track conditions and thanked Fred for meeting with Northlands Park to alleviate some of the issues.

New Business/Question Period

Darcy Marler presentation on Century Downs:

Darcy provided an extensive update on Century Downs. He thanks ASHA and the industry for their patience. All the issues that have come out have been dealt with. Agreements with landlords and AGLC have been updated and they now have AGLC's blessing to start building. The Development Permit was approved January 28 with conditions and they are expecting the stripping and grating approvals soon.

Coons & Sons have been contracted to do the rack track planning. UHA is working with ASHA, HBPA and CTHS and HRA and will continue to do so. UHA wants to maintain a good working partnership with all the stakeholders going forward. The plan is for Century Downs to be a ship-in-track. Discussion was held with regards to a training facility i.e. location etc. and Century Downs will continue the discussion with the industry committee to come up with the best solution for everyone.

The tender package for below ground will be going out this week and the vertical tender package will be out by the end of April.

Not sure how much the frost will delay the construction. It will be built as fast as we can and you will be proud of the final product.

The Racino will have 550 slot machines to start.

The hub rail is good for Thoroughbreds but not so good for Standardbreds. We will be working with ASHA to address this.

Passing Lane was discussed and Alberta Environment has strict rules i.e. size of ponds, etc. This will be further discussed by the industry committee.

Nancy Tamblin asked about number of racing days...will the Standardbreds have 100 days of racing? ANSWER: In 2015, it will only be Standardbreds racing at Century Downs and in 2016; it will have to be worked out between both breeds. Bill Andrew explained the Contract process with individual Tracks and indicated that over the next 8 months, ASHA will negotiate their Contract with Century Downs. He also indicated that there should be lots of race days in 2015/2016 as ASHA will be negotiating with both places.

Currently there is one finish line – Dan Coon is looking into this to see if it's possible to have 2 different finish lines. This will also be further discussed with the industry committee.

Sam Johnson asked about ship-ins. ANSWER: Currently there are plans for 130 stalls for ship-in ship-out the same day. Century Downs will work with the industry to discuss different options for the best solution for training facilities. Sam thought 180 stalls would be a better number than 130.

Brandon Campbell asked what happens if Century Downs is not up and running by the end of the year? ANSWER: Fred Gillis assured those present that ASHA will have alternate plans in place so that the race year was not disrupted. He has had meetings with both Northlands Park and Lacombe.

There was a general discussion on Training Centers and regardless if it's located in the north, south or central Alberta, someone has to ship. There are going to be changes and both the Standardbred folks and the Thoroughbred folks are going to have to be open minded. Century Downs, as a Track, has to be worried about all breeders both big and small. Discussion on a centrally located Training Centre took place and it was agreed that no matter where the Centre is located, it has to be for the long term health of the industry and will have to be sanctioned by HRA.

A SHORT LUNCH BREAK WAS TAKEN BETWEEN 1:00PM – 1:30PM.

General Questions

Nancy Tamblin asked where the stall rental money at Northlands goes and how come they weren't notified of this charge until the last minute. Fred Gillis advised he had at least three meetings with horsemen advising that there would be a charge for stabling at Northlands and further went into detail about how the Contract with Northlands, which included Stabling, expired in the spring of 2013 and how Northlands initially would not include Stabling in any new Contract with ASHA. Many hours of negotiations were held with Northlands to sort out a new Contract and Northlands finally agreed, with the assistance of HRA, to include a flat fee charge for Stabling but that Northlands would not be responsible for collecting it. Bill Andrew provided a quick background on the Contract Process and how tough negotiations can be and how many times, Contracts are signed at the eleventh hour.

Fred Gillis wanted it noted that if it had not been for HRA stepping in, the amount of money charged for stabling would have been a lot higher as 55% - 60% of the total Stabling Fee has been picked up by HRA.

Rick Schneider asked about the possibility of having a five year plan. This is something that everyone would love to have, unfortunately during these tough times, it's not possible. Rick also asked about the April 15 Stake Payments, saying it's not a lot of time to pay. Fred advised that these Stake Payments were managed by Standardbred Canada and he will be working with Standardbred Canada to determine if there could be a hold on these checks for 30 days. This will totally be up to Standardbred Canada. Membership will be advised of the outcome of these discussions.

Elections

President (Two Year Term)

Norm Kennedy was acclaimed

Owners Chair (Two Year Term)

Dianne Bertrand was acclaimed

Driver/Trainer Chair (Two Year Term)

Nominated: Brandon Campbell
Ken Reid

Elected: Brandon Campbell

Director (Two Year Term)

Nominated: JF Gagne
Ricky Schneider
Lorne Duffield
Jamie Gray
Gerry Hudon
Jim Rhodes

Elected: Jim Rhodes

Director (Two Year Term)

Nominated: Lorne Duffield
Ricky Schneider
Jamie Gray
Gerry Hudon
JF Gagne

Elected: Jamie Gray

Election of Three Members of the Breeders' Committee (Three Year Term)

Nominated: Nancy Tamblyn
Rod Hennessy
Sam Johnson
JF Gagne

Elected: Rod Hennessy, Sam Johnson and JF Gagne

Motion by Connie Kolthammer and Seconded by Derek Jones to accept the new Directors and Members as elected.
MOTION CARRIED

Motion by Sam Johnson and Seconded by Jim Rogers to destroy all the ballots.
MOTION CARRIED

Norm Kennedy welcomed the new Directors and Members to the Board and is looking forward to working together.

Prior to adjourning the meeting, it was announced that Bill Andrew has purchased new race number back pads and they will stay with ASHA. A huge thank you to Bill.

Motion by Jennifer Siefert and Seconded by JF Gagne to adjourn the 2014 AGM at 2:40pm.