



## **ASHA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes** **for July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

held at the ASHA Office Board Room, Airdrie

**In Attendance:** Bill Andrew, Don McDougall, Harold Haining, Tim Lake, Kelly Crump, Rod Starkewski, Nathan Sobey and Mike Hennessy. Regrets John Hind, Don McNeil. Absent Dave Kelly. Also attending (no vote) Executive Director Fred Gillis, Administrative Assistant Michelle Desjardins. Meeting called to order at 5:39 pm

1. **REVIEW OF AGENDA**– Addition of ATOBA Proposal from Julie Brewster
2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** held on May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**Moved by** Kelly Crump and seconded by Mike Hennessy that with no errors or omissions noted, minutes of the meeting of May 25<sup>th</sup> be approved. **Motion Carried**

3. **HRA UPDATE**–**presented by Bill in the absence of John Hind** reported the following from HRA from the last meeting:

- a) Standardbred racing continues to be strong, but the Thoroughbred racing tends to be under performing. Slot revenue is on par at Century Downs with last year. CM is down a little from budget. Simulcast seems to be down year over year on Thoroughbred Handle. HRA is reviewing the situation.
- b) The Track On 2 requested funds for operating revenue to HRA. Given HRA's financial status they cannot help currently, but ASHA will try. Track on 2 applied for VLT's and should receive 3 by August 2<sup>nd</sup>. after successful testing of wireless VLT's, as a cost saving measure. Bill recommended that in order to support Track on 2, ASHA cut this fall's race days in Lacombe from 17 to 13 to provide a funds loan to the Lacombe track to conduct their racing. HRA would support and facilitate this, with the money going to next years budget.

**Moved by** Don McDougall and seconded by Nathan Sobey to support the Track On 2 by reducing racing at Lacombe (Track on 2) from 17 to 13 days and use the funds (purse grants) to provide the track with a loan for operational revenue, to be paid back by the end of next year. **Motion Carried**

- c) Don McDougall conveyed extreme displeasure to Ken Verlik about the prominently Thoroughbred advertising throughout Alberta where Standardbreds are the featured breed on the racetrack. Ken claims it has changed, although this has yet to be verified.
- d) Bill encouraged the young drivers to repeat their past weekend sideline greet with the fans (Packwood Grand) at the new track to create good rapport with potential new fans; take off their helmets and goggles in the winner's circle; high five the crowd, engage with them.
- e) Don recommended that the Century group hire people to walk around to educate people on betting. Century Mile is doing well with physical numbers but not betting. Spectators require education.
- f) Fred added information regarding the upcoming implementation of the new whipping rule commencing at Century Mile on September 1, 2019. A new rule book is in production.

#### 4. **2019 RACING**

- a) **Financial Report 2018 – report submitted by John Hind in his absence and presented by Bill**  
Revenues are on budget. Insurance premiums are down due to the mean decrease of the age of the ASHA membership.
- b) **Handle Report 2019 – Fred Gillis**  
The handle is overspent, with the upcoming August long weekend being strictly Stakes races. July's handle has not been received yet, as HRA is continuing to understand how all the allocations and splits work out. The handle is projected to be about 45 to 60 thousand overspent this meet, due to the higher-class horses currently racing. Fred presented some number crunching on race days to increase the purses and remains within budget.
- c) **Presidents Report – Bill Andrew**  
Bill met casually with the minister of finance who was informed about our industry. He was made aware that Harness racing has taken their share of cuts over the years, but we are resilient with a strong horse population despite breeding numbers are down; horse population and supporting funding remain the greatest concerns.

## 5. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

### a) **Breeders Report – Harold Haining (report submitted)**

Points from the report:

- A proposal request with British Columbia working with their stakes schedule and racing in general between the two provinces; Bill updated the Board that there will be a meeting on August 4<sup>th</sup> with HRBC to work with them.
- Clear outline of the roles of the (Breeders) committee members. Bill clarified; primary role of the Breeders Committee is to give recommendations to the Board on the Stakes, and the BIP, the secondary role is support and assistance at the Yearling Sale; the Breeders committee is also responsible for overseeing, when there is extra funds, Stallion bonuses, and incentive programs. The Breeders Committee does not decide; the number of horses in overnights, conduct of Drivers and Trainers, etc.
- Yearling Sale items
  - Members on the ASHA Board of Directors also to sell YS Voucher tickets (books then taken by Don McDougall, Nathan Sobey, Mike Hennessy and Kelly Crump).
  - Preview Night; consignors willing to assist
  - Plans for Silent Auction/Live Auction, proceeds to go to the Benevolent Fund
  - OnTrack to once again live stream the sale and provide monitors around the facility
  - Higher purses
  - Update for a mare acquisition program.

### b) **Owners Committee – Don McNeil** sent his regrets

- Fred, on Don's behalf requested an update on the review of the judges. Bill update the Board that there is a review in progress.

### c) **Drivers/Trainers Chair –Nathan Sobey**

- The imminent changes to the whipping rule was a strong topic for discussion.
- The conditions sheet requires change. The board and Fred will follow up with Century for the possibility of the suggestion of change.
- The drivers room showers are still not operational, so the TB's jockey room remains the solution.

## 8) NEW BUSINESS

### a) **Social Media Update– Don McDougall**

The new Media personnel is trying different avenues with video presentations that create awareness with focus on informative content.

### b) **Awards Criteria - Tim Lake** presented the final draft of the awards criteria.

**Moved by** Tim Lake and seconded by Don McDougall that the Board approve the Awards criteria as presented.

(Criteria to be posted to the ASHA Website as soon as convenient).

**Motion Carried**

### c) **Horse Population**

Much of the horse population would be maintained with proper writing of the conditions, which was discussed during the Driver/Trainers report. As far as further acquisitions through States Horse Sale, there is hesitation as costs are shared with Century and HRA. Currently funds are very tight for all concerned, though Fred will talk with Paul to determine commitment.

### d) **Live Stream and Phone Bidding**

The board reviewed the information presented and did not approve phone or online bidding. Bidding will continue to be accepted through authorized Agents, and those who attend the sale.

Next meeting scheduled for October 5<sup>th</sup> at Century Mile, or close by location, TBD.

*Rod Starkewski motioned to adjourn at 8:39 pm*