



Minutes
Oregon Racing Commission
April 19, 2018

Meeting Detail

The Oregon Racing Commission (ORC) met on Thursday, April 19, 2018, in Room 1A of the Portland State Office Building (PSOB), 800 N.E. Oregon St., Portland, OR.

Call to Order

Vice Chair Jan Palmer, DVM, called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

In Attendance

Commissioners: Chair Charles Williamson (by phone); Vice Chair Jan Palmer, DVM; Commissioner Diego Conde; Commissioner Christopher Dudley; Commission Angelo Turner.

Staff

Executive Director Jack McGrail

Agenda Items

Approvals:

Action: Approval of the meeting agenda.

Moved by: Commissioner Christopher Dudley

Seconded: Commissioner Diego Conde

Vote: Commissioners Williamson, Palmer, Conde, Dudley and Turner voted AYE, and the motion carried unanimously (5:0).

Action: Approval of the March 15, 2018, meeting minutes.

Moved by: Commissioner Christopher Dudley

Seconded: Commissioner Diego Conde

Vote: Commissioners Williamson, Palmer, Conde, Dudley and Turner voted AYE, and the motion carried unanimously (5:0).

Old Business:

Medication and Horse Welfare Sub-committee Report

Commissioner Conde reported the sub-committee met this morning and discussed Washington's adoption of most of the ARCI model rules. The ORC is going to follow Washington's lead. The rule-making process will begin soon, Commissioner Conde explained, with Executive Director McGrail contacting stakeholders. Any rules adopted will not go into effect until the summer meets are finished, he added.

The sub-committee also discussed the track (Lasix) veterinarians at the summer fair meets. Commissioner Conde stated that Dr. Jack Root is contracting with most of the fairs to provide that service. He added

that State Veterinarian Stacy Katler, DVM, will contact the fair managers and encourage them to identify an alternate vet who would be available in case of emergency.

The sub-committee also discussed a potential change in the claiming rule. Commissioner Conde stated that Director McGrail will consult with stakeholders and move forward with rule-making to promulgate a rule similar to one adopted in February by Kentucky.

Budget Sub-committee Report

Commissioner Dudley reported that the sub-committee met this morning and considered a request from the Southern Oregon Horse Racing Association (SOHRA) for financial assistance to keep the Grants Pass track open for training for 66 days prior to the race meet. Because of increasing costs, SOHRA is seeking a total of \$25,000 in assistance, Commissioner Dudley stated. The Oregon Horsemen's Benevolent & Protective Association (OHBPA) has agreed to contribute \$10,000 in matching funds, and the Oregon Quarter Horse Racing Association (OQHRA) has agreed to contribute \$2,500 in matching funds. SOHRA requests that the Commission contribute \$12,500. Commissioner Dudley noted that the track has about 160 stalls available and expects about 60 horses initially, with a likelihood of filling all stalls after the Union race meet concludes.

The sub-committee noted that \$6,000 is available from purse money not used last year by Harney County, and some of the smaller ADWs are generating more money than expected; according to Director McGrail, money is available to fulfill SOHRA's request.

Commissioner Dudley stated that the sub-committee recommended the Commission approve the request for \$12,500. Vice Chair Palmer noted that the Commission has already given SOHRA \$6,000 of that amount, so another \$6,500 would be forthcoming.

Action: Allocation by the Commission of \$12,500 to SOHRA

Moved by: Commissioner Christopher Dudley

Seconded:

Vote: Commissioners Williamson, Palmer, Conde, Dudley and Turner voted AYE, and the motion carried unanimously (5:0).

Commissioner Dudley added that the sub-committee also discussed the timeline for the 2019-2021 biennial budget. The state needs the agency's requested budget by Aug. 1. The sub-committee will meet July 9, then bring a recommendation to the full Commission at its July 19 meeting.

Best Practices Sub-committee Report

Commissioner Dudley reported that the new survey is out and available on the ORC website. It has been slightly redesigned, is available on SurveyMonkey, and is much easier to use. He noted that 60 responses have been logged so far.

On May 1, Commissioners will receive by email a background memo on the annual self-evaluation and a form to be filled out, which will include a place for the Commissioner's name. (Paper forms are available, if requested.) The form is to be completed by June 1, and the Commission will discuss results at the June meeting, then finalize the review process at the July meeting, including looking at the Commission's mission and goals and the evaluation document.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director McGrail expressed his appreciation to the fair managers for completing their applications in a timely manner. He noted the Eastern Oregon Livestock Show (EOLS) lost barns last summer in a fire that also damaged the starting gate. Repairs to the barn are about 80 percent finished. Presiding State Steward Mike Twiggs will conduct a preliminary inspection next week. Director McGrail added that EOLS may seek Commission funds to help with the costs not covered by insurance. He noted that EOLS has amended its Form B to include Dr. Jack Root as the track veterinarian.

Grants Pass has started an ambitious infield-improvement project that Director McGrail stated would dramatically change the facility's look and make it a permanent resource for the community. The infield will include soccer fields and lights, making the track look more inviting and better on the simulcast. Mr. Twiggs met this week with the project engineer, SOHRA President Rod Lowe and trackman Steve Wood (by phone) to ensure safety of jockeys and horses along the inside rail.

As noted earlier, SOHRA has agreed to keep the track open for training, with the Commission, OHBPA and OQHRA contributing funds.

Director McGrail stated that documents related to the ARCI model rules and new language for the claiming rule will probably be available for public review in the next month. None of the changes will affect the fair meets; if the Commission approves the rules, changes would likely go into effect at the Portland Meadows meet in October.

The Governor's Office has permitted the agency to file three Legislative Concept placeholders, Director McGrail noted. They are mainly bills related to ADWs that would allow them to manage and add to content in order to be more competitive in an evolving market. The Legislative Counsel will draft the bills, with Director McGrail's input on enabling statutes.

Portland Meadows (PM) Report

PM General Manager Karsten Hennze reported that PM has received a proposal from the horsemen for next season's meet, and he hopes to respond to it within the next two weeks. He added that he does not expect any stumbling with the contract, and plans to forward all parts of the application to Director McGrail as soon as possible. He hopes to bring a proposal to the next Commission meeting.

Future of Racing in Oregon Group (FROG) Report

Commissioner Turner reported that FROG met this morning and talked about revenue sources and shortfalls for fairs, including the Grants Pass meet, and possible ways to address them. Commissioner Turner stated he would like to get total attendance numbers for all the fairs, and wondered if the ORC had ever approached corporations to be statewide sponsors of the fairs to help with costs.

Director McGrail noted that some fairs would have attendance figures for the entire event, without breaking out the race meet, and the Commission can ask for those figures. He stated that the Commission is not involved in partnerships but has encouraged the fairs to contact community groups to seek sponsorships. The Commission does provide additional purse money – up to \$2,000 a day -- to match purse money generated by sponsorships. Most of the fairs seek this match.

Commissioner Turner stated that Mr. Hennze had suggested branding the fair meets as “presented by Oregon Racing” to create more cachet. He asked if anything prevents the Commission from seeking a corporate sponsor.

Director McGrail stated he would have to check state policy. He added that the Commission regulates and provides allocations to the fairs, but does not operate the meets.

Commissioner Turner noted that there are 60 race days in Oregon with an economic impact of about \$200 million.

Commissioner Dudley stated that 8 years ago, EcoNorthwest did a study of the economic impact of horse racing in Oregon, and it might be time to update that. Vice Chair Palmer added that the study was funded by PM and FROG.

Vice Chair Palmer noted that attendees at the FROG meeting talked at length about the fairs and about simulcasting at the fairs, which began last year. She added that Mr. Twiggs explained the revamped Jockey Incentive program.

New Business:

Discussion and possible approval of Summer Fair Meets Forms B and C:

Commissioner Dudley noted that the Eastern Oregon Livestock Show Form B had been amended to show Dr. Jack Root as the association veterinarian. Director McGrail reported that all applications have been reviewed by himself and staff and found to be in order.

Action: Approve Forms B and C for the 2018 Eastern Oregon Livestock Show race meet
Moved by: Commissioner Christopher Dudley
Seconded: Commissioner Diego Conde
Vote: Commissioners Williamson, Palmer, Conde, Dudley and Turner voted AYE, and the motion carried unanimously (5:0).

Action: Approve Forms B and C for the 2018 SOHRA meet at Grants Pass
Moved by: Commissioner Christopher Dudley
Seconded: Commissioner Diego Conde
Vote: Commissioners Williamson, Palmer, Conde, Dudley and Turner voted AYE, and the motion carried unanimously (5:0).

Action: Approve Forms B and C for the 2018 Crooked River Roundup race meet
Moved by: Commissioner Christopher Dudley
Seconded: Commissioner Diego Conde
Vote: Commissioners Williamson, Palmer, Conde, Dudley and Turner voted AYE, and the motion carried unanimously (5:0).

Action: Approve Forms B and C for the 2018 Tillamook County Fair race meet
Moved by: Commissioner Christopher Dudley
Seconded: Commissioner Diego Conde
Vote: Commissioners Williamson, Palmer, Conde, Dudley and Turner voted AYE, and the motion carried unanimously (5:0).

Action: Approve Forms B and C for the 2018 Harney County Fair race meet

Discussion: Commissioner Dudley noted that there had been concerns about this meet in the past. Director McGrail stated Harney County has a new fair manager who has been very responsive, seems to want racing in Harney County and wants to facilitate that. Vice Chair Palmer added that the Commission did not have any major issues with last year's meet.

Moved by: Commissioner Christopher Dudley

Seconded:

Vote: Commissioners Williamson, Palmer, Conde, Dudley and Turner voted AYE, and the motion carried unanimously (5:0).

Vice Chair Palmer asked if Commissioners were planning to attend the fairs, adding that she will attend the Tillamook County Fair. Commissioner Dudley stated he was planning to attend EOLS. Commissioner Conde stated he plans to attend a to-be-decided fair. Chair Williamson stated he plans to attend the meet at Grants Pass. Commissioner Turner stated he would attend CRRU.

Other Business as May Properly Come Before the Commission:

None

Public Comment:

Mr. Lowe of SOHRA thanked the horsemen and the Commission for supporting the meet and helping with funding to keep the track open for training.

Contested Cases:

None

Confirmation of the Next Commission Meeting:

The next regular Oregon Racing Commission meeting will be Thursday, May 17, 2018, at 1:30 p.m. in Room 1E of the Portland State Office Building (PSOB), 800 N.E. Oregon St., Portland, OR.

Adjournment:

Action: Motion to adjourn.

Moved by: Commissioner Christopher Dudley

Seconded: Commissioner Diego Conde

Vote: Commissioners Williamson, Palmer, Conde, Dudley and Turner voted AYE, and the motion carried unanimously (5:0).

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:05 p.m.