



**Minutes**  
**Oregon Racing Commission**  
**March 15, 2018**

**Meeting Detail**

The Oregon Racing Commission (ORC) met on Thursday, March 15, 2018, in Room 1C of the Portland State Office Building (PSOB), 800 N.E. Oregon St., Portland, OR.

**Call to Order**

Chair Charles Williamson called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m.

**In Attendance**

**Commissioners:** Chair Charles Williamson; Commissioner Diego Conde; Commissioner Christopher Dudley.

**Excused**

Vice Chair Jan Palmer, DVM

**Absent**

Commissioner Angelo Turner

**Staff**

Executive Director Jack McGrail

**Agenda Items**

**Approvals:**

**Action:** Approval of the meeting agenda.

**Moved by:** Commissioner Christopher Dudley

**Seconded:** Commission Diego Conde

**Vote:** Commissioners Williamson, Conde and Dudley voted AYE, and the motion carried unanimously (3:0).

**Action:** Approval of the February 15, 2018, meeting minutes.

**Moved by:** Commissioner Diego Conde

**Seconded:** Commission Christopher Dudley

**Vote:** Commissioners Williamson, Conde and Dudley voted AYE, and the motion carried unanimously (3:0).

**Old Business:**

**ADW Sub-committee Report**

Commissioner Dudley reported on the ORC-ADW Hubs Forum held March 14 in the PSOB. Ten entities were represented by 14 individuals; five representatives of the Commission also attended. Commissioner

Dudley characterized the discussion as free-flowing and covering a range from rule tweaks to a pair of Legislative Concepts. One Legislative Concept, which started in the special session and will be revisited, would clarify the ability of hubs to carry virtual racing in their pari-mutuel pools. The Governor's Office has given the go-ahead to proceed and the Commission has asked Executive Director McGrail to get the placeholder concept started with legislative counsel. The second Legislative Concept involves expanding events ADW licensees can carry in pari-mutuel pools and whether the Commission has clear authority under statute to do so. The sub-committee asked the Executive Director to start the process on that concept, which has not been vetted yet by the Governor's Office.

The forum also discussed the issue of problem bettors, Commissioner Dudley added, and whether ADWs could share information while respecting confidentiality concerns. The sub-committee will explore what other industries are doing in this arena to see whether the ADWs can share information or come up with a self-exclusion process for customers.

Chair Williamson expressed the Commission's support of the Legislative Concepts.

### **Best Practices Sub-committee Report**

Commissioner Dudley reported that the sub-committee met this morning to discuss next steps in distributing a survey to licensees about how well the Commission is performing. This is part of the self-evaluation required by the Department of Administrative Services. The sub-committee has composed a survey that identifies respondents by interest group (horseman, ADW representative, etc.) and includes seven questions. The sub-committee decided the most effective way to distribute it is via SurveyMonkey, as well as having it prominently available on the ORC website. The Commission will ask industry groups, fair managers and Portland Meadows (PM) to make the surveys available as well. It was suggested that a paper format also be available at fairs and PM. The sub-committee hopes to send the survey out in April, with responses due back by May 1.

### **Executive Director's Report**

Executive Director McGrail thanked the ADW representatives for attending yesterday's forum. He stated that the wide-ranging discussion was helpful to the Commission in doing its job. The forum resulted in new initiatives, some of them legislative and others regulatory.

Director McGrail reported that for many years, Grants Pass has been the primary training track for the fair meets. The Southern Oregon Horse Racing Association (SOHRA) has asked for financial help from the horsemen and Commission to keep the track open for training. The track is open about 56 days, and expenses include gate crew, water, fuel, clocker, outriders. The Budget Sub-committee will meet soon to consider what resources are available, Director McGrail stated, adding that the Oregon Horsemen's Benevolent & Protective Association is contributing \$10,000 and the Oregon Quarter Horse Racing Association is contributing \$2,500. He noted that SOHRA anticipates paying half of the estimated total cost of \$50,000. Keeping the track open is vital to getting horses fit to run during the summer, Director McGrail stated, and the Commission needs to help that effort.

Director McGrail noted personnel changes at the Commission. Michelle Barry has accepted a position with the state Veterinary Medical Examining Board. Dean Muchow has been promoted to chief investigator. Juan Tena has moved from an interim position to a permanent position as investigator.

Director McGrail reported that last week, the Washington Racing Commission adopted the ARCI Controlled Therapeutic Medication Schedule. Those rules will be in place April 10, and will be enforced during the Emerald Downs meet. He stated it is likely the ORC's Medication and Horse Welfare Subcommittee will look at Washington's decision and whether Oregon should adopt rules consistent with sister jurisdictions. He added that once trainers are familiar with Washington's rules, it would not be a difficult transition in Oregon.

He stated that the ORC is in discussion with Curtis Linnell of the Thoroughbred Racing Protective Bureau (TRPB) about the agency's audit compliance needs. This is an evolving industry, Director McGrail noted, and the Commission needs to stay ahead of regulation and integrity aspects. Discussions with Mr. Linnell will be aimed at whether his services are needed, or whether existing staff is sufficient to perform these functions. The goal is to protect the integrity of the wager, he concluded.

### **Portland Meadows (PM) Report**

Karsten Hennze, PM General Manager, reported that the meet completed 37 race dates, a successful bounce-back from last year's 34 race days (due to weather). Handle was up about 20% over last year, averaging \$600,000 daily. Daily on-track handle averaged \$23,666; Mr. Hennze called that a decent number, but noted the track does not make any money on live racing.

The meet comprised 330 races. Average field size was down: 7.12, compared with 7.3 last year and 7.5 the year before. He called the downward trend troubling, noting that the meet drew an aging horse population, with 60 2-year-old starters last year. There were 530 horses stabled on the grounds, almost 100 fewer than the year before. The meet did better than last year, with fewer horses and a lower average field size, he stated. All in all, the meet did "more with less."

The meet saw three breakdowns, resulting in a catastrophic injury rate of 1.28 per 1,000 starters. Mr. Hennze noted that while one breakdown is too many, that number was lower than in the past two years. He added there were a few minor jockey injuries.

PM awarded about \$2 million in purses, he added, a "steady" number. Simulcasts trended downward, but ADWs were up.

Mr. Hennze characterized the season as a "steady, decent meet."

In response to a question from Chair Williamson about the scratches-per-day rate, Mr. Hennze noted the number is down from previous years. The rate for the just-completed meet was 3.65; it was 3.9 last year and almost 6 two years ago.

Chair Williamson noted that if the fields were bigger, the number of scratches would be less significant, adding that he hoped the Future of Racing in Oregon Group would talk about ways to increase the number of horses at future meets.

### **New Business:**

#### **Discussion and possible approval of Harney County Fair license application - Form A (dates):**

Chair Williamson reported that the Harney County Fair has requested summer race dates of Sept. 7, 8 and 9.

**Action:** Approve proposed 2018 dates for Harney County Fair  
**Moved by:** Commissioner Diego Conde  
**Seconded:** Commissioner Christopher Dudley  
**Vote: Vote:** Commissioners Williamson, Conde and Dudley voted AYE, and the motion carried unanimously (3:0).

**Other Business as May Properly Come Before the Commission:**

None

**Public Comment:**

None

**Contested Cases:**

None

**Confirmation of the Next Commission Meeting:**

The next regular Oregon Racing Commission meeting will be Thursday, April 19, 2018, at 1:30 p.m. in Room 1A of the Portland State Office Building (PSOB), 800 N.E. Oregon St., Portland, OR.

**Adjournment:**

**Action:** Motion to adjourn.  
**Moved by:** Commissioner Diego Conde  
**Seconded:** Commissioner Christopher Dudley  
**Vote:** Commissioners Williamson, Conde and Dudley voted AYE, and the motion carried unanimously (3:0).

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:58 p.m.