



Minutes
Oregon Racing Commission
March 17, 2022

Meeting Detail

The Oregon Racing Commission (ORC) met at 1:30 p.m. Thursday, March 17, 2022. The meeting was held via videoconference.

Call to Order

Chair Diego Conde called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

In Attendance

Commissioners: Chair Diego Conde; Vice Chair Steve O'Hagan; Commissioner Charles Williamson; Commissioner Jan Palmer, DVM

Staff

Executive Director Jack McGrail; Catriona McCracken, Assistant Attorney General

Agenda Items

Approvals:

Action: Approval of the meeting agenda, amended to include review of proposed recruitment plan for position of ORC executive director

Moved by: Commissioner Charles Williamson

Seconded: Vice Chair Steve O'Hagan

Vote: Commissioners Conde, O'Hagan, Williamson and Palmer voted AYE, and the motion carried unanimously (4:0).

Action: Approval of the minutes from the Feb. 17, 2022, ORC meeting

Moved by: Commissioner Charles Williamson

Seconded: Vice Chair Steve O'Hagan

Vote: Commissioners Conde, O'Hagan, Williamson and Palmer voted AYE, and the motion carried unanimously (4:0).

Old Business:

Executive Director's Report

Regarding the summer meets, Director McGrail reported that the race meet in Kennewick has been canceled this spring, which will make it more difficult for the Eastern Oregon Livestock Show (EOLS) in Union to attract horses. The Commission is allocating funds to EOLS for an

assistant racing secretary to help with that. Dr. Scott Liebsle from Idaho will again serve as the Commission's second vet at the meet. Director McGrail stated the Commission hopes to have track consultant Steve Wood check track surfaces at the fairs this year. Dollar amounts aren't available yet, but jockey insurance is likely to go up 10 to 15 percent; Doug Smith from the Crooked River Roundup is handling that. He added that Mr. Smith announced his meet is adding an additional \$500 to each purse, for all breeds, resulting in a bottom purse of \$4000 this year.

As the Horseracing Integrity and Safety Act (HISA) goes into effect, Director McGrail noted that beginning July 1, Grants Pass Downs will get one-year provisional accreditation and a "reasonable period of time" to achieve compliance. It is not clear what constitutes compliance, he added. Cost assessments are pending, he added.

Briefly, on the budget, Director McGrail noted that ADW license renewals are upcoming, and the agency's escalating legal fees are a budget issue.

Grants Pass Downs (GPD) Report

Randy Evers, chief racing officer, reported horses begin arriving April 1, with training starting April 4 and races on May 9. Jason Beem will again be the track announcer, John Everly the racing secretary, and Steve Wood the track supervisor.

Tony McGlothlin, director of racing, stated that the track is adding 800 tons of sand this week and will be working on the slope and drainage in the chute. Backside construction projects are being finished, including building a manure bin for 180 stalls, rebedding stalls, and offices are ready. Contracts have been signed with a track vet and ambulance. So far, 355 stalls are assigned, with another 60 horses expected; that includes 52 2-year-olds.

Commissioner Williamson asked about the status of the Flying Lark, and Chair Conde explained that the Commission has received a draft from the Department of Justice of the proposed intent to deny notice. It will go out by the end of business tomorrow, and then it is up to the Flying Lark management to decide what is next, he added.

Budget Subcommittee Report

Subcommittee Chair Palmer reported that the subcommittee met this morning to discuss allocations and fees under New Business (below).

New Business

Discussion and possible approval of hub fund allocations for 2021-23 summer race meets

Commissioner Palmer reported that the Budget Subcommittee recommended the following allocations per year:

- Eastern Oregon Livestock Show: \$ 57,450
- Crooked River Roundup: \$101,700
- Tillamook County Fair \$ 94,450

Those amounts reflect redirecting funds set aside for the Harney County Fair, which will not have racing this year, to increase purses at each fair by \$250 per race, resulting in a bottom purse of \$2250.

Action: Approve the allocations for summer race meets as outlined

Moved by: Commissioner Jan Palmer

Seconded: Commissioner Charles Williamson

Vote: Commissioners Conde, O'Hagan, Williamson and Palmer voted AYE, and the motion carried unanimously (4:0).

Discussion and possible approval of reallocation of Harney County Fair hub funds to purses

After reallocating Harney County Fair funds to the other summer meets, Commissioner Palmer explained there was \$82,000 left. The Budget Subcommittee proposed allocating that amount to the Oregon Horsemen's Benevolent & Protective Association (OHBPA) to be earmarked purses at Grants Pass Downs.

Action: Allocate \$82,000 to the OHBPA for purses at Grants Pass Downs

Moved by: Commissioner Jan Palmer

Seconded: Commissioner Charles Williamson

Vote: Commissioners Conde, O'Hagan, Williamson and Palmer voted AYE, and the motion carried unanimously (4:0).

Discussion and possible approval of proposed rule amendment regarding participant license fees

Commissioner Palmer explained that the Commission had researched license fees in neighboring jurisdictions and found the ORC to be the lowest. Licenses now are \$60 for 3 years; the Budget Subcommittee proposes changing that to \$60 for 2 years (in essence, an increase of \$10 per year) to cover increases in printing, materials, labor and background checks.

Program Administrator Karen Parkman noted that the Commission has authority to charge up to \$30 annually for a license, so this is a policy change and a rule amendment is not required.

Action: Change licensing free program from a three-year to a two-year program, with licenses \$60 for two years

Moved by: Commissioner Jan Palmer

Seconded: Commissioner Charles Williamson

Vote: Commissioners Conde, O'Hagan, Williamson and Palmer voted AYE, and the motion carried unanimously (4:0).

Review and possible approval of 2022 Crooked River Roundup Form A

Action: Approve Crooked River Roundup Form A

Moved by: Commissioner Charles Williamson

Seconded: Commissioner Jan Palmer

Vote: Commissioners Conde, O'Hagan, Williamson and Palmer voted AYE, and the motion carried unanimously (4:0).

Review of proposed recruitment plan for position of ORC executive director

Chair Conde reported that Director McGrail is moving on and recruiters have submitted a recruitment announcement and plan to the Commission.

Kylen Stevens, executive recruiter for the Department of Administrative Services (DAS), explained the recruitment plan and interviewing process. The position will be posted with local government groups, Oregon Jobs, Indeed, and trade sites including ROAP (Racing Officials Accreditation Program), BloodHorse, and the national Horsemen's Benevolent & Protective Association.

Commissioner Williamson noted that the Commission's past two executive directors had been excellent and encouraged informally recruiting candidates as well. Chair Conde suggested that once the announcement is published, interested parties should be directed there.

A successful job candidate would be required to relinquish any personal investment in horse racing, and Commissioner Palmer suggested that be noted in the posting. Assistant Attorney General McCracken noted that could be added to the announcement with reference to pertinent statutes.

Director McGrail plans to leave the end of May. Chair Conde stated ideally there would be overlap with his replacement to allow training. However, Sherry Lauer of DAS reported that to ensure an ample nationwide applicant pool, the job should be posted 30 to 45 days. It typically takes 90 days to hire, so the end of May would be a stretch. She noted executive recruiting is very difficult right now, and typically there is no overlap.

Commissioner Williamson asked if Director McGrail could extend his stay, and Director McGrail responded that was possible. Chair Conde noted that he was confident the ORC had people capable of serving in the interim.

Ms. Lauer explained that to proceed, the Commission needed to authorize the recruitment and posting and to approve funding for advertising.

Action: Approve proceeding with recruitment plan for executive director as outlined and spending up to \$2000 to advertise the position

Moved by: Commissioner Charles Williamson

Seconded: Vice Chair Steve O'Hagan

Vote: Commissioners Conde, O'Hagan, Williamson and Palmer voted AYE, and the motion carried unanimously (4:0).

Contested Cases:

None

Public Comment:

Camy VonSeggern of the Tillamook County Fair reported that after hearing the Commission was increasing its purse contribution by \$250 per race, the fair decided to add another \$250 to each purse. The base purse at Tillamook this year will be \$3200, she stated.

Other Business as May Properly Come Before the Commission:

Chair Conde reminded Commission members it was time to file their SEI (Statement of Economic Interest) reports.

Confirmation of next meeting:

The next Commission meeting is scheduled for 1:30 p.m. April 21, 2022, via videoconference.

Commissioner Williamson stated that he would like to see the Commission hold a meeting this spring in Grants Pass, and Chair Conde agreed.

Director McGrail noted that plans call for the Portland State Office Building to reopen May 1, and the May Commission meeting may be live instead of by videoconference.

Adjournment:

Action: Adjourn meeting

Moved by: Commissioner Charles Williamson

Seconded: Vice Chair Steve O'Hagan

Vote: Commissioners Conde, O'Hagan, Williamson and Palmer voted AYE, and the motion carried unanimously (4:0).

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:14 p.m.