



Minutes
Oregon Racing Commission
August 19, 2021

Meeting Detail

The Oregon Racing Commission (ORC) met at 1:30 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 19, 2021. The meeting was held via videoconference.

Call to Order

Chair Diego Conde called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m.

In Attendance

Commissioners: Chair Diego Conde; Vice Chair Steve O'Hagan; Commissioner Charles Williamson (joined a few minutes late); 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 combine items 3 and 8

Moved by: Vice Chair Steve O'Hagan

Seconded: Commissioner Jan Palmer

Vote: Commissioners O'Hagan, Conde, and Palmer voted AYE, and the motion carried unanimously (3:0).

Action: Approval of the minutes from the June 17, 2021, ORC meeting

Moved by: Vice Chair Steve O'Hagan

Seconded: Commissioner Jan Palmer

Vote: Commissioners O'Hagan, Conde, and Palmer voted AYE, and the motion carried unanimously (3:0).

Old Business:

Budget Subcommittee Report

Subcommittee Chair Palmer reported that the Commission has been asked to contribute to the cost of producing a report on the economic impact of horseracing in Oregon. She noted that the last such report had been done more than a decade ago. The estimated cost of \$88,000 has been divided among industry groups: \$43,000 to be paid by Grants Pass Downs (GPD), \$25,000 by

the ORC, \$10,000 by Oregon Horsemen's Benevolent & Protective Association (OHBPA), \$5,000 by Oregon Quarter Horse Racing Association (OHQRA) and \$5,000 by Oregon Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association (OTOBA).

Action: Approve \$25,000 allocation for economic impact study

Moved by: Chair Diego Conde

Seconded: Commissioner Charles Williamson

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

Subcommittee Chair Palmer reported that the subcommittee discussed hub fund allocations for the 2021-23 biennium. With roughly \$2.1 million available, the subcommittee recommended the following allocations: 36 percent (\$756,000) to OHBPA, 30 percent (\$630,000) to GPD, and 17 percent (\$357,000) each to OQHRA and OTOBA.

Action: Approve hub fund allocations as outlined above

Moved by: Chair Diego Conde

Seconded: Vice Chair Steve O'Hagan

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

Medication and Horse Welfare Subcommittee Report

Subcommittee Chair O'Hagan reported that the subcommittee met Wednesday and first discussed the ORC Coggins test policy, which requires proof of a negative Coggins test every 6 months. He explained that the horsemen have asked the ORC to change that to follow the Department of Agriculture's standard, which calls for a Coggins test every 12 months. He noted there has not been an equine infectious anemia (EIA) outbreak in the area for several years, and neighboring jurisdictions require the test every 12 months. Subcommittee Chair O'Hagan noted this is a policy, not a rule, and the ORC proposes following the Department of Agriculture's policy, noting that the Commission can be more restrictive if needed.

Director McGrail explained that no vote is needed; the policy falls under a rule that gives the Commission a lot of flexibility. The change to 12 months would go back to previous policy and match the policy of neighboring states.

Action: Direct the Executive Director to prepare a letter within three business days re-establishing the Commission policy requiring proof of a negative Coggins test every 12 months

Moved by: Chair Diego Conde

Seconded: Commissioner Jan Palmer

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

Subcommittee Chair O'Hagan noted that Senior State Veterinarian Tom Everman presented an overview of the spring/summer GPD and summer fair meets. GPD saw more than 1000 starters

and three race-related equine fatalities. Dr. Everman told the subcommittee that the new lab is doing a fantastic job; its quick turnaround times for results means the horsemen are paid quickly.

Dr. Everman also told the subcommittee that the fairs had a variety of problems. Eastern Oregon Livestock Show in Union struggled to get enough horses. At the Crooked River Roundup in Prineville, jockey Eduardo Gutierrez Sosa was killed in a riding accident. And the Tillamook County Fair had to cancel most of one day's racing when a car crash cut power to the track.

Subcommittee members talked about the circumstances of Mr. Sosa's death and whether it was preventable. Subcommittee Chair O'Hagan reported that Dr. Everman and Senior State Steward Mike Twiggs concurred that it was a horse issue, not the fault of the track, other riders, or Mr. Sosa. Members of the subcommittee, and the Commission as a whole, expressed their condolences to Mr. Sosa's family, and Commissioner Williamson noted that a GoFundMe page had been set up to help them.

Executive Director's Report

Director McGrail reported that the summer fairs' usual problems were compounded by Covid-19 and a lack of horses, but they paled in comparison to the accident leading to Mr. Sosa's tragic death. Expressing his condolences to the family, Director McGrail added that he was gratified by how the entire racing industry, the horsemen, and the community, came together and praised the professionalism of Commission staff that night.

He stated that it was good to see people in the stands at the Crooked River Roundup and Tillamook County Fair, and he looks forward to a normal summer circuit next year and fuller fields.

Director McGrail reported that there has been a transition in leadership at GPD, with Rod Lowe and Kendra Lellis moving on. He added he is looking forward to the track's submission of the name of a new director of racing and is confident a qualified candidate will be found.

Director McGrail thanked the industry groups for their thoughtful submissions for budget requests, noting that all have programs that are important and worthy. The Commission's goal is to promote racing, he stated, and the ORC tries to allocate funds to that end.

Grants Pass Downs (GPD) Report

Katy Burris, GPD chief administrative officer, reported that races start Sept. 20, and the backside opens Aug. 28. Tony McGlothlin, who has been security superintendent for The Flying Lark, will be the interim general manager, and Dennis Painter, formerly deputy operations officer, is now the director of operations, she stated.

New Business

Review and possible approval of revised fall race dates: Grants Pass Downs

Director McGrail explained that GPD took two days off its spring meet to help the fair meets and has added those dates to its fall calendar, for 18 days of racing. The proposed additions are Sundays, Sept. 26 and Oct. 17, with a 1 p.m. post time.

Action: Approve addition of two race dates to GPD fall meet

Moved by: Vice Chair Steve O'Hagan

Seconded: Commissioner Jan Palmer

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

Other Business as May Properly Come Before the Commission:

None

Contested Cases:

None

Public Comment:

None

Confirmation of next meeting:

The next Commission meeting is scheduled for 1:30 p.m. Sept. 16, 2021, via 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 2:08 p.m.