

North Dakota Racing Commission Meeting
Derrick Dixon Event Center
1210 William Hardesty Street, Belcourt, ND
Friday, May 31, 2024 – 10:30 a.m., Central Time

(701) 328-7850 Meeting ID: 16117734#

Minutes

Call to Order: Chairman Tracy Hanson called the meeting to order at 10:37 a.m.

Present: Chairman Tracy Hanson, Commissioner Richard LaFromboise, Commissioner Mike Schmitz, Commissioner Jessica Benson, Executive Director Bruce Johnson, Administrative Officer Gail Allensworth, and Legal Counsel Steve Hanson

On the Phone: Commissioner Michael Nason

Others Present: Jamie Azure, Donna McEwen, Robert Wilson, Leigh Backhaus, Jim Pettie, Steve Herman Jr, Hugh Drexler, Jay Alsop, John Bubel, Leon Glasser, Doug DeMontigny, Joyce DeMontigny, Donald Dolphus Jr, Terry Davis, and Jamie Herman

Others on the Phone: Wendy Reuer

AGENDA

1. **Approval of Minutes** – February 15 & February 23, 2024
2. **Marketing & Advertising Update**
 - a. WDAY
 - b. Ads to start tomorrow
 - c. Costs
3. **Breed Fund Database**
 - a. Update
 - b. Costs to-date
 - c. Recap Entire Project Financially
 - d. Breed Fund Questionnaire

4. **Legislative Updates**

- a. Next Biennium
- b. Historical Horse Racing

5. **Live Race Meets 2024**

- **Condition Books**
 - a. What looks good 2024?
 - b. Improvements for 2025
- **Cancelled Races/Make-up Dates**
 - a. Unique Race Environment
 - b. Having a plan
- **Rules & Regulations**
 - a. Medications
 - b. Paddock efficiency
 - c. Horse Identification
 - d. General Safety
 - e. Security
- **Racing Facilities**
 - a. Machinery & Implements
 - b. Vests/Helmets/Weights
 - c. Historical Horse Racing

6. **2024 NDRC Crew**

- a. Stewards
- b. Veterinarians
- c. Office staff

7. **NDRC Executive Director**

- a. Travel
- b. Salary Review

8. **Next Meeting Dates and Locations**

- a. September 12, 2024, meeting in Bismarck
- b. November 14, 2024, meeting in Bismarck

9. **Any other business which may properly come before the Commission**

10. **Adjournment**

Commissioner Richard LaFromboise introduced a special guest, Tribal Chairman Jamie Azure.

Tribal Chairman Jamie Azure gave a warm welcome to the Racing Commission and everyone attending the meeting.

1. **Approval of Minutes** – February 15 & February 23, 2024

A motion was made by Commissioner LaFromboise and seconded by Commissioner Nason to accept the minutes of February 15 and February 23, 2024, as presented. All Commissioners voted aye and hearing no negative vote, the motion passed.

2. **Marketing & Advertising Update**

- a. WDAY
- b. Ads to start tomorrow
- c. Costs

Executive Director Johnson provided an update on the progression of the marketing and advertising for the Racing Commission. The Commissioners decided at the February 15, 2024, meeting to go with WDAY out of Fargo and needed to decide on the funding.

WDAY is ready to start running the ads. The cost for the campaign is \$49,700, for the advertising through December 31, 2024, and would be paid out of the Promotion Fund. Director Johnson recommended accepting the proposal.

Commissioner Schmitz asked to see an example of what WDAY was proposing. There was not anything at the meeting to present to the Commissioners. There was a discussion by the Commissioners and Executive Director Johnson.

A motion was made by Commissioner LaFromboise and seconded by Commissioner Benson to move forward with the \$49,7000 proposal from WDAY. LaFromboise – Y, Benson – Y, Hanson – Y, Schmitz – N, and Nason – Y. Motion passed.

3. **Breed Fund Database**

- a. Update
- b. Costs to-date
- c. Recap Entire Project Financially
- d. Breed Fund Questionnaire

Executive Director Johnson stated that IT is still working on the new breed fund database and is moving closer to completion but needs additional funding to complete the project. They need an additional \$1,000 to complete the project as they are working on the report aspect of the project. The actual database is finished.

A motion was made by Commissioner Benson and seconded by Commissioner LaFromboise to approve \$1,000 in additional funding to IT for the breed fund database. Benson – Y, LaFromboise – Y, Hanson – Y, Schmitz – Y, and Nason – Y. Motion passed.

A Breed Fund Questionnaire was mailed to the horsemen that asked them to update their list of breeding stock of stallions and broodmares and return to Administrative Officer Gail Allensworth. There are hundreds of horses in the database that are over 30 years old. Could they still be actively breeding? We want to clean up the database so that is only active breeding stock.

The response back from the horsemen is 33 percent.

No motions needed.

4. Legislative Updates

- a. Next Biennium
- b. Historical Horse Racing

Executive Director Johnson provided an update on what he expects or hopes to see in the next Legislative session or the subsequent session.

No motions needed.

5. Live Race Meets 2024

- **Condition Books**
 - a. What looks good 2024?
 - b. Improvements for 2025
- **Cancelled Races/Make-up Dates**
 - a. Unique Race Environment
 - b. Having a plan
- **Rules & Regulations**
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 - b. Paddock efficiency
 - c. Horse Identification
 - d. General Safety
 - e. Security
- **Racing Facilities**
 - a. Machinery & Implements
 - b. Vests/Helmets/Weights
 - c. Historical Horse Racing

6. 2024 NDRC Crew

- a. Stewards:
Jim Pettie & Steve Herman Jr.
- b. Veterinarians:
Lindy West, DVM in Belcourt & Alexa Weyer, DVM in Fargo
- c. Office staff:
Interns: Lukas Fleming & Jevlyn Medina

7. NDRC Executive Director

a. Travel

Executive Director Johnson stated that he will likely want to go to the Racing Symposium in December and possibly some other travel if it is worthwhile.

b. Salary Review

Executive Director Johnson stated that he would like a raise and that the Legislature provided funding of 4% for State Agency employee raises for the fiscal year.

A motion was made by Commissioner LaFromboise and seconded by Commissioner Benson to give Executive Director Johnson a 4% raise retroactive to July 1, 2023. LaFromboise – Y, Benson – Y, Hanson – Y, Schmitz – Y, and Nason – Y. Motion passed.

8. Next Meeting Dates and Locations

a. September 12, 2024, meeting in Bismarck

b. November 14, 2024, meeting in Bismarck

9. Any other business which may properly come before the Commission

- Leigh Backhaus asked about races being written and being run for accredited North Dakota-bred horses. The rule states that there is supposed to be no less than one race written each day for Thoroughbreds and Quarter Horses.
- Commissioner Schmitz asked for the legality of race management racing horses to be on the next agenda.

10. Adjournment

A motion was made by Commissioner Schmitz and seconded by Commissioner LaFromboise to adjourn the meeting. All voted aye and hearing no negative vote the motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:40 p.m.