



**Board of Trustees meeting  
Association Office – Albuquerque, NM**

**September 20, 2022  
11:00 a.m.**

**PRESENT**

**President Tom Goncharoff, 1st Vice President Mike Logan, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Verner R. Query and Trustees Norma Alvarez, Mark Brown, C. Warren Franklin, Annette McCloy, Helen Nave, Mac Murray, Susie Prather and Nancy Summers.**

**ABSENT**

**Brian Anderson**

**GUESTS**

**Pierre J. Amestoy, Jr.**

**QUORUM**

**President Goncharoff acknowledged a quorum present.**

**MINUTE APPROVAL**

**Annette McCloy made a motion to accept the minutes of August 6, 2022 and August 23, 2022, seconded by Norma Alvarez. Motion carried 10:0**

**ACTION ITEMS**

**MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENT**

**Mary Barber reminded the Trustees that we have been discussing the membership requirement for the last couple of meetings and the question is, are we going to require every partnership to have a membership or if non-representatives in a partnership would be required to get an individual membership if they have horses outside the partnership membership.**

Norma Alvarez feels that every partnership should have a membership even if the managing partner is the managing partner in other memberships. Nancy Summers asked about a situation like Champion Racing that has fifteen people in it. Warren Franklin feels that if all the people in a partnership have individual memberships, they should not be required to have an additional partnership membership.

After a lot of discussion, Norma Alvarez made a motion that on the membership requirement policy, effective on November 1<sup>st</sup>, that a Farm, Syndicate, or Stable Name needs its own membership. If a horse runs under individual owners names, each co-owner in a partnership must have a membership, seconded by Mark Brown. Motion carried 10:0.

#### **NEW MEXICO RACING COMMISSION'S AGENDA ITEM 10 C – RECOGNITION OF THE NMHBA AS THE HORSEMEN'S GROUP IN NEW MEXICO**

President Goncharoff told the Trustees that he got a call from Izzy Trejo to let him know this would be on the Commission's agenda again. President Goncharoff told him that he did not think we had the votes on our Board for this to be approved. One of our biggest concerns is the legal liability for this thing to go forward. There is the question of the liability for the individual Trustees and for the Association. He asked Izzy Trejo, since the Commission is essentially assigning us this task, if we get sued, is the state agency going to back us up? The answer was he thought we needed to ask our attorney. President Goncharoff decided that our attorney needed to contact the Commission's attorney Richard Bustamante to discuss this. President Goncharoff contacted Fred Mowrer and asked him to contact Richard Bustamante. The follow up was that Richard Bustamante was very sympathetic to our situation and that he would discuss this with the Commissioners. Fred Mowrer was surprised to hear that this item was still on the Commission's agenda after his conversations with Richard Bustamante. President Goncharoff was concerned that our insurance would not cover us since we knew that if we agree to do this, we will be sued and had discussed this concern with our attorney.

President Goncharoff is not sure if this item will be taken off the Commission's agenda during the upcoming meeting on Thursday or not. Since this is an action item on our agenda, he wanted to discuss how we want to handle this . He will be traveling to Oklahoma so he will not be able to attend himself but Mary Barber will be there. Mike Logan asked if one of our attorneys could possibly be there as well and Mary Barber will contact them and ask that one of them be there or join by Zoom.

Mac Murray mentioned that our attorney Raymond Sanchez was advising us to not get involved in this and Fred Mowrer not only said no but hell no. President Goncharoff brought up that Paul Jenson was allowed to sign off on the export signal for Zia Park so why do they need us?

Nancy Summers made a motion that if they try to assign us as the one Horsemen's Group in New Mexico, that we respectively decline, and say we cannot do it. President Goncharoff

added the words “on the advice of our legal counsel” to the motion, seconded by Helen Nave. Motion carried 10:0.

Pierre Amestoy commented that “the Commission used to have the horsemen’s back so they didn’t have to fight with the racetracks. Now the simulcast signal is the only chip the horsemen have to negotiate with the racetracks. Now they have been abandoned by everybody. The Commission doesn’t care about us. They only see the breeders as a tool to get the simulcast and to get to our funds. They want us to be in charge of HISA requirements and they will come in here and they will make us liable for any situation. You guys do not want to have this responsibility. Please stay away from them and stay safe. Don’t go there. How is this going to help our association?”

Pierre Amestoy then left the meeting.

Mary Barber asked when we would say this, would it be during her five minutes she has to speak? After some discussion, it was decided that we would wait to see if they go through with this agenda item. Don’t say anything unless we have to.

The trustees then broke for lunch.

## DISCUSSION ITEMS

### BUDGET REPORT

Mary Barber went over the budget report that was provided to the Trustees (copy incorporated into the record). It was explained that this report is only through the second quarter which would be the end of June. A lot of big items were paid for since then and we hope to have the budget report through the third quarter at the end of September during the next meeting. The first item is employee salaries. Mary Barber explained that since the employees were awarded raises, we may go a bit over in that category since we did not budget for it. We should be under on the health and retirement. The Summer Meeting, the Audit, the Trophies, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of our commercial were all paid for after June so they are not on this report. We did budget \$15,000 for a lobbyist in case we need to pay a portion in 2022. We have pretty much used most of our marketing and advertising budget but she thinks we have done most if not all of what we have planned to do. Norma Alvarez explained that we did not budget for the extra funds we spent on the commercial. Mary Barber thinks we will be under for the sale party. We had the waters, the meat, the guy who cooked for us, the Sam’s club items, and the Minute Men Press items. We will be spending some funds on our computers. They have been running pretty slow and we also are going to improve our stallion auction. We will be over on travel. All three employees went to Zia Festival and two employees went to each of the horse sales. We did not pay per diem, we just paid for meals on the credit card and mileage if an employee used their vehicle. Legal fees should be okay. Mary Barber feels that we need to start slowing down

on our spending for a bit since everything is costing more and our funds have started to go down.

### **STAKES COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mac Murray mentioned that the Juvenile has been raised from \$65,000 to \$100,000. The NMHBA is coming up with \$35,000 and the Downs At Albuquerque is adding \$65,000. He feels this is really a nice move from the racetrack. The Thoroughbred Futurity was also discussed. It is the largest Thoroughbred purse for New Mexico Breds this year. Nancy Summers commented that this year, there were three trials for the NMSF Thoroughbred Futurity and in the past, there would be maybe two trials to eliminate one horse.

Norma Alvarez commented on the \$2.2 million that will be paid out on Sunday at the Downs At Albuquerque. She asked what it was at Zia Park and Mary commented that New Mexico Cup day used to be \$2 million but that was just for New Mexico Breds. This Sunday has open stakes races in addition to the four New Mexico Bred stakes.

Mike Logan told the Trustees that he and Mary Barber met with Don Cook at the Downs At Albuquerque to discuss the NMSF Quarter Horse Derby. The purse was raised to a total of \$250,000 added in 2023. Nancy Summers asked why the purses are not what they used to be at Zia Park. Mary Barber explained that they have not been making the money they used to but that it looks like things are getting better there.

Mike Logan brought the New Mexico Bred stakes list by racetrack that was provided, (copy incorporated into the record). He said he is available if anyone has any questions. Nancy Summers asked about the Thoroughbred stakes. Mike Logan explained that Verner had an idea for a big Thoroughbred race and they talked to some of the racetrack managers about it but they were not interested and scared at the lack of nominees. Verner Query explained that Quarter Horse people are used to paying in but the Thoroughbred people are not. Mary Barber mentioned that we do have the two TB races at Sunland Park that have purses of \$250,000 each, but that the NMSF Thoroughbred Futurity is now the biggest purse for Thoroughbreds in the stakes.

Mike Logan mentioned the Challenger Six Handicap is back on the stakes schedule at Sunland Park and is an 870 race. Mary Barber informed the Trustees that they have changed the name of that race to be named after one of their sponsors, the Star Western Wear Stakes. The Red or Green Stakes used to be the Jess Burner Stakes but that race was moved to Ruidoso at the request of the Burner family so Sunland Park kept the race with a different name. Mike Logan said that these racetracks usually keep their stakes schedule's pretty much the same.

The Sierra Starlett stakes and all the Zia Festival races at Ruidoso Downs were discussed. The purses were raised at the last minute after people nominated into these races. The Sierra Starlet was called off due to not having enough entries and so we lost the Black Type status on that race.

## **MARKETING REPORT**

Norma Alvarez went over the Marketing report. It is up to date and shows we have spent \$21,992.31 (copy incorporated into the record). An additional \$600.00 bill for the commercial that has not been paid yet. This bill is for updating the current commercial with more Thoroughbred information after the sale and also for sale footage to be used in future commercials. The Cowboy Channel is covering a lot of races and Norma Alvarez went over the list. She has asked Tom Dawson to be sure to mention the purses are \$2.2 million on Sunday. Our logo is shown on the wall behind the announcers.

## **LOBBYIST REQUIREMENTS**

President Goncharoff said we don't know what is coming down the pike as far as the legislature goes but we should hire a lobbyist just in case so we don't get caught flat-footed. The requirements should be 1) someone that understands our industry 2) how much attention they would be able to give us and if there are any conflicts, and 3) how much will it cost us.

Ralph Vincent suggested a name to Mary Barber. Helen Nave thinks we could ask Susan Vescovo for her opinion. Mary Barber had invited Joe Thompson to this meeting but he was out of town. She does not know him well but she is impressed with him. She had called Ralph Vincent and asked if he knew him and if he thought Joe Thompson would be a good candidate for us and Ralph thinks he would be.

The cost was discussed and Mary Barber reported that in the past, a sixty day session cost us \$30,000 and a thirty day session cost us \$15,000 plus there were some other little expenses added on.

Helen Nave asked what Joe Thompson does and Mary Barber replied that he is a lawyer with his own consulting firm and is also a lobbyist. He was a lobbyist for Sunland Park one year and he also came to this office with the Laguna group that was one of the applicants for the sixth racing license. He was their lawyer/consultant on that. Some of the Trustees did remember him from that visit.

Norma Alvarez mentioned Ralph Vincent and how he has really taken care of us and is such a straight arrow. President Goncharoff talked about how Ralph and Tom had really worked hard on the statute changes, and they got through because of their efforts.

## **TRUSTEE TERMS**

Mary Barber had mocked up a ballot showing that Norma Alvarez, Mark Brown, Mac Murray, Warren Franklin, Tom Goncharoff, and Nancy Summers will all stay on the board through 2023.

**Brian Anderson, Mike Logan, Annette McCloy, Helen Nave, Susie Prather, and Verner Query can all go on the ballot as nominees if they wish to be re-elected. Mary Barber needs to know who all would like to be re-elected.**

**Annette McCloy had made the decision to not run again but feels that Brian Anderson was a good fit. Norma Alvarez wants to nominate Debra Laney. President Goncharoff told Annette McCloy that we really don't want to lose her but she is feeling overwhelmed and does not have the time to continue on our board. She would like to see some new people on the board.**

**Annette McCloy spoke about the Legislative Day at the Races and how it was a real success last year but hardly anyone came this year. She thinks the people who did come had a good time and when Ethan Linder came down to talk to them, they got a lot of good information and asked questions. Norma Alvarez will write thank you notes to the legislators that were at the committee meeting held in Hobbs last week. Annette McCloy commented that Scott Bryant provided his suite for the legislators and the racetrack provided sandwiches. Norma Alvarez asked Annette McCloy if she would consider helping to put that on in the future even though she is not on the board and she replied that she would do that.**

**Mike Logan, Helen Nave, Susie Prather, and Verner Query all agreed to run again. Brian Anderson will be contacted after the meeting to see if he wants to run again.**

#### **RECAP OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**President Goncharoff had supplied a copy of an article that was in the Albuquerque Journal titled 'Official: New Mexico horse racing still in the dark ages' to the Trustees, (copy incorporated into the record). What they are referring to is Advance Deposit Wagering.**

**One of the legislators asked what we would like to get out of the upcoming legislative session. Bill Belcher of Zia Park was first and he spoke about Advance Deposit Wagering and Izzy Trejo and Tom Goncharoff spoke about as well.**

**President Goncharoff had a chance to discuss this further with the committee chairman Moe Maestas who seems to have a good understanding of ADW and Sports wagering and is in support of this. Representative Maestas thinks we could get it through this year but that we would need to discuss this with tribal leaders in advance.**

**The order of people from our industry was Izzy Trejo, first, Professor Dixon from UNM, Bill Belcher of Zia Park, Tom Goncharoff and Mike Logan went last. President Goncharoff said that he didn't think anything negative was said by Izzy Trejo. Professor Dixon was next and he attended by Zoom and was hard to hear. He went over information from 2016 that was very poorly done. He went to the Jockey Club site and stated that the foal crop was down. Bill Belcher was next and he did not like subsidizing horseracing. He would like to see funds for purses coming in from new sources like ADW. He mentioned**

that he only makes \$.03 off every dollar bet on horseracing. President Goncharoff felt that we need to put our best foot forward so he talked about the sale results and how we set records this year with a 45% improvement over last year, averaging \$25,000. The Select sale had 19 NM Breds that averaged \$58,000 each. He reported that this is not just happening here but all around the country. This shows that people have confidence in horseracing. He mentioned the million dollar futurity and said they put their best foot forward and the legislators were very receptive. He did mention that there could be some legislation coming up that concerns our industry and to please contact us if they have any questions.

Helen Nave was supplying Rebecca Dow questions to ask by text during this meeting. Representative Culvert also asked some good questions about cutting days. Helen thinks that may have come from Candy Ezzell. Helen Nave thinks that our industry would be a lot better if we didn't have to fight our own Commission for our livelihood. It has been a fight since this Governor was elected.

Mac Murray commented that Tom Goncharoff & Mike Logan did a great job and that the people in attendance were paying attention. Candy Ezzell did a good job as well. Chairman Maestas showed that he is at least giving this some thought. He made a comment that the Racing Commission may need to be revamped.

Mike Logan stated that he and Tom wanted to go into that meeting to talk about the economic impact horseracing has on the economy since this was the Economic Development & Policy Committee hearing. We started getting all these emails, texts and all this crap saying we weren't doing this or that and we try to do the best job we can do. We need to be able to communicate one on one with phone calls. He thinks a good example is how we discussed agenda item #5, did anybody here think that was going to be a unanimous vote? No. The only way we can be a good board is to communicate. He tries to be a good communicator but he is not always. In the future that is the only way we can be cohesive is by communicating.

Mark Brown thinks that we should try to help the racetracks get the capital improvement funds so they can fix up the barn areas and also go for ADW as well.

Verner Query made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Helen Nave. Motion carried 10:0.

---

Tom Goncharoff  
President

---

Mary M. Barber  
Attest