



**Board of Trustees Meeting  
Association Offices**

**June 19, 2025  
Albuquerque, New Mexico**

**PRESENT**

**President Tom Goncharoff, 1st Vice President Norma Alvarez, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Jay Taylor and Trustees Pierre Amestoy, Brian Anderson, Mark Brown (by Zoom), Warren Franklin (by Zoom), Bobby Lee (by Zoom), Mac Murray, Helen Nave (by Zoom), Susie Prather (by Zoom) and Andy Rivera (by Zoom).**

**ABSENT**

None

**GUESTS**

**Association Lobbyist Joe Thompson along with his assistant Donnie Slack , Lonnie Juarez of the SJT Group, Commissioner Billy Smith, and members Ralph Vincent (by Zoom), Janis Spencer Murray (by Zoom), Denise Chambliss (by Zoom) and Pam Gennings Sena (by Zoom).**

**AGENDA APPROVAL**

**Jay Taylor made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Brian Anderson. Motion carried 10:0.**

**QUORUM**

**President Goncharoff acknowledged a quorum present and called the meeting to order.**

**LOBBYIST REPORT**

**Joe Thompson updated the Trustees on what is happening in New Mexico. Although the next session is only 30 days, we need to pay attention because legislation concerning horseracing could come up. The 2027 legislative session could be very busy.**

**The New Mexico Horse Breeders is signed up to have a table with a legislator at the dinner that Speaker Javier Martinez will be putting on in August. It is a chance to meet and**

educate new legislators about who we are. There are ten seats including the legislator and we need to decide who else will attend the dinner to represent us.

Candidates for Governor were discussed. He thinks it could be between Deb Haaland and Sam Bregman for the Democrat side and Judy Macnamara and Gregg Hull, the Mayor of Rio Rancho were discussed as possible candidates for the Republican side. Joe Thompson is not sure that Judy Macnamara is even interested.

Joe Thompson's Intern Donnie Slack arrived and was introduced to the Trustees.

President Goncharoff thanked Joe Thompson and Donnie Slack for attending the meeting.

### MINUTES APPROVAL

Norma Alvarez made a motion to approve the minutes of May 7, 2025, seconded by Brian Anderson. Motion carried 10:0.

### ACTION ITEMS

### 2024 AUDIT REPORT

Lonnie Juarez, of the SJT Group who conducted our yearly audit, was introduced to the Trustees and he passed around a paper copy of a Power Point presentation to summarize the audit for 2024.

Lonnie went over items on each page and explained that it was determined that overall, everything was in order except for one discrepancy with the amount of funds received for the 10% Awards vs how much was sent out in checks. Mary Barber commented that although Barbara Bates is still looking into this, she thinks it may be that although the funds were received in 2023, the checks were cashed in 2024.

Lonnie also suggested that we put the custodial funds on Quick Books. Barbara Bates uses a different software for these funds, and it would be good to have everything together on Quick Books.

President Goncharoff asked Lonnie how we stack up as a non-profit and was told that we are doing pretty good. The SJT Group does a lot of audits for non-profits. The custodial funds do distort things because those funds are included but do not belong to the association.

Jay Taylor made a motion to accept the 2024 audit report, seconded by Pierre Amestoy. Motion carried 10:0.

### NEW MEXICO / ARIZONA BRED RACES

Pierre Amestoy reported that he has been in contact with Ron Allen who is on the Arizona TB Breeders Board of Trustees, and they identified 100 – 130 Arizona Breds that would participate in this new program. They will pay \$500.00 this year if we start it at

Albuquerque and Zia Park since it will not be a full year. It will cost \$1,000 for a full year starting in 2026. Pierre asked the Trustees if they are ready to move on this.

President Goncharoff made the comment that this is not a By-Law change so the Board of Trustees can decide to implement this new program on their own.

There was a lot of discussion on this subject, and it was suggested that we have a committee go back and work on the wording of the bullet points again and then have a Zoom meeting for a final vote before our next meeting in Ruidoso.

Billy Smith commented that we have to do something about the declining number of Thoroughbreds.

Pierre Amestoy made a motion to table this item and work on the wording, seconded by Jay Taylor. Motion carried 11:0.

The Trustees broke for lunch at 12:30 and came back at 1:10.

After more discussion on the New Mexico Bred / Arizona Bred races program, Pierre Amestoy made a motion, in respect for the Arizona Breeders, to vote to see if the Board is in support of continuing to move forward on this subject, seconded by Jay Taylor. Motion carried 11:0.

Helen Nave is in agreement with Norma Alvarez and Warren Franklin to look closely at the By-Laws so that we don't get in a mess with this.

#### **FANDUEL / BLOODHORSE PROPOSAL**

Bobby Lee made a motion to table this item again until the New Mexico Bred / Arizona Bred races proposal is decided, seconded by Jay Taylor. Motion carried 11:0.

#### **SEMEN LEAVING NEW MEXICO FOR BORDER TOWNS**

Mary Barber reported on a situation where semen was sent by air to Midland, Texas for a breeding that would result in a foal being registered New Mexico Bred. After some discussion with members, this is something they felt was acceptable since it was the fastest way to get the semen to New Mexico by air. The breeding would still take place in New Mexico.

Mary Barber asked the Trustees to clear up the question of can the semen briefly go out of state to get to a destination in New Mexico to be used to breed a mare for a New Mexico Bred foal?

After a short discussion, Jay Taylor made a motion that semen can be shipped out of state, but insemination must take place in New Mexico, seconded by Norma Alvarez. Motion carried 11:0.

## ALBUQUERQUE DOWNS STAKES FUNDS

Mary Barber asked the Trustees for permission to use some of the overnight funds in the Downs At Albuquerque / NMSF purse account to be put on stakes. She projects that they will be short about \$70,000.00 and there is a sufficient amount in the overnight fund to transfer over.

Jay Taylor made a motion to give permission for some of the overnight funds to be moved to the stakes fund in the purse account for the Downs At Albuquerque / NMSF, seconded by Pierre Amestoy. Motion carried 11:0.

## DISCUSSION ITEMS

### THOROUGHBRED RACING IN NEW MEXICO

Billy Smith stated that we need to get the Thoroughbreds back in New Mexico, but we need to make sure we would have full fields.

Pierre Amestoy asked about the stall allocation for the Thoroughbreds. If Ruidoso Downs decides they only want to race Quarter Horses, how can we get the Commission to help us get a Thoroughbred meet.

Mary Barber stated that the race dates are supposed to be decided for 2026 at the Commission meeting next week. We have not seen anything about what the tracks are requesting. What about a Summer Thoroughbred meet? Billy Smith replied that the race dates can be adjusted if something changes.

Pierre Amestoy asked about how we can allocate money for purses if we can run a straight Thoroughbred meet? How do we address this now so we know we will have the funds when the time comes? Billy Smith mentioned that Zia Park has a lot of funds so that is one idea. He can strongly suggest that something like that could get done. He knows that Paul Blanchard is not going to want to spend his funds for his mixed meet and will need additional funds for a Thoroughbred meet.

Norma Alvarez mentioned the idea of having the Downs At Albuquerque meet be a straight Thoroughbred meet and use their purse fund for just Thoroughbreds and Ruidoso's Purse fund would be for just Quarter Horses.

Billy Smith feels that we should only have three racetracks running in New Mexico. These three would be Sunland Park, Ruidoso Downs, and The Downs at Albuquerque. Zia Park would give \$2 million to Sunland Park and \$2 million to the Downs At Albuquerque and the purses would be the best in the country. He knows that Zia Park would go for it. This would make it a lot easier on the horsemen who would only have to move twice a year. This could be worked out. Some people would be mad. He thinks all the racetracks would like this.

## **DOWNS AT ALBUQUERQUE CONDITION BOOK**

Ralph Vincent asked the Trustees to consider asking the Downs At Albuquerque to consider some revisions to the Thoroughbred races in the condition book for their upcoming race meet. He sent a letter and some documents for the Trustees to look over.

It could be a three month wait to run a Thoroughbred in New Mexico, and this could be the straw that breaks the camel's back. Looking at the Albuquerque condition book, there are only three maiden special weight races for 3 and up New Mexico Breds, when looking at all the possible distances, three is not enough. There are three allowance races for Thoroughbred breeds in the entire first book and only six breed claiming races for Thoroughbreds in the first book.

If you do not get in the one race you qualify for with the right conditions in the first book, then you have to wait another month. He would like Albuquerque to go back and look at their condition book and make some changes.

Pierre Amestoy volunteered to talk to Don Cook about this. With no Thoroughbred racing for three months and this book was written without taking that into consideration. The book is the same book they have written in the past. This is also a result of the race meets being too short. He would rather run two days a week for a longer period of time than the way it is set up now.

Billy Smith commented that what is happening today, we brought upon ourselves. The breeders have not done one thing to fix the problem. Pierre Amestoy stated that if they do not fill a Thoroughbred race quickly, they use a Quarter Horse races that fills easily instead.

Mark Brown does not think that Albuquerque should run less Quarter Horse races because the Thoroughbreds are not running now. They are always begging the Thoroughbred people to enter their horses. Even with the Quarter Horses, you do not get to run very often, and he feels they shouldn't run more Thoroughbred races than usual at Albuquerque.

## **FINANCIAL REPORT**

Jay Taylor went over the Financial Report that show a pretty big decrease in our General operating account in the last three months. This is because of some pretty big bills that had to be paid. For instance, the Cowboy Channel, the audit, Michael Cusortelli. Most of our income comes late in the year so we should be able to make a lot of that back.

Our investments went up since the last report. There is \$89,000 in the money market account that could be cashed in or reinvested in other things. All the investments have made a little since the last report.

The wars going on around the world could effect our investments. We will need to keep an eye on them. The stock market could go down until things settle down.

President Goncharoff asked about if we could afford the FanDuel proposal. Jay Taylor felt we could because this has been budgeted for. We will look at everything at the end of the year. Marketing is the only thing we could cut if we need to.

### ZIA FESTIVAL - TOPICS FOR TOWN HALL DISCUSSION

After some discussion, it was decided that Thoroughbred racing in New Mexico and possibly the New Mexico / Arizona Bred race idea would be good topics for the meeting. We could discuss straight meets and the idea of only having racing at three racetracks.

Mac Murray thought it would be a good idea for Billy Smith to say a few words at our Zia Festival dinner or Town Hall meeting.

### MARKETING COMMITTEE

All Norma Alvarez had to report is that everything is going really well with the Cowboy Channel and she has not spent any additional funds. Ruidoso Downs had a seventh sponsor and so they gave us a full page advertisement in their program. It is pretty blurry because the print is too small, and it is on a newspaper type paper.

Mary Barber showed the full page color advertisement we were given for \$1,500.00 in the June issue of the BloodHorse magazine that both Bobby Lee and Pierre Amestoy approved.

### SALE PARTY REPORT

Mark Brown reported that everything is on schedule. He has talked to Chaplain Winter who is on board for the cookout, and they are more than happy to do all the cooking. We will probably have the same menu. He will go over to Mike Logan's to borrow the water trough for the drinks. Walt Wiggins also gave us the okay to have it in the big sale barn.

### OPEN DISCUSSION

None.

Norma Alvarez made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Jay Taylor. Motion carried 11:0.

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Tom Goncharoff  
President

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Mary M. Barber  
Attest