

Iowa Harness Horseman's Association Board Minutes

March 10, 2002

President Royal Roland called the meeting to order at 1:15pm. Present were Mark Holtan, Mary Ronek, Royal Roland, Jim Reese, Joel McDanel, Jim Coulter, Larry Jenson and Dan Roland.

The meeting began with lobbyist Laverne Schroeder describing the bills affecting us that are currently in the legislature. This included the bill to allow a split referendum on the slot machine / horse racing issue in Polk County this fall. He encouraged us to get our members to contact their local representatives in opposition of this bill. The board has drafted a sample letter for members to send to their representatives. He also said there was a bill to cap the taxes at the Dubuque Greyhound Park at 30%. Prairie Meadows currently pays 32% and the rate increases by 2% each year to a cap of 36%. Mr. Schroeder thinks it is unlikely that this bill would pass without including all pari-mutual tracks in the bill.

After Mr. Schroeder's presentation the official board meeting began.

The minutes for the previous meeting were unanimously approved as written.

Jim Reese presented the treasurers report. The report was amended to include the payments to Humboldt, What Cheer and Oskaloosa for Fair Improvement Grants approved at the last meeting. The Fair Prepayments were lowered a corresponding amount. The adjusted December 31st, 2001 balance was \$46,056.63. **Motion was made by Jim Coulter and seconded by Mark Holtan to accept the report as amended. All Ayes.**

The next point of discussion was election of officers for 2002.

For President Royal Roland was nominated by Joel McDanel and seconded by Jim Coulter.

Mark Holtan was nominated by Larry Jenson and seconded by Mary Ronek.

Royal Roland was re-elected by closed ballot 5-3.

Mark Holtan was then nominated for Vice-President by Jim Coulter, seconded by Dan Roland.

There were no other nominations so Mark Holtan was elected Vice-President.

Dan Roland was nominated for Secretary by Mark Holtan, seconded by Mary Ronek.

There were no other nominations so Dan Roland was elected Secretary.

Jim Reese was nominated for Treasurer by Dan Roland, seconded by Larry Jenson.

There were no other nominations so Jim Reese was re-elected Treasurer.

The fourth item on the agenda was discussion on the proposed 2002 budget. The proposed budget was amended to remove the \$5,000 in income from the Prairie Meadows simulcast because there was a negative breakage pool during the races last fall. The budget was also amended to include \$94,000 instead of \$79,000 for overnight purses because more overnight races were written than originally expected. Expenses for Lobbyists and Liaisons were reduced from \$10,000 to \$4,500 because we do not currently have a Liaison to the State Racing Commission on retainer. USTA Director Judy Roland has been attending the meetings while we do not have a Liaison and Royal presented her report from the last commission meeting. The board agreed we should ask her to continue this practice until such time as we can hire a permanent Liaison.

The budget discussion also included discussion of the promotional work done by Mary Lou Lawless and the expenses related to that work. While agreeing that Mary Lou had done a tremendous amount of work in the last year the board felt it should more clearly define Mary Lou's responsibilities to help focus her efforts. The board sees her primary tasks as being as follows

1) Primary writer of the monthly article in the Illinois Standardbred magazine.

- 2) The board would like her to continue submitting an article to the local newspapers for each race meet.
- 3) The board would like her to write and submit or arrange for a meet summary to be included in the local newspapers for each meet.
- 4) The board would like Mary Lou to continue getting as many of the local legislative leaders as possible to attend the race meets. Included in the discussion was to continue the policy of naming a race after the legislative member and in the future to arrange for a blanket with the race name on it to be presented to the winner of the race. We would also then like for one of the win pictures for the race, including the picture of the legislative member presenting the blanket to be sent to the office of the legislative member. Jim Reese knew someone in Bedford who does the embroidering of the blankets very reasonably and was going to contact her for rate information.

The board also decided that it was OK for Mary Lou to do the win pictures, but that this would not be part of her duties in the promotional area. They would also like her to work with Debbie Philipp of the Iowa Harnessracing Woman's newsletter and Dan Roland on the Iowa Harnessracing Web Site to share content and avoid duplication of efforts (such as the in-training list).

The IaHHA board currently has two standing committees, the Hall of Fame committee and the Promotion committee.

The Hall Of Fame committee includes board members Larry Jenson, Jim Coulter and Mary Ronek. Nancy Carey is the appointed head of the Hall of Fame committee. It was discussed that the process for future Hall of Fame selections would be that the Hall of Fame committee would provide recommendations to the board and the full IaHHA board would vote on those recommendations.

The Promotion committee consists of Mark Holtan, Joel McDanel, Rick Mishler and Dan Roland. The Promotion committee is scheduled to meet prior to the next scheduled board meeting.

The next item on the agenda was regarding negotiations with Prairie Meadows for a new contract. Prairie Meadows has informed us that they will not negotiate with us until they have signed a contract the thoroughbred association. **Motion by Joel McDanel, seconded by Dan Roland to form an official Negotiating Committee comprised of Royal Roland, Mark Holtan and Jim Coulter. All Ayes.**

The next agenda item was regarding the Aged Iowa Registered program. As newly elected Secretary all nominations should go to Dan Roland. He will be responsible for sending out the nomination forms to all people on the IaHHA membership list. We would like to include a note for regular members who have not paid their 2002 dues reminding them that they must be paid with Aged Iowa Registered nominations. There was also a discussion regarding having staggered levels of conditions for the Aged Iowa Registered horses. It was decided that to do that would force the top mares to race against the top colts and that we would rather not do that. No changes were made to the Aged Iowa Registered conditions for 2002. As an alternative it was decided to have an ongoing discussion this year to develop more Iowa Registered overnight conditions for 2003 similar to the Iowa Registered Maiden race Jim Coulter scheduled for the Oskaloosa fair this year.

This also led to a discussion of having some form of Hawkeye Colt stakes races with limited or no supplementation from the IaHHA. These races would probably take the form of overnight races supplemented with nomination payments and entry payments. It was agreed to continue this discussion at future meetings to develop some plan by the beginning of 2003.

The Hawkeye Colt Stakes discussion led to a discussion on the rule changes approved by the Hawkeye Colt Stakes board regarding splitting of races. After reviewing the published conditions the consensus was that the new rule only applied if there were two divisions. Nine or fewer would be raced as one division. Ten to 16 horses would race as two divisions and be split according to the new rule that there be no more horses switched

to the opposite sex division than required to have five in both divisions. On 17 or more horses the race would be split into three or more divisions and the old rules would apply for having even divisions.

There was also discussion regarding the Hawkeye Colt Stakes board voting to cut purses for the Iowa Registered Stakes races. Mark Holtan said that the overall purses were not cut because there is the same \$365,000 budgeted for Iowa Registered Colt races as before, but that the per race purse was cut to \$5,800 because the board had voted to not have more than 8 horses in a race and that this could lead three divisions instead of two at some races. There was some discussion on if those changes were within the original intention of having the Hawkeye board administer the Iowa Registered races or if that was simply a procedural responsibility. It was agreed that it would have been better if the Hawkeye board had consulted with the IaHHA board before making these changes. **Motion was made by Mary Ronek and seconded by Dan Roland to have the IaHHA association retake control of administering the Iowa Registered races effective in 2003. Ayes - Mary Ronek, Dan Roland. Nays - Jim Reese, Joel McDanel, Larry Jenson, Mark Holtan, Jim Coulter.**

This also led to discussion regarding the future of the Hawkeye Colt Stakes board after the Hawkeye Colt Stakes is discontinued. It was asked to request the Hawkeye Colt Stakes board attend a joint meeting at the next board meeting to discuss that status of the board and ideas for a merger of the two boards.

The next item on the agenda was regarding membership communication. Dan Roland stated he felt it was a common feeling in the general membership that board did not allow adequate opportunity for feedback from the membership or timely information on board activities to the membership. Mark Holtan discussed the group meeting he and Larry Jenson have before each board meeting and the feedback they receive. **Motion by Dan Roland and seconded by Mark Holtan that the board publish a tentative meeting agenda on the Iowa Harness Racing web site a minimum of two weeks prior to each meeting, that the meeting minutes be distributed to each board member for approval within one week after each meeting and that the board members have the minutes reviewed within one week of receiving them so they can be released to the membership via the web site and e-mail within two weeks of each meeting. All Ayes.**

The board also asked the Hawkeye Colt Stakes board to provide a more clear definition on what constitutes a rainout under their conditions. There were some concerns with this at Eldon last year because stakes races were held over to the following day. According to the USTA rules a race may be held over up to 48 hours after scheduled post time at the discretion of the race secretary. The IaHHA board would like the Hawkeye Colt Stakes to affirm if this is the rule they will use for future rainout decisions.

At the end of the meeting Mary Ronek presented her resignation to the board in an open letter to the membership and the board. After noting that a number of her concerns were addressed in this board meeting a number of board members asked Mary to reconsider her decision at least until the next board meeting. She declined and stated that her decision was final. After asking Mary to contact the board with any member of her district that might be interested in finishing her term on the board it was decided that there was a limited amount of time to fill the seat before the next board meeting. **Motion by Mark Holtan, seconded by Joel McDanel to ask Dale Hein to fulfill the remainder of Mary Ronek's term. Further if Dale Hein refuses to fill the term then to ask Scott Smith. All Ayes.**

The next board meeting is scheduled for 1:00 May 5th at Prairie Meadows.

Meeting adjourned at 6:00 pm March 10th, 2002.