

CALIFORNIA AUTHORITY OF RACING FAIRS
Board of Directors & Live Racing Committee
Concurrent Meeting
Tuesday, February 4, 2020

MINUTES

A concurrent meeting of the California Authority of Racing Fairs (CARF) Board of Directors and Live Racing Committee was held at 11:00 A.M., Tuesday, February 4, 2020. The meeting was conducted at the CARF office, 1776 Tribute Road, Sacramento, CA, 95815.

CARF Board Directors joining by conference call: John Alkire, Richard Conway, Jerome Hoban and Dan Jacobs.

CARF Live Racing Committee members joining by conference call: John Alkire, Richard Conway and Jerome Hoban.

Staff and Guests participating: Larry Swartzlander, Tom Doutrich, Heather Haviland, Juliana Gomes, Vicki Layne, Raechelle Gibbons, Ann Grottveit, John Quiroz, Matt Cranford, Tom Martinez, Allen Aldrich, Terri Eaton, Katherine Barbeau and Cory Soltau. Joining by conference call: Louie Brown, Cody Boyles and Lauri King.

Agenda Item 1 – Date, Time and Location of Next Meeting: March 3, 2020 in Sacramento. The next CARF Board of Directors and Live Racing Committee meeting will be held at 11:00 a.m. March 3, 2020 in Sacramento.

Agenda Item 2 – Public Comment. Cory Soltau, President of the Arabian Racing Association of California (ARAC), requested that CARF notify him as soon as possible as to when stabling will be open at Pleasanton so that ARAC can recruit Arabian trainers from Colorado, Wyoming and Texas. Mr. Doutrich enquired to the number of Arabians expected and Mr. Soltau replied that would depend on when stabling is available. Mr. Swartzlander stated that CARF staff will coordinate a separate meeting with ARAC to discuss the 2020 Arabian program.

Agenda Item 3 – Closed Session: Conference with Legal Counsel – Anticipated Litigation. Ms. Grottveit reported that during closed session the Board heard an update from legal counsel regarding the status of the ongoing Pacific Racing Association (PRA) litigation and no action was taken.

Agenda Item 4 – Approval of Minutes. {ACTION} Mr. Conway moved to approve the CARF Board of Directors & Live Racing Committee concurrent meeting minutes for October 10, 2019 and December 10, 2019 as presented. Mr. Hoban seconded, unanimously approved.

Agenda Item 5 – Report, Discussion and Action, if any, on Legislative Program. Mr. Brown reported that the legislature reconvened on January 6 and is currently in the bill introduction phase of the session with Friday, February 21 being the final bill submission deadline. January 24 was the last day for any committee to hear and report on two-year bills, resulting in a number of bills no longer moving forward.

Mr. Brown stated that the focus of horse racing legislation this session will be on sports wagering and horse safety. Animal welfare groups are expected to be extremely active and have already sponsored a bill authored by Assemblymember Kalra to further restrict medication, require onsite track pharmacies and the implementation of preventative screening. Assemblymember Gray and Senator Dodd have also introduced horse safety bills.

Mr. Brown reported that the proposed initiative to legalize sports wagering at private horse tracks and tribal casinos lead by the Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians is moving forward and the necessary funding to procure signatures has been provided. Whether the initiative passes or fails, the tribes have succeeded in stalling the progression of sports wagering legislation. Mr. Hoban questioned if CARF should be doing more to be proactive in regards to this initiative. Mr. Brown encouraged fair managers to reach out to their local representatives and talk about the importance of tackling this issue within the legislative process. Mr. Hoban asked Mr. Swartzlander to regenerate and update the sports wagering point paper for circulation to the CARF Board.

Mr. Brown reported that legislative counsel has drafted spot bill language on behalf of CARF should a bill be required later in the session.

Agenda Item 6 – Report, Discussion and Action, if any, on Mini-Satellites and NCOTWINC. Mr. Swartzlander reported that the judge denied PRA’s petition asserting that the CHRB is not within their legal right to mandate satellite agreements with Northern California off-track betting facilities as a requirement for granting a racing license. Even though PRA will most likely appeal the ruling, it remains clear that Golden Gate Fields (GGF) should come back into NCOTWINC and work with the industry to restructure NCOTWINC/SCOTWINC.

NCOTWINC’s uncertainty as a viable organization without a key player in the north participating has impacted the opening of several Northern California mini-satellites, including a partnership between the Stanislaus County Fair and a Turlock poker club. Mr. Swartzlander stated that he received approval from the Thoroughbred Owners of California (TOC) to move forward with mini-satellites contingent upon approval from GGF and Santa Rosa to provide the signal to the sites. Mr. Swartzlander reported that there are currently four potential mini-satellite locations in Northern California.

Mr. Alkire encouraged Mr. Swartzlander to maintain a full-court press in regards to expanding the satellite network through the opening of new mini-satellites.

Agenda Item 7 – Financials. Mr. Alkire stated that financials are included in the meeting packet and that Ms. Gibbons is available for questions. Ms. Gibbons provided a review of the financials. No questions.

Agenda Item 8 – Report, Discussion and Action, if any, on Racing Calendar and Live Racing Operations.

2020 Racing Dates & Stabling: Mr. Swartzlander reported that CARF’s objective when dates negotiation begin is to secure two weeks of unoverlapped racing for Ferndale and to establish a three-year fair racing calendar. Mr. Swartzlander stated that he has repeatedly reached out to The Stronach Group (TSG) in regards to stabling with an offer of 2% generation from the Stabling and Vanning Fund to compensate GGF for staying open and serving as auxiliary stabling for Pleasanton and Sacramento. At this time, no one from TSG has responded. CARF staff will move forward with plans to provide stabling at fairs and the CARF Board will need to make a final decision at the March meeting. Allen Aldrich stated that, as the TOC designee to mediate between CARF and GGF, he would relay to the TOC Board and horsemen that a decision will be made March 3.

Mr. Swartzlander reported that the license application calendar has been release by CHRB and that the Pleasanton application will be heard in April. Ms. King requested that the Fresno application be heard in June.

Mr. Swartzlander reported he has been in communication with Becky Bartling regarding becoming an associate member of CARF.

Agenda Item 7 – Executive Director’s Report.

DRAFT Policy Manual & Employee Handbook

Ms. Haviland reported that the meeting packet contains draft agency policies for the March Board meeting. The policies follow those of CFSA and CFFA, as well as a vacation policy model used by the Alameda County Fair, and are a precursor to updating the CARF Employee Handbook.

Executive Director Evaluation Form

Mr. Swartzlander reported that his evaluation form was included in the meeting packet and Board members should send completed forms to Mr. Alkire.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Haviland