

CALIFORNIA AUTHORITY OF RACING FAIRS
Board of Directors & Live Racing Committee
Concurrent Meeting
Tuesday, December 1, 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, December 1, 2020. The meeting was conducted via teleconference originating at the CARF office, 1776 Tribute Road, Sacramento, CA, 95815.

CARF Board Directors joining by conference call: Jerome Hoban, Dan Jacobs, Rick Pickering, Dana Stoehr and Kelly Violini.

CARF Live Racing Committee members joining by conference call: Jerome Hoban, Lauri King, Jim Morgan and Rick Pickering.

Staff and Guests participating via conference call: Larry Swartzlander, Tom Doutrich, Heather Haviland, Vicki Layne, Juliana Gomes, Raechelle Gibbons, Louie Brown, Cody Boyles, Allen Aldrich, Cindy Olsen, Dwayne Martin and Caroline Titus.

Agenda Item 1 – Date, Time and Location of Next Meeting: The next CARF Board of Directors and Live Racing Committee meeting will be held February 2, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. by teleconference originating in Sacramento.

Agenda Item 2 – Public Comment. None.

Agenda Item 3 – Approval of Minutes. {ACTION} Mr. Jacobs moved to approve the CARF Board of Directors & Live Racing Committee concurrent meeting minutes for November 3, 2020 as presented. Ms. Violini seconded, unanimously approved.

Agenda Item 4 – Report, Discussion and Action, if any on Legislative Program. Mr. Brown reported the legislature is scheduled to be sworn in November 7 and will begin the 2021 legislative session in January. Legislative counsel plans to have spot bills in place for CARF to use as needed. Mr. Brown believes the beginning of the year will be the busiest due to COVID-19 related concerns.

Mr. Brown reported that AB 1499 is in the process of being amended, with the Department of Finance, to reach an agreement regarding the accounting and disbursements of revenues for fairs.

Mr. Brown reminded the Board that the goal of fairs is to have the Department of Finance reconcile their numbers yearly in order to provide a precise figure for budgeting purposes.

Agenda Item 5 – Report, Discussion and Action, if any, on 2021 Budget. Ms. Gibbons reported that in light of the ongoing COVID-19 uncertainties facing both fairs and horse racing in 2021, the Finance Committee met to review and approve three possible budget scenarios for CARF.

Ms. Gibbons presented 2020 estimated year-end figures and three budget scenarios outlining various possible racing schedules. The green column represents Scenario 1 with the traditional 40 days of racing, the red column represents Scenario 2 with a modified race calendar and the blue column represents Scenario 3 which mirrors the Pleasanton/Sacramento COVID-19 race meet of 2020.

Ms. Gibbons reviewed the agency and live racing budgets line-by-line to provide updates regarding specific categories where the agency proposes spending cuts to balance out shortfalls created by a reduction in race dates. Mr. Hoban reported that due to the uncertainty of 2021 COVID-19 related restrictions, the Finance Committee felt it best to offer three options to cover possible contingencies in the racing schedule and thanked staff for their work on the proposed budget.

{ACTION} Mr. Pickering moved to approve the 2021 budget scenarios as presented. Mr. Jacobs seconded, unanimously approved.

Agenda Item 6 – Report, Discussion and Action, if any, on Racing Calendar and Live Racing Operations. Mr. Pickering reported that the 2021 Northern California race dates were approved by the California Horse Racing Board (CHRB) and are similar to the fair dates CARF was awarded and intended to run pre-COVID-19. Mr. Pickering added that the CHRB anticipates adjustments will be made to the racing calendar dependent on the status of state mandated restrictions and the timeframe of the vaccine rollout.

Mr. Pickering stated that there are currently reports regarding Golden Gate Fields staff and horsemen testing positive for COVID-19, which will most likely impact racing at Golden Gate Fields immediately and may have a trickle-down effect impacting racing at fairs. Mr. Swartzlander added that the status of Santa Rosa's race dates and the likelihood of them partnering with Golden Gate Fields in 2021 is unknown.

Mr. Swartzlander reported that a meeting with NCOTWINC and SCOTWINC yielded support for the Fantasy Sports Pilot Program initiated by CARF. Mr. Swartzlander believes that the addition of fantasy sports is vital in reinvigorating the satellite network and enhancing the horse racing product currently offered at satellites.

Agenda Item 7 – Executive Director’s Report. Mr. Hoban asked Mr. Pickering to give a report regarding Western Fairs Association and asked that the item be included on future agendas. Mr. Pickering provided an update regarding the proposed clean-up of WFA’s bylaws and board seats, including the desire to make the organization less “California-centric” in representation.

Ms. Haviland updated the board regarding the upcoming CARF Election. Nominees include Rick Pickering for Live Racing Chairman, Lauri King for WFA Representative and Stephen Hales and Jim Morgan for the at-large seat previously held by Richard Conway. Jerome Hoban and Kelly Violini are the sole nominees to retain the seats they currently hold. Ballots will be delivered on December 3 and are due back to CARF Dec. 17.

Respectfully submitted,
Juliana Gomes