

CALIFORNIA AUTHORITY OF RACING FAIRS
Board of Directors & Live Racing Committee
Concurrent Meeting
Tuesday, September 5, 2023

MINUTES

A meeting of the California Authority of Racing Fairs (CARF) Board of Directors and Live Racing Committee was held at 11:00 A.M., Tuesday, September 5, 2023. The meeting was held via teleconference originating at the CARF office, 1776 Tribute Road, Sacramento, CA 95815.

CARF Board members joining by conference call: Stephen Hales, Jerome Hoban, Dan Jacobs, Dana Stoehr and Kelly Violini. Mr. Martinez joined during agenda item 6.

CARF Live Racing Committee members joining by conference call: Terry Gonsalves, Greg Gomes, and Jerome Hoban.

Staff and Guests participating via conference call: Larry Swartzlander, Heather Haviland, Juliana Gomes, Ann Grottveit, Louie Brown, Mike Francesconi, Matt Cranford, Ruben Gastelo, Bill Patterson, Frances Jefferson, Stacey Lapham and 510-693-2399.

Agenda Item 1 – Date, Time, and Location of Next Meeting: October TBD at the Big Fresno Fair via teleconference. Mr. Swartzlander reported Thursday, October 5 has been set as the meeting date in Fresno.

Agenda Item 2 – Public Comment. Frances Jefferson stated that she was attending the meeting for informational purposes but wanted to express her concern regarding keeping the Northern California share of the simulcast monies in the North.

Bill Patterson stated that the California Thoroughbred Trainers (CTT) wish to see Thoroughbred racing continue in Northern California and that they support CARF's efforts to provide year-round racing in the North.

Agenda Item 3 – Closed Session: Conference with Legal Counsel – Anticipated Litigation. Mr. Hoban brought the meeting back to open session and reported that the CARF Board heard updates and legal advice from counsel; no action taken.

Agenda Item 4 – Report, Discussion and Action, if any, on Stabling and Racing Transition from Golden Gate Fields. Mr. Swartzlander stated that staff is currently negotiating with The Stronach Group (TSG) to keep Golden Gate Fields open through June 2024 to benefit horsemen and industry stakeholders.

Agenda Item 5 – Report, Discussion and Action, if any, on 2024 Race Dates. Mr. Swartzlander reported that, at the request of the California Horse Racing Board (CHRB), the meeting packet includes a proposed 2024 calendar for the traditional fair meets. The draft calendar includes three significant changes; providing three weeks for Santa Rosa and pushing the Ferndale race meet back one week, as well as adding an additional week for Ferndale.

Mr. Gomes stated that the Ferndale Board is excited for the prospect of three weeks of racing, but moving the meet later in the calendar creates overlap with the Grants Pass Downs meet in Oregon. Mr. Gomes asked if CARF staff would negotiate with Grants Pass to move their race meet or if those discussion would fall to Ferndale. Mr. Swartzlander asked Ferndale staff to initiate discussions and involve CARF staff as needed.

Mr. Hoban asked if Cal Expo and Fresno support the calendar as proposed. Mr. Cranford stated that Cal Expo supports the calendar. Mr. Gastelo stated that Fresno also supports the proposed calendar.

{ACTION} Mr. Hales moved to approve the 2024 fair racing calendar as presented for submission to the CHRB. Mr. Jacobs seconded, unanimously approved.

Agenda Item 6 – Report, Discussion and Action, if any, on Calypso Challenge. Mr. Swartzlander reported that staff is awaiting an updated legal opinion regarding the legality of wagering on fantasy sports in California as requested by Global Tote in order to enter into a formal agreement for tote services.

Agenda Item 7 – Report, Discussion and Action, if any, on Racing Operations. Mr. Swartzlander stated that a majority of the fair meets have concluded, but that final numbers are still coming in and the current trend shows ADW handle down approximately 10 percent.

Agenda Item 8 – Executive Director’s Report. Mr. Swartzlander reported that he will require corrective heart surgery, but that he expects to be cleared for another year.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Haviland