

**THE NEW MEXICO HORSEMEN'S ASSOCIATION**  
**STATE BOARD MEETING**  
**August 16, 2023**

The NMHA State Board of Directors held a meeting on August 16, 2023, by Zoom conference and in the State Office in Albuquerque. Paul Jensen, President called the meeting to order at 9:08 am, with the following in attendance:

Paul Jensen, President  
Jose R. Gonzales Jr. Director  
Larry Strain, Director  
Tony Blea, Director  
Susie Prather, Director

Jill Giles, Director  
Denise Chambliss, Director  
Pam Sena, Director  
Tony Cappellucci, Director

Drew Swasey, Brenda Gabaldon, Terri Montoya, Jason Thompson, Maureen Fincher, Bernadette Barrios, Alex Cordova, Celio Trujillo.

Jill introduced Drew Swasey from the SunRay Park Committee.

Paul called the meeting or order at 9:08.

Jr

**Approval of the Agenda**

Paul had Terri add 3 minutes per person for public comment. Jill made a motion to approve the minutes. Pam seconded. **Motion Passed.**

**Approval of the July Minutes**

Pam added in attendance; Helen Neves, Candy Ezzell, Jake Brown, Lupe Munoz, and Lynette Baldwin. Pam made a motion to approve with the added names. Tony seconded. **Motion Passed.**

**Approval of the July Financials**

Paul thanked Jill for stepping in to help with the financials. Jill reviewed the financial reports. HBPA was paid, the check to the Thompsons was paid out of the general account. Jill suggested discontinuing the Albuquerque Journal. Office maintenance was for the repairs to the air conditioner. Office expenses, taxes, and salaries stayed the same. The US Bank account was closed, and the money transferred to Wells Fargo to pay HBPA and the Lobbyist. Pam asked why there was an AOL charge. She was told there always has been. She said to cancel the account, you can get the email for free. There is a contract with Microsoft that needs to check if there is a penalty to cancel. Pam said we just need the basics. Jill suggested getting rid of the mass texting program. Jr. thinks we can use it to get the word out about meetings with Legislatures, it could be beneficial. Jill agrees, but we have only used it once in six months. Jr. feels this would help utilize our people. Pam said we are limited to 2 and the number of words. Jill made a motion to approve the financials. Pam seconded. **Motion Passed.**

### Monies Due Purses

Zia is planning to run for \$350,000 a day. It will be the highest purse structure ever in New Mexico. Jill said Zia has 1500 stalls they are running 30 days, 15 quarter horses and 15 thoroughbreds, 150 races that 1500 starts per breed. You will be lucky if you get in, better explain this to your owners. And then hope you don't get scratched. Pam said everyone would rather have a chance to run.

### PAC Report

Jason wanted Brenda to know that she was in his prayers and if you need anything please call. Nothing going on in racing so far. He will be happy to talk to you about meeting with Legislators. He'll be happy to let you know when events are. This year will be elections for all the House and the Senate. He expects to see a lot of new faces, especially in the Senate. We want to be involved. Previously when we got involved it was beneficial. It isn't even about the money. Bring them to the track to see the operation, sometimes this is more beneficial. Jr. told Jason to get us the information and we will find people to attend. Paul agreed we need to talk to people not through money at them. We can have people give personal checks when they attend. They like the personal touch. Individuals they notice. Paul asked what we can do this session. Jason said you could try and do a draft for this session, but it will be very difficult. It is a 30-day session. It is hard to even get their ear on the fourth floor. It has really been difficult since MLG has been there. We would really need to get a Legislative push. The NMRC will be Germaine for their budget. The end of September is when the Legislative Finance Committee will start meeting regarding budgets. Opportunities are there to get accountability. That is when we see what the NMRC will have to present. You can start discussions now and get questions asked along with meeting with Legislators.

Jr. is working with Rick Kloeppel on different ideas. The #1 priority is to unify, we have to be on the same page. Jason said that Candy is our biggest champion for racing. You need solidarity, horsemen and breeders, legislators will take notice. Jason is happy to go to meetings with us. Jill said this is how we get our name out there; they will remember us. They need to get to know us. That way they will remember us down the line. Get our name out there. Jr. told the board the meeting he, Terri, Rey, Gary and Erin attended had people come up to and talk to us afterwards. They were surprised by the numbers we have and what we contribute to the economy.

Jason said, "they don't know what they don't know"! There are a lot of things about racing that legislators don't know – we need to continue educating them. Get in front of your individual district's representatives on a regular basis. Attend small meet and greet fund raisers, contact them personally or they lose track of you. Grass roots makes a difference.

Celio Trujillo asked about AgFest and how it went. Jr. wants to be a part of this every year. Jason will contact them. Pam heard the Governor is going to cancel it. Jason will check on it, the governor is not a part of it, it is done privately. He will look into it it's been going on since he was 5. Jason said that Governor Grisham is concerned a "Lame Duck" so we will see others jumping in to run for governor. Great discussions call him for anything you need.

## Report from the President – Paul Jensen

Paul said we covered the most important stuff with Jason. That is number one on how we survive and thrive. More to discuss with Gary in executive session. Lots on hold because of the lawsuits but we don't have to put legislation on hold. Paul said he signed the letter for the contract at Zia, it was a 2 year contract from last year.

## Track Committee Reports

### Sunland

Jr. said there is not a lot going on at Sunland. They are still in discussion with Dustin and he thanked him for working with us. He looks forward to working with the committee.

### SunRay Park

Jill said it is quiet at SunRay. The casino is not doing great. There is a big fair this week, maybe that will help. Simulcast is up a little from last year. There were only about 10-15 people there to watch the trials at Ruidoso. They will be asking for less race days. Commissioner Buffington is going to ask that they run more races a day.

### Ruidoso Downs

Pam introduced Denise Chambliss as the new board member for the Ruidoso Committee. There have been a lot of horses scratched. Nine horses confirmed broke down. There are problems with HISA not following the rules. AQHA had a big meeting at Ruidoso. The NHBPA was there. There was a special presentation regarding all the extra security. Ruidoso will have the integrity watchdog program. The track was closed, and several barns were searched, nothing was found.

### The Downs @ Albuquerque

Tony Blea talked to Jose A., and they have added material to the track, and it looks good. EMS Vet services wants to rent our building on the backside. They will us \$3000 for 2 months. Jose called Don and he is ok with it. Just doesn't want horsemen using it. It's been quiet, everyone keeping a low profile, make things work. Our problems will be during the State Fair, it is only two weeks away. Pam asked who signed the contract. Tony said W.L for the track committee. Pam said we need a record that we asked them to sign it. Paul said we sent an email, so we have a record. Regarding the trailer Paul thinks that is a good idea. Don doesn't want to let individual trainers but will allow EMS to use it. Paul made a motion to rent the building at the Down @ Albuquerque to EMS for \$1500 a month. Jill seconded. They will use it for September and October. Tony Capp wants to make sure there won't be an issue with renting. Jill said it will be a donation of \$3000 but we can check with the accountant. Paul agreed. **Motion Passed.**

### Zia Park

Susie said Larry had talked to Lauren and everything looked good. The Chaplain retired and they are working with the Chaplain at Ruidoso to find someone. They will have a food truck there. The kitchen will be open with preprepared food. Larry said Lauren would like to have the board there so she can meet them. It was asked when the track would open, and she would let

Larry know. They haven't sent soil samples yet. People can move in starting September 25<sup>th</sup>, that is 2 days before Ruidoso will close. Paul thanked Larry for communicating.

### **New Business/Discussion Items**

#### **Comments/Concerns/Questions**

Susie has only gotten 2 comments. One came from a couple who can't afford the \$250 they are on Medicare. The other had to do with the breakdowns at Ruidoso and is anything going to be done. Paul heard they were looking into it. Our hands are tied. We need to follow this issue closely need to let legislators know.

Susie asked if they are testing at Ruidoso consistently. She heard not everyone is being tested. Paul said there is two different legislative bodies there; Quarter horses are the NM Racing Commission and the Thoroughbreds are HISA. He does not know how that is being addressed. Jill said they tested everything they thought would qualify. Winners go to the test barn but not all thoroughbreds some are random tests.

#### **Membership Dues**

There have been lots of comments. Jill and Steve Brown were on the committee for membership dues. They sent out a couple of scenarios. The response they got back was that no one is going to pay, we can't afford it, or we aren't doing anything. Steve suggested \$250 for the owner or trainer. Jockeys have the guild and grooms was suggested \$10. She has talked to her owners, and they would do dues. Alex Cordova suggested setting up an online store to raise money. Having a yearly fundraiser makes it easier. Jr. thinks that's a great idea. Do it during every meet, get people involved. Bernadette said Pink Days make a lot of money. Jr. said if you do every meet the local committee can get positive things going. Pam said we need to look at our status as a charitable association. Pam, can we have a PAC fund drive, we need to be specific where the money is going. Jr. said there has to be a way to get it done. Drew said most people don't know how we work. If used correctly we are their voice. He thinks most people will pay. Paul thinks we will get more as a donation than setting a dollar figure. Tony C thinks donation without fee is a good idea. Alex said we need to do fundraisers. Jr. said it important that our membership knows why we are doing what we do. Drew said to publish more of what we do, it's a good organization. In April we did a letter for just donations but didn't send it out because of the cost for postage. The people who saw the letter did donate. We could revise the letter and send it out asking for their help. Any amount will help. Pam said membership drive came up to do at the end of year for 2024. Do it in November and December. Alex said to send it through mass email. Susie can put it on Facebook. Jr said to think outside the box. Susie said to send out mass email, text and social media. Paul said to send out the letter with the \$250 Jill and Steve decided on. Motion was made to send out the letter for \$250 donation by text, email and on Facebook. Pam asked who will do the letter, is Jill going to do it, or she can. We need to describe why we are no longer recognized by the commission. Jr. said make the letter short and sweet. Susie said not to put an amount leave it open ended. Drew recommended there be an amount. Tony also said no amount. Jill will do the letter with no dollar amount for donations through mass emails, mass text, Facebook and the website. After we get responses then could do a mail out. Tony seconded. Bernadette suggested having copies in the office to give to

members. Also reminded them that it should be in Spanish. Jr. will help with that. Next, we could do fund raisers. Alex will look into it and present it at the next meeting.

### Coffee with the Congresswoman

Jr., Erin Gonzales, Rey Marquez, Gary Cross and Terri attended an event with Congresswoman Melanie Stansbury. It was very positive, we received good feedback. Made a lot of contacts. Jr. reminded everyone to pay attention to events in your community. Attend as many as we can. NMpolitical report sends out information on special functions.

### Update LA Attorney General Litigation.

We have sent them our information and we have been added. The AG is taking point for the horsemen. NM agreed to jump on. They will seek injunction to add NM and stop HISA.

### Old Business

#### By Law Change

Pam discussed the by law change she brought up last month that says that only the President or Executive Director can sign the simulcast contract after a consensus of the NMHA Board. Pam asked for a motion to approve the change. Tony C. seconded. **Motion Passed.**

#### Split Tests

Gary recommends that we keep doing them.

#### Social Media Update

Susie said it is going good. Share it and spread the word to gain our audience. The website is good, everyone who looked at it liked it.

### Executive Session 10:53