

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
OF THE CALIFORNIA HARNESS HORSEMEN'S ASSOCIATION  
December 13, 2015**

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Proceedings of a meeting of the Board of Directors of the California Harness Horsemen's Association (CHHA) held at the Hilton Hotel in Sacramento, California on December 13 2015.

PRESENT:

David Neumeister  
David Siegel  
Bob Johnson  
Luke Plano  
Steve Wiseman  
Robin Clements  
Richard Thomas  
Wayne Knittle

As a result, eight (of nine) members of the board of directors were present. Also in attendance were Vicki Desomer and Donna Newman, each representing the Sire Stakes Committee, Chris Schick, representing Watch and Wager, Stewards Wayne Oke, Grant Baker, Will Meyers, Safety Steward Tom McCarthy and State Veterinarian, Dr. Zucco. Jimmy Perez, Executive Director of CHHA was present. Other CHHA members and members of the public were present as well.

Mr. Neumeister, President, presided. Having no minutes from the previous meeting, there were no minutes to approve.

Mr. Perez reported on the successful rate change for back stretch workers which will reduce the minimum Workers Compensation premium from about \$4700 to \$2200 per year. This will go into effect on January 1, 2016 and will greatly reduce the strain on CHHA's ability to fund Workers Comp for backstretch employees. Mr. Siegel reported on a meeting conducted with him, Mr. Perez, Watch and Wager management and the CHRB regarding the classification of drivers as contractors. CHHA is awaiting word from CHRB about the results of their analysis of the rules and business and professions code.

Mr. Perez further reported that CHHA has completed the audits for the benevolent fund and CHHA operations and is now up to date with CHRB

Mr. Schick reviewed the meet's financial position to date and provided a hand-out for details. Discussion was had on the Minnesota racing schedule with regard to its earlier start in May, resulting in the reduction of a "layover" issue for CHHA horsemen planning to race in Minnesota in 2016. Mr. Siegel handed out data regarding the number of starters over the last several years week-over-week. There was a brief discussion about the importance of the current incentive program. Discussion then turned to the current horse

population. After a general consensus that based on the data and projections that there were not sufficient horses to support the planned 3-day weeks starting in January, the Board voted unanimously to ask Watch and Wager to request the elimination of five race days related to the 3-day weeks. (Motion by Mr. Siegel, Second by Luke Plano). In addition, the board voted unanimously, with the support of Watch and Wager (Mr. Schick) to institute a 10% across the board purse increase effective on December 26, 2015 (Motion by Mr. Siegel, Second by Mr. Johnson).

Mr. Siegel handed out a graph of data illustrating an increase in the percentage of races with less than even-money horses, which spurred general discussion about the condition sheets. The Board voted unanimously to change the provision requiring any horse that enters into the \$2000 claiming class to “pass through” the top division if it had not raced in the \$2000 claiming class (or lower claiming class) in its previous start to a revised provision requiring that any horse that enters into the \$2000 claiming class to “pass through” the top division if it had not raced in the \$2000 claiming class (or lower claiming class) in its any of its three (3) previous starts. The motion also included a directive to the Executive Director to appropriately amend the current Horsemen’s Agreement with Watch and Wager. (Motion by Mr. Siegel. Second by Bob Johnson).

The Board voiced by consensus opinion to give the race office some additional discretion in the area of balancing the fields for younger horses. No specific motion was made nor vote taken.

Mr. Siegel encouraged the board to begin reporting and posting minutes from meetings (like these). After a brief discussion, there was a unanimous consensus (no vote taken) to do so. Ms. Clements assumed responsibility for taking minutes with assistance from Mr. Siegel.

Mr. Siegel handed out a graph of California-Sired registered USTA foals which illustrated a steep decline in recent years, with 19 such foals in 2014, and 10 so far registered in 2015. Ms. Newman did a survey of breeders and estimated that after all have been registered, the final 2015 number would be in the 20-neighborhood. After lively discussion, there was consensus that the status quo was not sustainable. Mr. Neumeister reviewed proposed legislation that would broaden the California Sire Stakes program to include horses sired by stallions in the current DHA states. The Sires Stakes Committee voted to move forward with this legislation, which if passed, would become effective on January 1, 2017, affecting the 2017 breeding year, which would result in such horses being born in 2018, and therefore racing as 2-year olds in 2020 or as 3-year olds in 2021. In addition, The Sires Stakes Committee discussed and voted to have a breeders’ incentive for the 2016 breeding season. All foals born in 2017 will receive a \$1500 bonus after that foal has been registered, pending an affordability review by Ms. Newman.

Mr. Siegel brought up the issue regarding some confusion about the inclusion of Cal-bred (not sired) horses as part of the DHA program. It was clarified that the board previously voted to treat such horses the same as Cal-sired horses for purposes of claiming prices and allowances (e.g. 50% claiming allowance) and there had been no

vote to reverse this previous stance. The board directed Mr. Perez to appropriately amend the horsemen's agreement to clarify this point if needed.

Mr. Siegel reviewed the recent goings on regarding CHRB rule 1734 – whipping. Taking part in the discussion were stewards including the safety steward, and a number of the drivers. The result of the discussion is attached as a rule change proposal for CHRB consideration that was unanimously approved by the CHHA board, the stewards, the state vet and Mr. Schick on behalf of Watch and Wager. These rules will be adopted as a “house rule” beginning on December 26, 2015 as they are not in conflict with existing CHRB rule 1734. (Motion made by Mr. Siegel. Seconded by Mr. Thomas).

There being no further business to come before the CHHA board, the meeting was, upon motion, duly seconded and approved, adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

*David Siegel*

Secretary of the meeting

**CHRB PROPOSED RULE CHANGE – 1734 and  
CAL-EXPO HOUSE RULE EFFECTIVE 12/26/2016**

- 1) No driver shall use unreasonable or unnecessary force in the whipping of a horse, nor whip any horse excessively or brutally causing welts or breaks in the skin, nor whip any horse about the head including but not limited to trailing horses, nor whip any horse after the finish line has been crossed except when necessary to control the horse. The Board of Stewards will notify the Official Veterinarian to conduct any post-race examination on any horse deemed to have been subject to unreasonable or unnecessary force.
- 2) The following actions regarding the use of the whip are prohibited:
  - a) Raising the elbow above the driver's shoulder height and/or allowing the hand holding the whip to reach behind the driver during the use of the whip.
  - b) The use of the whip other than on the area inside and above the level of the shafts of the sulky and between the sulky shafts.
  - c) Whipping under the arch or shafts of the sulky.
  - d) Use of the whip as a goading or poking device or between the legs of the horse.
  - e) Use of the whip when the horse does not appear to be advancing through the field of horses or is no longer in contention.
- 3) One handed whipping is restricted as follows:
  - a) Drivers must keep one line, rein, or handhold in each hand at all times during the race until the one-eighth of a mile prior to the finish line and may not whip in a one handed striking motion until then.
  - b) Once the horse has reached the point one-eighth of a mile prior to the finish line, the driver may, in a one handed motion, use the whip in a reasonable and responsible manner but not more than three times in succession without giving the horse a chance to respond.