

LOUISIANA STATE RACING COMMISSION
MINUTES – April 29, 2024 Meeting
As transcribed by Julia D. Harper, Certified Court Reporter

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE

Edward J. Koehl, Jr., *Chairman*
Dr. Patrick Bernard
Rock M. Bordelon
Leslie P. Bouie
Larry L. Findley, Sr., DVM
K. R. "Ron" Finkelstein, O.D.
Nathan C. Granger
Earl A. "Boo" Landry, Jr.
Mike R. McHalfey
Travis K. Miller, DVM
Deano Thornton
Vincent V. Tumminello, Jr., M.D.
Katherine L. Winters

ABSENT

None

The meeting of the Louisiana State Racing Commission (LSRC) is called to order by the Chairman on Monday, April 29, 2024 at 10:00 AM in the Event Center of Evangeline Downs Racetrack & Casino, Event Center Prefunction Room, 2235 Cresswell Lane Extension, Opelousas, Louisiana. Roll call is taken; a quorum is present.

Chairman Koehl motions to approve the October 30, 2023; December 11, 2023 & February 18, 19, 2024 Meeting Minutes; Commissioner Bouie seconds; motion carries.

IV. RULES

**Addressed out-of-order per Chairman Koehl*

A. EMERGENCY RULE/NOTICE OF INTENT:

1. LAC 35:I. Chapter 17 – Corrupt and Prohibited Practices
§1725. Controlled Medication [AMEND]

Chairman Koehl motions to adopt the new thoroughbred medication rules. Chairman Koehl motions for a second; Commissioner Landry seconds; motion carries.

Chairman Koehl motions to adopt the emergency medication rule to become permanent.

Commissioner Landry seconds; motion carries.

B. DISCUSSION/NOTICES OF INENT:

1. LAC 35:III. Chapter 57 – Associations’ Duties and Obligations
§5728. House Rules [NEW]
Executive Director Landry motions to approve the new house rule change. Commissioner McHalfey seconds; motion carries.

2. LAC 35:III. Chapter 57 – Associations’ Duties and Obligations
§5734. Purses and Sports Wagering [NEW]
Chairman Koehl motions to adopt the rule for allocation of sports wagering funds to purses. Commissioner Landry seconds; motion carries.

C. FORMAL ADOPTIONS:

1. LAC 35:I. Chapter 3 – General Rules
§322. Disability Accommodations [NEW]
Executive Director Landry motions to formally adopt Disability Accommodations rules. Commissioner Bernard seconds; motion passes.

2. LAC 35:III. Chapter 57 – Associations’ Duties and Obligations
§5773. Association Annual Plan of Operation Report [AMEND]
Chairman Koehl motions to formally adopt rule 5773; motion passes.

3. LAC 35:XI. Chapter 99 – Claiming Rule
§9905. Timing of Entering Next Claiming Race [AMEND]
Executive Director Landry motions to formally adopt Chapter 99 of the Claiming rules. Commissioner Landry seconds; motion passes.

*Chairman Koehl stated that he wanted to comment on the Infrastructure Requirements on the Associations. The Chairman stated that he was concerned that not all of the Associations had complied with the obligations stated in their submittals. **See official transcript for details.

I. ASSOCIATION REQUESTS

A. The Old Evangeline Downs, LLC d/b/a EVAGELINE DOWNS RACETRACK & CASINO

1. PROGRESS REPORT

Ms. Carol Core, Vice President and General Manager of Evangeline Downs, introduced Ms. Tracey Coonce, Director of Racing at Evangeline Downs. Ms. Coonce states that Evangeline Downs’ first month Thoroughbred Meet ended and they showed increases in handle and field size, with 17.58% and 8.42%, respectively. Ms. Coonce then went into details about several incidents that occurred at the track, including their gate truck and track warning light systems, starters and outriders. There was an in-depth discussion among the Commissioners and Delta Downs staff in reference to infrastructure improvements and funding.

See Meeting Transcript for discussion about Evangeline Downs' No Contest races, racetrack surface, stall requests, OTB operations and food and beverage services.

Executive Director Landry motions to ratify the condition book, designated races, officials and Mr. Charles Ashy as the state steward for the thoroughbred meet. Commissioner Granger motions to approve; Commissioner McHalfey seconds; motion carries.

Executive Director Landry addresses the quarter horse meet. Chairman Koehl moves to approve. Commissioner Bordelon seconds; motion carries.

**B. CHURCHILL DOWNS LOUISIANA HORSERACING COMPANY, LLC
d/b/a FAIR GROUNDS RACE COURSE & SLOTS**

1. PROGRESS REPORT

Mr. Jason Boulet, Director of Racing at Fair Grounds, informs that Fair Grounds' 2023-2024 Thoroughbred Meet would be its 152nd racing season. Total handle is up 38% from prior year, 697 races ran over 75 days, and starters average 8.5 per race, increasing from 7.9 prior year. Statements were made to compliment the LSRC and HBPA staff on coordination with the Fair Grounds.

2023-2024 THOROUGHBRED MEET

2. RACES

a. Ratification of designated races for the 2023-2024 thoroughbred meet: Executive Director Landry motions to ratify the stakes schedule for the thoroughbred meet. Commissioner Bernard moves to ratify. Commissioner McHalfey seconds; motion carries.

2024 QUARTER HORSE MEET

3. LICENSE APPROVALS

a. Approval for 2024 quarter horse race meet: Executive Director Landry motions to approve the quarter horse meet for 2024, the ten-year license for the track and OTB locations and for the new wagering format. Commissioner Tumminello moves. Commissioner Bordelon seconds; motion carries.

See Meeting Transcript for discussion about Fair Grounds' handle, Derby Day, racetrack surfaces, equipment, concessions, infrastructure, off-track betting and racing dates.

STEWARD

- 2. Approval** of Bobby Granger to serve as State Steward for 2024 quarter horse meet. Executive Director Landry motions to approve Mr. Bobby Granger as State Steward for the quarter horse meet. Commissioner Landry motions to approve. Commissioner Finklestein seconds; motions carries.

2024-2025 THOROUGHBRED MEET

7. LICENSE APPROVALS

- a. **Approval** for 2024-2025 thoroughbred meet:
Executive Director Landry motions to approve the licensing approvals. Commissioner Bernard moves to approve. Commissioner Landry seconds; motion carries.

Lunch recess

C. BOYD RACING, LLC d/b/a DELTA DOWNS RACETRACK, CASINO & HOTEL
1. PROGRESS REPORT

Mr. Steve Kuypers, General Manager of Delta Downs, introduced Mr. John Simon, Director of Racing and the Racing Secretary. Mr. Simon stated that their thoroughbred meet ended February 24th and even though their handle was down, their starters increased to 8.49. Track renovations were completed and during the quarter horse meet popcorn and \$500 vouchers were given away. Track condition and infrastructure updates, as well as presentations may be found in the transcripts. See transcript for details.

Request was made to allow a start time of 4:45 PM to accommodate two additional races.

Executive Director Landry motions to approve; Commissioner Findley seconds. Motion carries.

2023-2024 THOROUGHBRED MEET

2. OFFICIALS & MANAGEMENT: RATIFICATION OF THE RACING DATES AND OF ADDITIONAL OFFICIAL.

Executive Director Landry motions to approve; Commissioner Tumminello seconds; motion carries.

See Meeting Transcript for details on dates and staff.

3. STEWARDS, OFFICIALS & MANAGEMENT:

Executive Director Landry motions to approve new racing dates and wagering format. Commissioner Bernard seconds; motion carries.

Executive Director Landry motions to approve the racing dates and license for the thoroughbred meet. Commissioner Findley moves; Commissioner Landry seconds. Motion carries.

D. LOUISIANA DOWNS INVESTMENT COMPANY, LLC
d/b/a LOUISIANA DOWNS CASINO & RACETRACK
1. PROGRESS REPORT:

Mr. Matt Crawford, Director of Racing and Racing Secretary for Louisiana Downs, stated that their recent futurities had the highest purses ever. In addition, the quarter horse meet was a success.

Details on track and infrastructure improvements can be found in the transcript.

2. 2024 QUARTER HORSE MEET
Races

Executive Director Landry motions to ratify the stake schedule for the quarter horse meet. Commissioner Findley motions; Commissioner McHallfey seconds. Motion carries.

3. OFFICIALS & MANAGEMENT

Executive Director Landry motions to approve ratifications for officials and management, and to add a race date. Commissioner Tumminello makes the motion; Commissioner Landry seconds. Motion carries.

4. 2024 THOROUGHBRED MEET

Executive Director Landry motions to approve the 1st condition book, designated racing dates (revised) and of Mr. Roy Wood as the state steward for the meet. Commissioner Bouie moves to approve; Commissioner Findley seconds. Motion carries.

II. HPBA UPDATE

A. LOUISIANA HORSEMENS BENEVOLENT & PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION (LAHBPA)

1. PROGRESS REPORT

See Meeting Transcript for report from Mr. Ed Fenasci, Executive Director of LaHBPA, about LaHBPA's and his request for his agenda items to be deferred to the next meeting.

III. BREEDER UPDATES

A. LOUISIANA THOROUGHBRED BREEDERS ASSOCIATION (LTBA)

1. PROGRESS REPORT

See Meeting Transcript for report from Mr. Roger Heitzmann, Executive Director of LTBA, about breeders awards, Louisiana Legends Night, stallion shows, Louisiana-bred stakes winners, scholarship giveaways, horse of the year voting, upcoming special nights at the race tracks, a new website and computer system, and horse sales.

B. LOUISIANA QUARTER HORSE BREEDERS ASSOCIATION (LQHBA)

1. PROGRESS REPORT

See Meeting Transcript for report from Mr. Bruce Salard, Executive Director of LQHBA, about the LQHBA's stakes races, funds for hair testing and results, advertising, and their upcoming annual meeting.

V. OTHER

A. ANNUAL RENEWAL OF TRAINING TRACK APPLICATIONS:

Executive Director Landry motions to approve the renewal of the training track applications for Copper Crowne, Folsom Thoroughbred Training Center Owners Association and Louisiana Downs. Commissioner Granger moves; Commissioner Landry seconds. Motion carries.

B. SPECIAL COUNSEL

Executive Director Landry motions to approve Kelly & Townsend as special legal counsel. Commissioner Tumminello moves; Commissioner Landry seconds. Motion carries.

C. DIRECTOR OF POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Executive Director Landry motions to appoint Mr. Charles Gardiner as the Director of Policies & Procedures. Commissioner Landry moves; Commissioner Findley seconds. Motion carries.

***SELECTION OF 1ST VICE CHAIR & 2ND VICE CHAIR**

**Executive Director Landry states that a discussion is needed to nominate the 1st Vice Chair and the 2nd Vice Chair. Commissioner Tumminello nominates 1st Vice Chair as Commissioner McHallfey and 2nd Vice Chair as Commissioner Landry. Commissioner Bernard seconds; motion carries.

Chairman Koehl motions to appoint Commissioner Tumminello as the 3rd Vice Chair. Commissioner McHallfey moves; Commissioner Landry seconds. Motion carries.

D. OTB

Executive Director Landry states that agenda item "V. D." is to be struck from this meeting and will be discussed at another meeting.

VI. ADJUDICATIONS

Violations of lac 35:V.7901 (Careless Riding)

Counsel Mr. Brett Bonin states that the three jockeys noted in the careless riding adjudications withdrew their appeals.

1. Jose A. Guerrero, Jockey: Executive Director Landry motions to approve; Commissioner Tumminello seconds. Motion carries.
2. Chris Rossier, Jockey: Commissioner Earl Landry motions to approve; Commissioner Findley seconds. Motion carries.
3. Jose L. Rodriguez, Jockey: Commissioner Bernard moves to approve; Commissioner Tumminello seconds. Motion carries.

See the Meeting Transcript for details and responses in reference to this issue.

C. VIOLATIONS OF LAC 35:I.1797 (Equine Positives)

Counsel Mr. Brett Bonin discusses the five cases involving medication.

1. Dale Z. Keith, Trainer: Appeal withdrawn. 60 day suspension to be set by Steward Granger. Commissioner Tumminello motions; Commissioner Findley seconds. Motion carries.
2. Willie J. Simien, Trainer. Continuance until next Commission meeting.
3. Eric D. Nelson, Jr., Trainer: Commissioner McHallfey motions to uphold Stewards ruling. Commissioner Landry seconds. Motion carries.
4. Xavier Scott, Trainer: Commissioner McHallfey motions to approve 60 day suspension, probation and \$1,000 fine. Commissioner Landry seconds. Motion carries.
5. Bradley Bolen, Trainer: Executive Director Landry asks for a motion and a second. Commissioner Tumminello motions. Chairman Koehl requests an individual vote. Vote is unanimous for yes. Fined \$2,500 and placed on 6 months probation.

D. SUSPENSION/REVOCAION OF LICENSE (LAC 46:I.521)

1. Donald Boxie. Mr. McHallfey motions for lifetime probation. Commissioner Landry seconds. Motion carries.

Commissioner Granger motions to adjourn; Commissioner Landry seconds; motion carries.



Stephen Landry

Executive Director