

LOUISIANA STATE RACING COMMISSION
MINUTES – February 19, 2024 Meeting
As transcribed by Mary E. Lee, 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, February 19, 2024 at 9:00 AM in the Iberville A Room of the Monteleone Hotel, 214 Royal Street, New Orleans, Louisiana. Roll call is taken; a quorum is present.

Mr. Charles A. Gardiner III, Executive Director of LSRC, announces his retirement.

Commissioner Bernard motions to approve the August 28, 2023 Meeting Minutes; Commissioner Findley seconds; motion carries.

I. ASSOCIATION REQUESTS

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

Mr. Steve Kuypers, Vice President and General Manager of Delta Downs, introduced Mr. John Simon, new Director of Racing at Delta Downs, and Mr. Michael DePew, Track Consultant. Mr. Simon states that Delta Downs' 2023-2024 Thoroughbred Meet would end Saturday, February 24th, with a nine-race card. He states that total handle was around \$2,700,000, down 4.5% from last year, and starters per race averaged 8.47 compared with last year's 7.9. He states that Delta Downs 2024 Quarter Horse Meet runs from April 26th through July 13th.

See Meeting Transcript for discussion about Delta Downs' racetrack surface, infrastructure issues, stall requests, OTB operations and food and beverage services.

Chairman Koehl requests monthly reports on the status of construction of the two new barns and current amount in their Infrastructure Fund per LAC 35:III.5771. Mr. Kuypers agrees.

**B. THE OLD EVANGELINE DOWNS, LLC
d/b/a EVANGELINE DOWNS CASINO & RACETRACK
1. PROGRESS REPORT**

Ms. Carol Core, Vice President and General Manager at Evangeline Downs, introduces Ms. Tracey Coonce, new Director of Racing at Evangeline Downs. Ms. Coonce informs that Evangeline Downs' 2023 Quarter Horse Meet ended with total handle up 8% over the prior year and a record handle of \$904,000 on closing night. She states that Evangeline Downs' 61-day 2023 Thoroughbred Meet's handle was up 20% over the prior year and that they ran 126 turf races versus 92 the prior year. She says that the horsemen will start moving in on March 4th.

See Meeting Transcript for discussion about Evangeline Downs' racetrack surfaces, handle, infrastructure issues, stall requests, and OTB operations.

The Chairman requests Evangeline Downs to include the current amount in their Infrastructure Fund per LAC 35:III.5771 in their reporting. Ms. Core agrees.

Commissioners motions to take a 10-minute recess; Commissioners seconded; motion carries.

A 10-minute recess is taken.

2024 THOROUGHBRED MEET

1. REQUEST BY THE OLD EVANGELINE DOWNS, LLC TO AMEND THE RACING DATES APPROVED ON AUGUST 28, 2023 (R.S. 4:158A) TO REMOVE 6 RACE DAYS PER AGREEMENT WITH LOUISIANA DOWNS AND LAHBPA AS PROVIDED IN MEETING AGENDA

Commissioner Bouie motions to approve, except for the portion referencing repair and improvement expenditures in the last paragraph; Commissioner McHalfey seconds; motion carries.

**C. 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. He states that Risen Star Day generated over \$15,000,000 in overall purse money, which was the 2nd biggest purse day in the race day's history. He says that 116 turf races have been run so far, total handle is up 38% from prior year, on-track handle is up 10% from prior year, and starters average 8.3 per race, increasing from 7.2 prior year.

See Meeting Transcript for discussion about Fair Grounds' handle, racetrack surfaces, EPA compliance, infrastructure issues, stall requests, OTB operations, food and beverage services and community relations.

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

Mr. Matt Crawford, Director of Racing at Louisiana Downs, introduces Mr. Kevin Preston, President of Louisiana Downs. He states that Louisiana Downs' 41-day 2024 Quarter Horse Meet has a handle increase of almost 50% from prior year.

See Meeting Transcript for discussion about Louisiana Downs' racetrack surfaces, infrastructure issues, stall requests, OTB operations, and food and beverage services.

2024 THOROUGHBRED MEET

2. REQUEST BY LOUISIANA DOWNS INVESTMENT COMPANY, LLC TO AMEND RACING DATES APPROVED ON AUGUST 28, 2023 (R.S. 4:158A) TO REMOVE 6 RACE DAYS TOTAL PER AGREEMENT WITH EVANGELINE DOWNS AND LAHBPA AS PROVIDED IN MEETING AGENDA.

Commissioner Landry motions to approve; Commissioner McHalfey 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 agreement with Louisiana Downs to address the purse overpayment situation and purse money transfers update.

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 Champion's Day, stallion shows, Louisiana-bred stakes winners, scholarship giveaways, horse of the year voting, upcoming special nights at the race tracks, 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, advertising, and their upcoming annual meeting.

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Chairman Koehl states that there are no reports because the committees would be appointed for the new Commission. He states that the Infrastructure Compliance Committee would be visiting all tracks to check on backside infrastructure work.

V. OTHER

A. PURSE TRANSFER

1. **Approval** of Purse Transfer from Delta Downs to Evangeline Downs for 2024 Thoroughbred Meet.

Commissioner Landry motions to approve; Commissioner Bernard seconds; motion carries.

B. CODE OF ETHICS

1. **Update** of ethical obligations of commission members.

Mr. Brett Bonin, Counsel for LSRC, provides an update to the commission on ethics rules and regulations, requirements, and training.

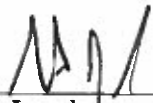
C. SELECTION OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1. **Selection** of Executive Director of the Louisiana State Racing Commission.

Commissioner Tumminello motions to appoint Mr. Stephen Landry as the new Executive Director of LSRC; Commissioner Landry seconds; motion carries. Mr. Landry introduces himself.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

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



Stephen Landry
Executive Director