

MARYLAND HORSE INDUSTRY BOARD
Minutes of the Board Meeting
April 11, 2024

Meeting held IN PERSON in the Indoor Arena Observation Deck at Celebration Farm/Daily Dose Equine Feed, Janet & David Geyer, 9961 Green Valley Rd., Union Bridge, MD 21791

The meeting started at 10:11 A.M.

Present: Dr. Amy Burk (V. Chr.), Lisa Watts, Erin Ochoa, Jennifer Sulin

Unable to Attend: Sheila Curry (Chr.), Adrian Ford III, Jay Griswold, Neil Agate, Connie Sawyer, Jenile Tapscott, Dr. Justin Sobota, Cassie Shirk

Also present: Janet & David Geyer (hosts), Levi King & Jane Delbianco (Quarry View Building Group), Kim Egan (Pres. MHC), Jeff Newman, Jim Steele (former Chr.), Christie Steele, Ellen James, Peggy Morgan, Anne Litz, Ross Peddicord.

Call to Order: Dr. Amy Burk (V. Chr.) called the meeting to order.

Introduction of Attendees: Our hosts **Janet & David Geyer** were introduced as well as presenters **Levi King and Jane Delbianco** and attendees from around the room. The Geyers' Celebration Farm is a licensed MHIB stable with about 30 horses, the majority are boarders. In addition, Janet Geyer, a chemist who once worked for McCormick's, has developed her own line of organic horse feeds, which she markets through Chewy.com, Tractor Supply and her own store in Libertytown, MD.

Congratulations: to Jenile Tapscott: TB Sector Board member, Award Winner at the upcoming MD Thoroughbred Racing & Breeding Renaissance Dinner, April 17.

1.Approval of Minutes from the March 12, 2024 board meeting conducted by teleconference.

- The Minutes could not be approved since a quorum had not been established.

2. Monthly Budget Report:

- The MHIB budget template compiled by MDA Fiscal Services was emailed to the board for review prior to the meeting.
- Revenue and Expenses to Date:

Revenue to Date \$ 273,653.00 (includes the \$92,971 carryover we started the year with + \$180,653 in Feed & Stable Licensing revenue collected so far in FY24).

Expenses to Date \$162,797.00

Total Balance on Hand \$ 110,827.00

We anticipate further collection of Feed Revenue of at least \$60,000 during the remaining third and fourth quarters of FY24. We will have enough of a balance at the end of the year that \$28k can be allocated for a new Chevy Equinox small SUV for our inspector Ellen James. MDA Fiscal projects that we will still have a \$50,889 carryover going into FY25.

We continue to be in good shape as long as we control expenses.

3. Presentations:

- **QUARRY VIEW BUILDING GROUP:** The elite custom builder has been an important sponsor of the MARS Maryland 5 Star at Fair Hill since its inception four years ago. Co-owner **Levi King** and design consultant **Jane Delbianco** re-affirmed their commitment to becoming a major 5 Star sponsor in 2024. MHIB members expressed their appreciation for their 5 star sponsorships and were eager to learn more about their operation and how they would like to expand their business. The owners founded Quarry View in 2008 with one mission: to build quality, legacy buildings while creating relationships that last a lifetime. Many of these structures are high-end equestrian facilities.

- **2024 LEGISLATIVE WRAP-UP:** **Kim Egan**, President of the Md Horse Council, gave a wrap up of equine-related bills from the General Assembly which ended April 8.

Among the bills that passed:

A bill to require minors to wear helmets while mounted in public spaces.

A bill to prohibit non-compete agreements in employment contracts for veterinarians.

A bill that established the framework to proceed with the Pimlico Plus project and state takeover of Thoroughbred racing.

Passage of Senate Bill 452 which makes provisions in “waiver” or “release” documents that purport to limit a “recreational facility’s” liability for ordinary negligence unenforceable. It is important to note that the bill does NOT ban the use of all waivers or releases. The right to ask clients or customers to acknowledge the risk of an activity and to assume that risk remains unaffected. Businesses should consult with their attorneys to see how the provisions of this bill might affect the documents used in their businesses. An amendment to exempt horse establishments failed. We are still a “contributory negligence state” which means a customer cannot sue an establishment if they have contributed to an accident.

MHC is holding a webinar on the bill from 11AM – 1PM on May 21.

The MDA sponsored bill to allow MHIB to charge a late fee for stable license 60 days overdue failed to pass.

4. Committee Reports & Updates:

- **Stable Licensing: FY24:** So far 812 stables have either renewed or applied for new licenses. There were 797 licensed stables in 2023. Three stables still need to renew their 2024 licenses.

These stables have been sent Letters of Agency Action and notified they are being assessed \$500 fines if they do not comply. Ross also called them and left messages on April 9.

FY25: Anne, Peggy & Ellen are working with the new **ONE STOP** online state licensing system that could go live shortly and will be in effect on June 1 for FY25 stable licensing. Anne sent out a notice advising stables of the change.

SUSPENDED LICENSES: Following the discussion at the March board meeting, Ass't AG Justin Hayes notified MHIB that:

If, following a third inspection, the Board again determines that the licensee's establishment is still deficient in the areas in which it had been given written notice, the Board shall:

- (a) Bring formal charges against the licensee; and
- (b) Conduct an administrative hearing in order to determine whether:
- (c) The operator's license in a particular class or classes should be suspended or revoked

The MHIB has authority to temporarily suspend a license, but only after conducting an administrative hearing. So, while there is a lot of process required to suspend a license, it can be done.

- **Proposed 2024 Meeting Schedule:**

Tuesday, May 14	10 AM	Wild Kid Acres, Edgewater
Thursday, June 13	10 AM	Clarity Farm, Davidsonville
Tuesday, July 9	10 AM	TRRC (Therapeutic & Recreational Riding Center), Glenwood
Thursday, Aug. 15	4 PM	Ocean Downs, Berlin: Local Eastern Shore farm tours can be visited before the meeting: Wicomico Horse Center (Salisbury), Layfield Farm Event Center (Princess Anne) Races & dinner after the mtg. TBC
Tuesday, Sept. 10	10 AM	Rutledge Ridge Farm, Fallston. Bridleless demo Melanie Ferro-Wise
Thursday, Oct. 17	10 AM	Fairhill Equine Veterinary Clinic, Dr. Kathy Anderson (in conjunction MARS MD 5 Star at Fair Hill), Elkton TBC
Tuesday, Nov. 12	10 AM	Oak Spring Equestrian, Woodbine Working Equitation demo, TBC

- **April 10 Survey for 2024 MD Horse Forum:** Co-Chairs **Dr. Amy Burk, Jen Reynolds and Anne Litz** have prepared a survey to gauge topics that attendees would like to see discussed at the August 8, 2024 MD Horse Forum at McDonogh School, Owings Mills. They are distributing the survey April 10. We have a major financial commitment of \$25K from the **Rural Maryland Council** to be presenting sponsor. We will be asking industry organizations and companies to also participate as sponsors.

- **MD Horse Park System Tourism Grant Committee:** **Pamela Sams-Turner**, procurement manager for MDA, posted an RFP (Request for Proposals) on **eMaryland Marketplace Advantage (eMMA)** online site to accept proposals from Advertising/Public Relations agencies to work with our marketing committee to brand/advertise/market our Maryland Horse Park System. RFPs are due April 11. This opportunity was provided by a \$250,000 grant provided by the Maryland Office of Tourism.

- **New MD Trail Riding Guides**—A trails guide committee met April 8 with **Dianne Dougherty** of Trail Rider's Path (TrailRidersPath.com) to discuss developing new print and online guides for

public access riding trails and public trail riding stables in Maryland. We met Dianne at Horse World Expo and admired the guides she produces in Pennsylvania. She is preparing a proposal for us to review.

- **Possible May 17 Celebration of Western MD Licensed Stables.** We are thinking of partnering with the National Pike Wagon Train Festival and honoring centenarian **Evelyn Mae Adams, Regal Willow Farm** and the licensed stables in Garrett, Allegany and Washington counties at the opening night Gathering of the Festival in Clear Spring.
- **Horse Discovery Center (HDC) Network:** Anne is collecting data from the 42 centers to compile the 2023 HDC Annual Report.
- **MD Horse Park System: Prince George's Equestrian Center:** MD National Capitol Parks & Planning has posted the job opening for equestrian events manager at PGEC. We distributed it to various outlets. The deadline to apply is May 3. **Fair Hill:** DNR is planning a post-legislative session meeting for Fair Hill stakeholders to discuss future plans for the facility. **MD Horse Library & Education Center:** MHLEC continues to hold a robust schedule of monthly talks and events.
- **Two Successful Events held in Late March:**
 - a. **March 21 Trackview Celebration honoring Seven former board members:** Nearly 40 people attended the Trackview Celebration to honor seven of our former board members who collectively accumulated over 100 years of public service to MHIB, including **Jim Steele, Karen Fulton, Bev Raymond, Karin DeFrancis, Eli Solomon, Kathleen Tabor** and the late **Dorothy Troutman**. New board member **Lisa Watts** hosted the event at Rosecroft.
March 25 Maryland Horse Industry Annapolis Rally: to Spread the Good Economic News from the American Horse Council economic impact study: MHIB sponsored an informational table with our Horse Industry Partners at the Rural Maryland Council rally on Lawyers Mall from 4-6 PM on Maryland Day, March 25. We met with legislators and many folks from other agricultural organizations.
- **Western Riding Committee:** Potential guest speakers at upcoming meetings could include **Johnny Williams** from J Bar W Ranch rodeo in Johnsville; **Elisha Iager** from the Lady Longears Ranch and Arena complex in Woodbine; and **Tina Marie Sherman**, who runs the Western Horse Shows of Harford County (WHSHC).
- **2024 Grants program:** All but two grant agreements have been signed and returned and 32 out of the 34 recipients have been paid.

5. Stable Reports—see Addendum

6. Administrative Reports

- **Equine Academic Community (Dr. Amy Burk):** UMD Pasture specialist **Dr. Amanda Grev** is holding her Grazing Day on June 22 at the Baltimore County Ag Center in Cockeysville.

- **Humane Societies (Erin Ochoa)**: The Ground Breaking ceremony for the new National Equine Welfare Education Center at Days End is scheduled for May 2. The \$2M project has been funded largely by the state (\$1.25M through Bond Bills spearheaded by **Sens. Guy Guzzone** and **Katie Fry Hester**) and private donors. Last year Days End welcomed 8,400 visitors to the farm and recently conducted an equine welfare education seminar attended by 18 animal control officers from 8 Maryland counties and 3 other states. Days End also recently handled the impoundment of 20 horses from West Virginia. In addition to the rescue operation, Days End also runs the METS equine placement service, which also handles many requests.
- **Standardbred Sector (Lisa Watts)**: The spring Rosecroft meet conducts live racing twice weekly on Tuesday and Thursday nights. The industry is mourning the loss of industry leader, **Tom Cooke**, a man of many talents, including esteemed Georgetown University economics professor, owner/breeder of many Standardbred stakes-winning horses over the years and former president of Maryland harness industry organizations. The industry is celebrating the successful lobbying efforts, headed by **Mike Hall, Jonathan Roberts** and **Jackie MacLeod**, to protect state harness industry subsidies that were earmarked for the Thoroughbred industry under the passage of the Pimlico Plus bill.
- **Trails & Recreational Riding (Jennifer Sulin)**: Jennifer continues to represent MHIB at MHC Town Hall meetings on sometimes contentious Public Trails issues and expressed concern about the civility of some of the Town Hall attendees towards her.
- **NOTE: Thoroughbred Sector (Jenile Tapscott)**: Jenile could not attend but sent an email saying the Thoroughbred industry as a whole is happy that the Pimlico Plus bill passed and that HISA officials are pleased with the way HISA regulations are being conducted at Laurel Park.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 12:15 PM followed by an Overview and Tour of Celebration Farm and the Daily Dose Equine Feed operation by hosts Janet & David Geyer.

**Respectfully submitted,
Ross Peddicord, Executive Director**

ADDENDUM: Peggy Morgan/Ellen James Stable Reports attached