

MARYLAND HORSE INDUSTRY BOARD
Minutes of the Board Meeting
January 10, 2024

Meeting held **IN PERSON** in Room 110, Lower Level Conference Room, MD Department of Agriculture, 50 Harry S. Truman Pkwy, Annapolis, MD 21401.

The meeting started at 10:03 A.M.

Present: Sheila Curry (Chr.), Dr. Amy Burk (V. Chr.), Dr. Justin Sobota, Neil Agate, Lisa Watts, Connie Sawyer, Jennifer Sulin, Adrian Ford III, Jenile Tapscott, Cassie Shirk

Unable to Attend: Jay Griswold, Erin Ochoa

Also present: Kevin Atticks, Sec’y of Ag; Steve Connelly, Deputy Sec’y of Ag, Jane Thery, Lexi Liu, Travis Gorleski, Kim Egan, Mike Hall, Bob Schiewe (new dir. Cloverleaf), Gina Maybee, Linda Macklin, Jeff Newman, Al Martinez, Stacy Frank, Dr. Mike Odian, Gerardo Martinez, Jessica Uriol, Mariano Martinez, Estelle Heidler, Sailor Endres, Peggy Morgan, Ross Peddicord.

Call to Order: Ross Peddicord called the meeting to order until a new Chair is elected.

Introduction of New Board Members & Attendees: New board members—Sheila Curry, Adrian Ford III, Connie Sawyer, Jennifer Sulin, Jenile Tapscott & Lisa Watts.

1.Nominating Committee Report: The Nominating Committee comprised of three current board members—**Neil Agate, Jay Griswold and Dr. Justin Sobota**--nominated **Sheila Curry** as new board chair and **Dr. Amy Burk** as vice chair. The board then unanimously elected them as the board’s new officers.

2.Minutes from the Oct. 4, 2023 meeting at To Win Again Farm and VIP Rehabilitation Center and the Nov. 9, 2023 meeting at Oldfields School were subject to approval since a quorum had not been established at the November meeting.

- On a motion by **Neil Agate** and seconded by **Dr. Amy Burk**, both sets of minutes were approved by the board.

3. Monthly Budget Report:

Revenue to Date	\$ 213,120.37 (does not include an additional \$21,000 in Second Qtr Feed Fund revenue and \$100,000 from General Fund)
Expenses to Date	\$185,740.00
Total Balance on Hand	\$ 27,380.37

We have collected \$109,445.17 in feed revenue for the First and Second Quarters FY24 although the Revenue Sheet (on Tab 28103 sent to board members & staff) only shows \$88,649.37. MDA Fiscal Services explained not all Feed Fund revenue has yet shown up in our account, noting

December 2023 does not close until January 16, 2024 which means not all adjustments or journal entries are included in this report.

Feed Fund statements for the Third Quarter were mailed on Jan. 2, 2024. Each quarter roughly brings us \$54-\$55k in revenue.

FY24 stable licensing fees collected in June FY23 are included in our beginning fund balance on July 1, 2023 of \$92,971. [About \$70k of that is FY24 stable license renewal revenue]. Stable licensing fees in Object Code 5550 (on Tab 28103) are what we have collected since July 1. We still have about \$2k to collect in late stable renewal fees.

In addition MHIB received a one time General Fund (GF) appropriation of \$100,000 for FY2024. An adjustment will be processed in January 2024 moving current Special Fund (SF) salary/benefit expenditures into GF which will deplete the \$100,000 appropriation, but increase our available SF balance.

Once the \$100k is depleted, we will pay salaries from our anticipated revenues of \$330,000 and will have enough remaining revenue left at the end of the year to have a carryover going into FY25. As usual, we are holding our own as long as we control expenses.

Dr. Burk asked that we consider allocating more than \$30k annually to grants. Ross suggested we assess the financial situation at the end of FY24 in June, see how much we have as a fund carryover and then make a determination.

4. Committee Reports & Updates:

- **Stable Licensing: FY24:** So far 793 stables have either renewed or applied for new licenses out of 797 licensed in 2023. That's a 99% renewal rate by Jan. 8. There are still 12 stables yet to renew and there are about 8-10 new stables in the pipeline waiting for inspection. So we should end up reaching over 800 licensed stables this year, a new record. Our inspectors/staff are making phone calls and farm visits and sending notices to urge the late renewals to comply. **FY25:** MHIB has submitted legislation through MDA to initiate a \$100 late fee in FY25 for stables that are 60 days Past Due in renewing their licenses. **FY23:** Two stables, **Dream Catch Equine (Kathleen Almony)** and **Four Winds Farm (Melanie Adams)**, who repeatedly refused to renew their 2023 stables licenses, have been fined \$500 plus the \$125 license fee. They were notified of the fine June 6 by email and by regular and certified mail. So far neither have responded to our letters. Our Ass't AG will file an injunction in Harford County Circuit Court to shut their operations as soon as his workload permits. Ellen reports that it appears **Dream Catch Equine** has ceased operations at its current location.
- **2024 Meeting Schedule:**
New board members like meeting in the 10 AM-Noon timeframe and will be sent a Doodle Poll to see which day of the second week of the month is best to meet.

So far, we have Thursday, February 15, 2024 set for the next meeting and will then determine the rest of the schedule. Both the February and March meetings will be virtual with In Person meetings starting again in April. We can visit various farms and locations in person throughout

the state. So far we have an invitation from **Clarity Farm** in Davidsonville to meet there sometime during 2024. There are numerous other possibilities such as **Daily Dose Feed/Celebration Farm** in Union Bridge, a new feed manufacturer, and **Ironstar Outpost**, a horse bed and barn in Howard County, plus many others. **Gerardo Martinez** suggested meeting at **Rancho Los Magueyes Ortiz** in Odenton.

Upcoming Meetings: [Subject to Change]

Thurs., Feb. 15 10 AM Virtual

Thurs, March 14 10 AM Virtual

The Health Advisory Committee, chaired by Dr. Sobota, will hold a virtual meeting in late February.

- **New Board Member Orientation:** We have six new board members and set Tuesday, January 30, 2024 at 10 AM as an in person new member orientation to review our by-laws, list of projects and committee assignments.
- **Former Board Member Celebration:** Our departing six board members accumulated over 100 years of public service to MHIB and to the Maryland horse industry so they are certainly worthy of a “retirement” celebration. **Lisa Watts** suggested we hold a “Trackview Celebration” in the third floor clubhouse at Rosecroft with track management donating the space and contributing to expenses during an evening race card. A March date and time will be determined.
- **2024 Grants program:** We received 60 grant applications requesting a total of \$146,000. Our grant pool consists of \$30k. Here is the break down of applicants: 20 organizations; 16 Therapeutic Facilities; 15 Licensed Stables; 5 4-H & Pony Clubs; 2 Rescues; 1 Riding Club; 1 Individual. The 5-member grants committee met Nov. 30, 2023 and awarded 35 grants. MDA distributed a grants news release. The release plus complete list of awards is on our website www.mda.maryland.gov/horseboard.
- **Horse Discovery Center (HDC) Network:** Anne has lined up **Shari Jaeger Goodwin**, an acclaimed business strategist, executive leadership coach, author, speaker and horsewoman to be guest speaker at the HDC annual meeting at MHLEC on Wednesday, March 6, 2024. MHIB has 42 horse discovery centers in 18 counties. These are stables that volunteer to welcome the general public to their farms in a friendly and knowledgeable atmosphere.
- **MD Horse Park System: Prince George’s Equestrian Center: Liz Yewell**, who has been the equestrian events manager at PGEC for 35 years, is retiring. This is a vital post since many of our top equestrian events like the Washington International Horse Show, Capital Challenge Horse Show and nearly a year round slate of horse events are held there. This is one of the most important horse jobs in Maryland. The center is managed by MD National Capital Parks & Planning Commission. It’s important that we are updated during the hiring process and hopefully **Sheila Curry** will be able to keep us informed. The board requested that Ross write **Steve Carter**, operations manager for MNCPPC, to ask if we could be apprised when the job opening is posted. **Fair Hill:** The MARS Md 5 Star at Fair Hill will be held Oct. 17-20, 2024. It is still being determined if there will be steeplechase/flat racing at Fair Hill this year. **MD Horse Library & Education Center:** MHLEC continues to hold a robust schedule of monthly talks and events.
- **MD Horse Park System Tourism Grant Committee:** The committee, comprised of representatives from Fair Hill, PGEC and MHLEC as well as MHIB and MHC, met on Nov. 2 and decided to pursue the procurement process to select an advertising agency to oversee the \$250,000 promotion and marketing campaign for the MD Horse Park System (Fair Hill, MHLEC, PGEC). **Pamela**

Sams-Turner, procurement manager for MDA, estimated that once an RFP (Request for Proposals) is developed and distributed, it could take as short as 45 days to a longer six-month period to complete the process. Ross has submitted a rough draft of an RFP to Ms. Dams-Turner and is planning to set up a meeting with her shortly.

- **October Horse Month:** **Anne Litz** designed a flier demonstrating the results of our third October Horse Month initiative—Three major events—MD Million, 6, 500 spectators; Fair Hill 5 Star, 30,000 spectators; WIHS, 10,000 spectators= 46,500 spectators plus data sent in from over 60 other events across the state=109,598 attendees at horse-themed events; more than 3 million social media & digital interactions; 5,000 horses, ponies & donkeys taking part in shows & events; and nearly 7,000 exhibitors and entries on display and entertaining fans plus over 300 vendors. The flier was placed in meeting packets.
- **2023 American Horse Council Economic Impact Study:** **Kim Egan** from the MD Horse Council has been in constant contact with Julie Broadway concerning the AHC study. AHC was expected to announce the results on Dec. 13 National Day of the Horse, but extended the release until Jan. 22 to answer questions and evaluate data from several breakout states, including Maryland. The survey ended Sept. 29, 2023. Maryland was No. 1 in terms of number of respondents (nearly 1,200) per capita and no 4 in total number of respondents behind Texas, New York and California. Maryland is one of several breakout states in the study. The \$25K cost was paid by a grant from the Rural Maryland Council.
- **2024 MD Horse Industry Day:** Two important events could determine the messaging for 2024 MD_Horse Industry Day in Annapolis—the Jan. 5 filing of a report by the MD Thoroughbred Racing_Operating Authority (MTROA) on its recommendations for the future of Maryland racing; and results from Maryland data collected as part of the American Horse Council national economic impact survey, expected to be officially announced Jan. 22. These findings could impact the messaging for a HID event. If MHIB does participate in a HID event, we'd be interested in honoring our two centenarian horse farm operators, **Evelyn Mae Adams** and **Dorothy Troutman**; as well as some of our young rising stars like **Woodge Fulton**, **Emma Foster**, **Addison Huffman** and **Isabelle Brockett** and/or many of our sport horse, competition and recreational breeders who ranked among the nation's best in 2023.
- **2024 MD Horse Forum:** On Oct. 26, Co-Chairs **Dr. Amy Burk**, **Jen Reynolds** and **Anne Litz** conducted a site visit to **McDonogh School**, which has a large riding program and is experiencing unprecedented growth of its equestrian department. Between 500-600 students ride in the McDonogh program and the school is building a third indoor arena. We have a major financial commitment of \$25K from the **Rural Maryland Council** to help fund the one-day event, which has been held every five years since 2004. The co-chairs are working out details with McDonogh officials and are planning to hold the event August 8, 2024. About 300 folks attend the Forum so it requires a large meeting space, catering and parking facilities.
- **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). New board member **Jennifer Sulin** volunteered to be on this committee and is a board member of the MD High School Rodeo Association.
- **Three Potential Upcoming Summits:** Three MDA departments have expressed interest in partnering with MHIB to hold three one-day summits/conference in the coming year. 1. **MDA Marketing** is interested in holding a Buyer Grower summit for **Hay and Straw producers**. 2. **Sec'y Atticks, Executive Direction**, is interested in holding a summit for **Maryland's Latino horse farmers**; and 3. **Nutrient Management** would like to hold a conference to discuss nutrient management plans with horse farmers

- **Touch of Class Awards:** It's been suggested that **Ouisha McKinney** paint a Touch of Class plate for each of our six departing board members, who served when MHIB was instrumental in bringing two major international events to Maryland—the MARS Maryland 5 Star at Fair Hill and WIHS and helped oversee growth from 545 licensed stables in 2011 to more than 800 in 2024.

5. Stable Reports: See Addendum {Ellen James was absent due to storm damage at her home}.

6. Administrative Reports

- **Equine Academic Community (Dr. Amy Burk):** UMD is collaborating with the MD Horse Library and Education Center in Reisterstown to present a series of equine educational talks.
- **Licensed Stables (Adrian Ford III):** Adrian operates the Big Easy Stable at Canterbury Farm in Potomac, MD.
- **Licensed Veterinarians (Dr. Justin Sobota):** Fortunately the Maryland horse community is healthy right now with few reported cases of communicable diseases. Dr. Sobota is planning the agenda for the Health Advisory Committee meeting and hopes to have information concerning a new veterinary school/program proposed on the Maryland Eastern Shore.
- **MD Dept. of Agriculture (Ass't Sec'y Cassie Shirk):** MDA is sponsoring HB234 and SB278 which includes initiating a \$100 late fee for stables that have not renewed their licenses within 60 days of the July 1 deadline.
- **MD Horse Council (Neil Agate):** Neil distributed copies of the current *Equiery* and said the MHC legislative committee is busy tracking bills affecting the horse community in Annapolis.
- **Organized Shows & Events (Sheila Curry):** Sheila is meeting with an MHIB subcommittee to discuss ways to allocate funding for non-racing venues, shows and organizations.
- **Standardbred Sector (Lisa Watts):** Rosecroft is conducting live racing on Tuesday and Thursday nights from January 18 – May 18. Then the Ocean Downs meet starts in June.
- **Thoroughbred Sector (Jenile Tapscott):** Jenile is actively involved on the Laurel backstretch taking care of her family's racehorses and serves as an owner-trainer-groom.
- **Trade & Support Industries (Connie Sawyer):** Connie is the North American FEI representative and is encouraging both the Washington International Horse Show and the Maryland 5 Star at Fair Hill to conduct economic impact studies.
- **Trails & Recreational Riding (Jennifer Sulin):** Jenn is already attending and working with participants of the MHC Trails Town Halls and hopes to become an equine community liaison with the MD Dept. of Natural Resources.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 12:15 PM followed by lunch.

Respectfully submitted,
Ross Peddicord, Executive Director

ADDENDUM: Peggy Morgan Stable Report attached