

MARYLAND HORSE INDUSTRY BOARD
Minutes of the Board Meeting
Tuesday, February 18th, 10am 2025
Meeting held by Teleconference: Google Meets

Meeting held by teleconference.
The meeting started at 10:07 A.M.

Present: Sheila Curry (Chr.), Dr. Amy Burk (V. Chr.) Jenile Tapscott,, Jennifer Sulin, Connie Sawyer, Erin Ochoa, Lisa Watts, Cassie Shirk, Dr. Kathleen Anderson, Genevieve H.R. Macfarlane and Carolyn Mackintosh

Unable to Attend: Adrian Ford III

Also in Attendance: Kevin Atticks,(Deputy Secretary MDA), Steve Connelly (Deputy Secretary MDA), Rachel Jones, (MDA Government Relations) Dr. Jennifer Trout (MDA Animal Health), Cricket Goodal (MHBA)I, Jeff Newman, Robert Croteau, Fair Hill Training Center, Trish Brown DNR Fair Hill Special Events Zone, Fran Horgan, Eli Solomon, Harrison Palmer (Ag Commission), Tara Cullen, Ruth Toomey, Quinn Reed, Claire Lacey, Donna Hill, Susan Husk, Peggy Morgan, Ellen James, Anne Litz,

Call to Order: Sheila Curry (Chr.) called the meeting to order.

Introduction of Attendees: Anne Litz conducted a roll call of attendees.

Introduction of New Executive Director by Kevin Atticks: Anne Litz, New Executive Director of the Horse Industry Board as of Feb. 5th, 2025 and addressed the MHIB

Anne Litz has been appointed as the new Executive Director of the Maryland Horse Industry Board. She brings extensive industry experience, particularly with the board itself, which will be crucial moving forward. The department aims to enhance the board's productivity in shaping the industry's future. With significant developments in the broader horse industry, the board will play a key advisory role in regulatory, promotional, and policy efforts. The department looks forward to collaborating with Anne to develop and refine strategic initiatives to support the industry. Appreciation was also expressed for the contributions of previous Executive Director Ross.

Sheila Curry congratulated Anne Litz on her new role as Executive Director, recognizing her experience and institutional knowledge. Appreciation was expressed for her leadership in maintaining progress following Ross's retirement. Thanks, were also given to Kevin, Secretary Atticks, Cassie Shirk, and Steve Connelly for ensuring a smooth hiring process. Cassie Shirk looks forward to the future of the board.

Thank you of retiring Board Members: Jay Griswold (General Public), Neil Agate (Horse Council), Dr. Justin Sobota (Equine Veterinarians)

Introduction of New Board Members: Appointed by Gov. Moore: Dr. Kathleen Anderson (Equine Veterinarians) who has a six-doctor practice in Fair Hill and works with Thoroughbreds and Sport Horses. Genevieve Macfarlane (General Public) an Attorney who practices land use, real estate, and equine law, Carolyn Mackintosh (Horse Council) who owns Loch Moy Farm and has extensive international connections in the eventing, dressage and sport horse world.

I. **Approval of Minutes:**

- Approval of Minutes from Nov. 12, 2024, Board Meeting On a motion by **Sheila Curry**, and seconded by **Connie Sawyer**, the board approved
- Approval of Minutes from Virtual 3:30pm Closed Session Nov 18th On a motion by **Dr. Katherine Anderson** and seconded by **Sheila Curry**, the board approved.
MHIB Closed Session: Purpose: To outline and discuss the recruitment process to hire an MHIB Executive Director to replace retiring director Ross Peddicord.
Present: Kevin Atticks (MDA Sec'y of Agriculture), Cassie Shirk (Ass't Sec'y of Agriculture) Sheila Curry (MHIB Chr.), Dr. Amy Burk (MHIB V. Chr.) Jenile Tapscott, Neil Agate, Jay Griswold, Connie Sawyer, Erin Ochoa, Lisa Watts, Dr. Justin Sobota, Ross Peddicord.
Discussion: MDA handling the hiring of the next MHIB Executive Director and is requesting DBM to reclassify the Executive Director position as an "Appointed Position," aligning with other MDA Program Managers. The reclassification decision will impact the hiring timeline, with MDA aiming to select a new Executive Director by Jan. 1, pending DBM's determination.
- Approval of Minutes from January. 21, 2025 Special Meeting Board Meeting On a motion by **Sheila Curry**, and seconded by **Jenile Tapscott**, the board approved

II. **PRESENTATIONS:**

Introduction of New Industry Leaders—**Chris Merz**, Director of Maryland Racing Commission, **Robert Croteau**, New Fair Hill Training Center General Manager, **Marci Ross**, Acting Managing Director, Department of Commerce Office of Tourism and Film, **Bristol Craft** has been named Director of Equestrian Programs McDonogh School, **Zach Parks** Interim Director of Riding at McDonogh School

- III. **Avian Flu Update:** Deputy Secretary Steve Connelly & State Veterinarian Dr. Jennifer Trout
Steve Connelly: Since January 3, there have been avian flu outbreaks on the Delmarva Peninsula, affecting farms in Delaware (3), Maryland (5), and Virginia (1). Control measures have been effective, with restrictions lifted on 8 of 9 premises, and the last expected to be released by the 26th. The virus spreads mainly through migratory waterfowl, particularly snow geese, and black-faced vultures feeding on infected birds. Cases tend to peak in fall and winter, decreasing as birds migrate and temperatures rise.
Dr. Jennifer Trout: There have been no reported cases of HPAI in the equine herd in the U.S. or Maryland. However, data from Mongolia indicates some horses have tested positive for HPAI. The USDA and relevant departments are closely monitoring horses showing neurological or respiratory symptoms. No additional testing beyond routine procedures has been conducted, aside from efforts related to cats.

Dr. Amy Burk: Raised the question of testing for HPAI in horses. Steve Connelly and Dr. Trout stated that no there is not testing for horses but recommend any animals with flu like systems, contact your vet. If your horses water source is somewhere with dead birds, follow up with Animal Health. HPAI has been found in dairy cows across 16 states, mainly west of the Mississippi, with around 900 cases. It causes flu-like symptoms but is not fatal, though it reduces milk production. Strict testing is in place for interstate shipments and farm-level milk surveillance. The virus mainly affects lactating cows, accumulating in the udder and appearing in milk. Calves have not be displaying any sickness or symptoms.

IV. **Stable Licensing Update:** FY25 Renewals

FY 25 Licensing Renewals. New Stables: 814 Stables have renewed both online and hard copy. Peggy Morgan inspected 78 stables and Ellen James 58 since Nov. 12th

a. Report of New Stables

- i. Peggy had 7 New Stables : Defying Gravity, Covered Bridges Farm, Posh Pony Equestrian Center, Cook's Trove, Rising Hope Ranch, Kay Hill, Crick Hollow,
- ii. Ellen had 10 New Stables: Galloping Hills Farm LLC, 2nd Hand Horses – 2 locations, MJ Farms, Back Home Farm, Scotchmans Glen Gypsies, Playtime Pastures, Maryland Stud Station, Double Run Farm, Polarius Ranch, Catoctin Creek,

b. Any Issues with current inspections

- i. Granite Springs: Inspected November 15, approved with 30 days for one fence repair, which was fixed, but another is now down.
- ii. Battle View Farm: Three skinny older horses, now only one remains underweight despite proper feeding.

c. Question or concerns to our inspectors

- II. **New Hire Process:** Contractor Position Competitive Contractual Hire for MHIB, Registrar/Administrator/Outreach Position. Working with the MDA's HR to update and post the position, Timing is to determined but certain MDA will hire for the position.

III. **Upcoming Meeting Schedule:**

- a. **March:** Board Realignment Meeting at MDA, March 13th, 2025. Board and Staff only
- b. **April 10th 2025:** Virtual.
- c. **May:** Pimlico- Site Visit Backstretch Tour, May 15th
- d. **June:** TBD

- IV. **FY25 Grants**—Committee met Nov 18th. 37 Awards. 16 of the 37 have gone out and have been submitted correctly

V. **HB 162/SB380**-- Breeding Stables and Horse Establishments Bill – Withdrawn

- a. **Rachel Jones** : The board found the bill lacked specificity on how breeding facilities should be registered, despite initial concerns about animal welfare. When questioned, advocates clarified that inspections were not expected, only registration. This caused some confusion, as it was believed that if animal welfare was a concern, inspections should be required. The bill sponsors, Delegate Ziegler and Senator Love, acknowledged the need for more time to refine the bill to balance advocacy concerns with practical implementation. Coordination between the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners and the Horse Board was also discussed, as registration typically implies inspection authority. The matter will be reviewed further over the interim, with meeting minutes available for those who couldn't attend. Input and discussion will continue into the summer.

- VI. **2024 MD Horse Forum**— Over the next few months, MHIB will identify projects that support key issues and determine key players to address them. Many ongoing projects reflect the work from the Horse Forum.

- VII. **Career Program:** Partnership with MTCP. The Maryland Thoroughbred Career Program, established in 2017 by the Maryland Horse Foundation, is a week-long internship for high school and college students to explore various jobs in the thoroughbred industry. Led by Cricket Goodall and supported in the past by Dr. Amy Burke and Dr. Kathy Anderson, it provides hands-on experience and industry insights. The Horse Industry Board is considering expanding the program to cover the entire horse industry with an additional week. With board approval, they

aim to collaborate with key leaders to explore and support this expansion by supporting the program in planning and execution this year, hoping to encourage participants to return to Maryland for careers in the field. The Board voted and the ayes have it, and the motion is adopted.

- VIII. **Leadership Group:** Reconvene at Laurel April 2025
- IX. **2025 Maryland Tourism Day:** Ruth Toomey of Maryland Tourism Coalition, noted so much going on in the horse industry and how it ties to tourism as a positive movement.
- X. **MD Horse Park System:** Marriner Update. Connie Sawyer noted that the meetings with Mariner have ensured the budget and assets are in a strong position. The approved budget will fund a website landing page to serve as the digital hub for Maryland's horse park system, featuring an event calendar, trails, and industry resources. Work is underway on branding, logo design, and advertising, with a focus on digital and social media promotion. Efforts are moving quickly to align with Preakness, and despite some delays, the project is back on track with a clear schedule and direction.
- XI. Updates from Pillars – anything of note
 - a. **Prince Georges Equestrian Center**—Sheila Curry, nothing of note
 - b. **FAIR HILL**- Robert Croteau, Maryland 5 Star, Fair Hill Labor Day Racing, Maryland 5 Star: Introduction of Trish Brown who will lead DNR at Fair Hill and the Special Events Zone. Jeff Newman notes the Maryland Five Star had a strong year with over 32,000 attendees across ticketed days, marking an 11% increase. Notable winners included Oliver Townend, Sharon White, Madison Temkin, and Emily Bradford. The event remains available for viewing on Maryland Public Television and ESPN News. The 2025 edition is set for October 15-19, with Mars returning as the title sponsor. Additionally, planning is underway for the Preakness Festival, with multiple events leading up to Preakness Stakes in collaboration with various partners, including the First Lady's office and the Maryland Horse Industry Board.
 - c. **Maryland Horse Library Education Center** – February hosts the traveling exhibit, The Heart of the Turf: Racing's Black Pioneers! March is Women's History Month to include a Women in History Display. There will be a piece on Bill Pickett's Rodeo on March 24th.
 - d. **Pimlico Race Course**—MHIB and MTROA plan to work together for 150th Preakness; Preakness Festival. MHIB & MDA working with MTROA, MRC, MHBA, & MSA to developed a Farm Tour on Sunday, May 11th during the Preakness Festival.
- XII. **Trails Brochure:** Finished and available on the website
- XIII. **Committee Updates:** Health Advisory Committee to meet TBD, All Committees to be revisited for 2025
- XIV. **Upcoming Outreach**
 - **Horse World Expo** Feb. 27 – Mar. 2, 2025 Harrisburg PA
 - **Cloverleaf 2024 Horse of the Year Awards** Friday, Feb. 28:5:00 – 10:00pm Grasonville MD-
 - **Maryland Day** – Rural Maryland Council March 2025 Annapolis
 - **Women in the Horse Industry:** Racing Chapter – March MHLEC
 - **Leadership Meeting** April 2025
 - **2025 PATH Intl. Region 2 Conference:** Nancy Heller, Renee Dixon, Rachel Neff, Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International Region 2 Conference. July 11-13, 2025, Therapeutic & Recreational Riding Center 3750 Shady Lane, Glenwood, Maryland 21738

a.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

Introductions from Industry Sector Board Members:

Licensed Veterinarians - Dr. Kathleen Anderson: Looks forward to working with the Board and leading the Health Advisory Committee.

At Large - Genevieve H.R. Macfarlane: Genevieve's expertise is helping businesses get set up and dealing with any kind of land use or contract issues that come along the way. So happy to apply those principles, to my position on the board.

MD Horse Council - Carolyn Mackintosh: Received the Government Relations Committee report from Jane Seigler and Kim Egan: The deadline for introducing new bills in the Maryland Senate passed on February 3, and in the House on February 7. While bills can still be introduced and passed after these dates, they face additional procedural hurdles and time constraints before the session adjourns at midnight on April 7. This session, legislators are working under the strain of a looming budget deficit, worsened by uncertainty over federal funding for various state programs. As a result, many bills that would typically pass without controversy are now facing challenges. Carolyn invites everyone to attend the MHC Membership meeting tonight at 6:30pm for full details.

Organized Shows & Events- Sheila Curry: Sheila introduced herself as the representative for organized shows and events. She noted are quite a few of them for March, April and May and on through the rest of the year, of course. And they with our beautiful October Horse Month.

Equine Academic Community – Dr. Amy Burk: Dr. Burk is the professor of Equine Science at University of Maryland and serves as the director of the undergraduate program there. She is the academic representative on the board. Next month she will update extensions events for the summer and then some upcoming projects

Human Societies – Erin Ochoa: Next week, Madeline Bernstein, president of the SPCA of Los Angeles and a former district attorney, along with Jillian Deegan, Deputy Attorney in Virginia representing the Animal Legal Defense Fund, will teach a class on assessing cruelty, building cases, and testifying in court. They have 45 officers and professionals registered, with a waiting list, highlighting the need for a larger classroom at our firehouse location. In March, we will host the East Coast Animal Control Academy, a two-week program for officers, including a full day at Day's End focused on equine education.

Standardbred Sector – Lisa Watts: The Standardbred horsemen are currently racing at Rosecroft Raceway on Mondays and Wednesdays at 7:15 PM, weather permitting. It's been a tough winter, but they are holding our own. On February 24, they will host a memorial race for our beloved announcer, Pete Medhurst, who passed away from brain cancer in January. Pete was our announcer for 25 years and the voice of Midshipman, covering Navy football, lacrosse, and other sports for over 20 years. It will be an emotional event for us. The Cloverleaf Standardbred Owners Association and the Maryland Standardbred Breeders Association are hosting their awards banquet on February 28. If anyone is interested in attending, let her know. She is excited about new developments in our industry and the opportunities ahead. At Rosecroft, they are launching a youth live production group in collaboration with the State Police. This mentorship program is just getting started, and they would love to connect these young participants with other equine programs as well.

Thoroughbred Sector - Jenile Tapscott: Thoroughbred Racing is still awaiting updates on plans and discussions for the new Pimlico. Excitement is building for this year's Preakness, and everyone has settled in well at Laurel, working together smoothly. She came across an article yesterday mentioning that permits and plans are still in progress, so for now, they remain patient and ready for what's next.

Trade & Support Industries – Connie Swayer: Runs her own business and work with the FEI as the North American Events Manager for show jumping, overseeing the Longines World Cups, as well as the Maryland Five Star, with a strong focus on event management, live production, and broadcast. She is thrilled to contribute to the development of the Horse Park System. Noted is it is crucial for our group to stay engaged with major events at each of our pillars, which form the foundation of our Horse Park System. Maryland has a unique advantage in that our Centers of Excellence are divided by discipline, but each pillar needs our collective support. The grant for advertising and promotion is key to helping these venues and events expand beyond traditional equestrian audiences and attract new spectators. My main priority this spring is to create cohesive messaging that extends beyond the equestrian community, ensuring that stakeholders all benefit from our shared efforts.

Trail & Recreational Riding: Jennifer Sulin: Represents trails and recreational riding, with a unique perspective as one of the few actively involved in the Western riding world. Look forward to working with the Library on Black History Month and will connect relevant individuals in the rodeo community. On February 5, they participated in a call about a Howard County bill allowing motorized vehicles in Patuxent Park, with broad support for their use in clearing trails and aiding emergency access. A shoutout was given to CarolAnne Sharp, president of TROT, for organizing a booth at the PA Horse Expo alongside other trail organizations to promote Maryland trails. Additionally, they have been meeting with Sandy Olek, a new DNR member, with another meeting scheduled for Thursday in Annapolis, which they hope to attend either virtually or in person.

MD Department of Agriculture- Cassie Shirk: Looks forward to working the MHIB and Anne.

Licensed Stables - Unable to Attend: Adrian Ford III,

PUBLIC COMMENT

2/12/25, 8:02 AM State of Maryland Mail - Emergency preparedness Livestock Baltimore County –
Fran Burns

"I am writing to you today as I am not able to attend your upcoming meeting. Bio security is a topic I find of the utmost importance for our Licensed boarding stables and all horses which by the way are defined as "Livestock."

We are all aware of the recent news regarding the Avian Flu. There are a lot of unknown details with this disease and I feel confident there will be others in the future.

My boarding farm is located in Baltimore County. So for this demonstration I will use this location.

However, this applies to every county in the state of Maryland. Every county should be prepared and have a plan in place.

What do you do if one of your horses gets a communicable, highly contagious disease and you do not have a qt.? Where can you take the animal (with support of medical supervision) so that it will not affect

your remaining horses? Also, how can you get this horse shipped? Is there any type of protocol in place in Baltimore County or in Md. via the Dept. of Ag on how to best handle this?

Does Baltimore County have a way for all to be protected by providing a QT area? Personally I believe the money I pay should assist all licensed boarding stables with an emergency situation like this. In my community, we have the Baltimore County Ag. Center, located off Shawan Rd. in Hunt Valley. I was actively involved when the outdoor and indoor rings were built. There was a truck and trailer there at the time, I was told, designated for the use to pick up any livestock in need of QT. The facility also has barns with stalls and an area to provide QT. The management of the Ag Center has turned over several times since then and it is currently run by Parks and Recreation.

What happens if any of us who holds a Md. stable license has an issue and needs immediate qt? Has this group or the Dept. of AG made any arrangements in setting up some type of facility that can be used in an emergency situation? The owner would be responsible to "suit up" per biosecurity guidelines there and care for the animal. Finding shipping for an animal who could potentially have a communicable disease would be impossible.

I believe each county should have some type of qt. center to provide for this situation. Hay, grain and straw is the responsibility of the owner, or it can be provided up front for a cost. If the owner brings it it must be purchased outside of their farm specifically for this purpose. Nothing but the horse is to come in for QT. I am happy to donate pitchforks and buckets.

I appreciate any information you can provide on this important issue.

All the best,

Fran Burns

Boxwood Farm

Monkton Maryland"

Reponses

Claire Lacey: Claire is producing a webinar for the Maryland Horse Council this summer on biosecurity, particularly given the increased mobility of our equine community. She did a Bio-Security Course with the University of Minnesota 2019 and worked with infection diseases. If anyone on this call has input or relevant information, please feel free to contact Claire.

Connie Sawyer: The FEI has valuable biosecurity resources, especially for sport horses traveling globally. Connie can connect anyone interested with their lead veterinarian. Also, the FEI Sports Forum, covering sports, commercial, and veterinary topics, will be held in Lausanne, Switzerland, from March 31 to April 1, with a live stream available. She will share the link for those interested.

Dr Kathy Anderson: Pointed out that the USEF has Dr Katie Flynn on staff, and she's done a number of these biosecurity planning options, and could certainly engage her, either just as a resource or have her come to Maryland and give us some input.

Cassie Shirk: On the topic of biosecurity, MDA's animal health team can be involved in any messaging. Obviously, with the HPAI and poultry and livestock situation, MDA has pushed out a lot of messaging. She encouraged those folks to connect with our animal health team, or you can connect with her and she can get you in touch with the right people at MDA.

Erin Ochoa: the MDA has a pretty good process in place already regarding quarantine and biosecurity. Suggests looking what's already been in place.

Dr. Amy Burk: specifically address the letter regarding education for horse farm owners on moving horses during an outbreak. She strongly disagrees with that approach. Instead, we should be educating farm owners on the importance of having an on-site quarantine area. Moving a potentially infected horse risks contaminating trailers and other facilities. Encourage a focus on establishing quarantine spaces within their own farms.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 11:33 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Litz, Executive Director

ADDENDUM: Peggy Morgan/Ellen James Stable Reports