

December 1, 2021 Tuesday- 7:00 P.M. (Zoom)

Present: Greg Budach, Cathy Dessert, Rick Magee, Kyle VanOtterloo, Justin Anfinson, Bob Lems, Rick Bertrand, Nick Roland, Jessica Johnson, Bob Lems, Kyle VanOtterloo

Absent: Scott Banitt

Guest: Steve Carpenito

Steve Carpenito was moved to the top of the agenda so he could present his incentive plans for 2022 to the board.

Steve presented a plan that would pay owners of new horses coming to Running Aces \$1,200 each after qualifying and making at least 4 stats by July 10<sup>th</sup>. New horses would be considered horses that have not race at Running Aces since 2020.

He also proposed paying owners of returning horses \$400 if they make 4 starts prior to July 10<sup>th</sup> as well.

He offered that it would be limited to no more than 12 horses, (he did not specify per owner or trainer).

He suggested they must also be members of MHRI.

He believes it will address several concerns; drawing horses due to high competition elsewhere, and attracting new trainers to Minnesota.

He projects the cost to be around \$156,000 all of which would be funded from the purse account.

He suggested that the card room is doing very well and projections are that the purse account will be in excess of 5.7 million for 2022 and that the incentives will not affect our ability to raise purses substantially in 2022 even if we choose to hold back money for 2023.

He suggested that he is flexible on the amounts for returning horses vs. new and open to any ideas to incentivize horsemen to come to Running Aces.

Steve then went over his ideas for late closing events which we discussed with him. He is open to any ideas we would propose. He was not aware of the Watch N Wager funding added to the Dan Patch race in the past and agreed to check into that.

He would like everything finalized so he could start promoting by January 1.

After Steve left the meeting we discussed his plans and agreed that his plan for incentives is not preferred and that we would rather offer higher purses to incentivize trainers to come to Minnesota.

We don't feel the Dan Patch race benefits local horsemen and most of the money went to horses that came in for the event and then left.

Rick Bertrand had to leave the meeting and asked that we not decide on any of Steve's items at this meeting.

Cathy Dessert moved that we tell Steve we are not interested in his incentive plan as it is and we'd like him to check on the ability for Watch N Wager to support a Dan Patch event, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Nick Roland & carried.

Mark Corless moved to approve the minutes from our November 3rd meeting which was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Cathy Dessert & carried.

We discussed potential hire of Kevin Decker as our executive director.

Greg, Justin, & Cathy talked about his interview and reviewed his experience and suggested that he would make a great addition to MHRI. All had a chance to review his resume and history and reach out to some of his past employers with positive results.

All agreed we should offer him the position and ask that he relocate to Minnesota by February 15<sup>th</sup>.

We agreed to start him at \$68,000 annually plus \$750/month towards health insurance and give him \$2,500 for moving expenses.

Justin Anfinson moved and Jessica Johnson 2<sup>nd</sup> that we make that offer to him which carried with no opposition.

Annual meeting discussion:

Justin and Greg have the county fair awards figured and Cathy is working on the other awards and contacting Dee Leftwitch for photos.

Jessica has agreed to work on collecting donations for the stallion auction and will use her discretion as to what stallions and how many we will accept.

Justin will inquire with Tim Tetrick as a possible guest speaker and Kyle suggested Renee Mancino (marketing director in Ohio) as a possible alternative.

The hotel and food will be finalized with Running Aces by Mark Corless and anyone who wants to help with those decisions.

Justin will contact Ken Stauffer regarding help with an auctioneer.

Greg will contact Big Dee's and acquire some of the other major raffle items.

We discussed the HHI conference coming in February (2/21-25) in Florida. Cathy and Jessica both volunteered to attend.

Mark Corless moved to pay for Cathy Dessert and Jessica Johnson as well as Kevin Decker (should he accept our offer) to attend the HHI conference which was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Greg Budach & carried.

Mark Corless moved to pay the \$195 for Cathy Dessert and invite Dr. Laura Critchett to attend the racetrack industry symposium via RTN next week which was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Justin Anfinson and carried.

Director's comments:

Cathy talked about a friend of hers that is involved in a study researching Standardbred race horses tying up and asked for volunteers to donate hair samples from their horse's mane.

We discussed a timeline for election of new board members and tabled till our next meeting.

Cathy Dessert moved and Mark Corless 2<sup>nd</sup> approval of the Treasurer's report which carried.

Next meeting tentatively set for Tuesday, December 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

Justin Anfinson moved to adjourn and all 2<sup>nd</sup>.