

WTBOA Board of Trustees Minutes

April 8, 2011

Board members present: Claudia Atwell Canouse, Michael Feuerborn, Mary Lou Griffin, Nina Hagen, Dana Halvorson, Dr. Duane Hopp, Karla Laird, Debra Pabst, Candi Tollett and Keith Swagerty. Absent: Stanley Gillman and Boyd Lusarreta. Staff present: M. Anne Sweet.

The meeting was called to order at 12:45 p.m. at WTBOA offices by President Halvorson.

Board Minutes: *Hopp moved to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Pabst and the minutes were approved.*

Notes regarding Emerald Downs: This week there were an additional 100 horses on the grounds for a total of 880, down 83 horses from the same time last year. Jockey Ricky Frazier had fractured his head and will be unable to resume riding until May 1. Several jockeys are doing well in California, including Krigger, Duran and others, so they will not be coming to Emerald as in the past. It was noted that tonight is opening night and 50 televisions will be given away. All board members should have received Widmer Brothers (Turf) Club passes and parking stickers.

Laird reported that the WHBPA fundraiser was a great success, was well attended and netted \$27,000 for the Backstretch Daycare Center.

Finance Committee Report: The budget is on track. Projections are for 40 fewer horses at the sale, as compared to last year.

Regarding office staffing: If possible look for an additional staff person, but wait until the right person comes along, perhaps a part-time person in the beginning, who would be interested in possibly working into a full time position eventually and who is interested in long-term involvement in the industry. Sweet was asked to leave while a proposal by Feuerborn was discussed and then approved.

Sales Committee: The “early bird” entry fee of \$125 is in effect until April 18. After that date it goes up to \$150 for summer yearling nominations, which are due by May 16. Mixed sale entries are due by May 31. There will be a committee meeting scheduled for within a week after the nominations close. There are 23 yearlings nominated at this time.

Feuerborn provided a price quote for chartering a bus from Canada, similar to what was done for the Pegasus Two-year-old in Training Sale. It would cost \$2,000 for a 15-passenger bus, with an additional \$2,000 estimated if 15 people plus the driver stayed overnight for one night. The cost could be absorbed as part of the advertising budget. We would promote it early and perhaps provide someone on-board to accompany, host and/or entertain those who came down on the bus. [It was questioned whether Monday, September 5, is also a holiday in Canada. A 2011 calendar shows that September 5 is Labor Day in both the US and Canada.]

Northwest Race Series: April 15 is the extended deadline for two-year-olds of 2011 to be nominated to the series in the amount of \$3,500. [Two additional nominations were received at that amount.] There is also one more chance to nominate for the late deadline of May 31 in the amount of \$5,000. Stallion nominations are also due on April 15. [Seventeen stallions nominated this year for the 2014 NWRS.]

Publications: Sweet reported that the staff is currently working on the April/May 2011 issue. The e-newsletter currently has 728 contacts and continues to have a high rate of opens (averaging about 42%) and click-throughs. The website averages about 2,700 visitors who make an average of 6,000 visits per month, with about 18,000 page views. There are 608 friends on our Facebook page.

WTBOA Sales Stakes: The Caldwells and Bill Oppenheim have recommended this in the past. Tollett had done an informal poll of trainers asking if a sales stakes would help encourage them to buy a horse from our sale and all eight of those polled said yes, it would help. Other discussion included putting some additional money on top of a race for this year. Ideas for financing the stakes included: having stallion syndicates donate money; allocating money from future Stallion Season Auction funds; applying funds from the advertising budget; and consignor and/or buyer nominations. Possibly \$10,000 for colts/geldings and \$10,000 for fillies. Only sales horses would be eligible to run for the added money. Swagerty said he will find out how Arizona does their incentive program. Other ideas discussed: include the Pegasus Two-year-old Sale horses and/or older horses so there would be broader fields. Canouse suggested giving a bonus to sales horses winning a maiden special weight or allowance race, similar to the California-bred bonus, except this would be for WTBOA sales horse. General consensus supported a \$1,000 bonus to be paid to WTBOA sales horses who won a maiden special weight for two-year-olds racing at Emerald Downs, to be called the WTBOA Sales Incentive Program. Other ideas included going after sponsorship for a \$50,000 stakes, and possibly also including Washington Cup sponsors.

Funding would require \$200 each for 100 horses to reach \$20,000. A May 31 deadline was suggested for this year, requiring \$50 per horse from the consignor; with another \$50 asked of the buyer to complete the nomination. For 2011, it would be open to weanlings of 2009 and yearlings of 2010. Horses would have to go through the ring and pay a commission to be eligible; RNAs would be eligible. A large "check" will be presented in the winner's circle. Griffin, Hagen and Tollett will pursue the sales incentive program idea.

Meeting Dates: A magazine committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 12, at 11 a.m., with a sales stakes/incentive program meeting to follow at 1 p.m. The next board meeting will on Friday, May 13, at noon, with a finance committee meeting at 11 a.m.

Other Business: Laird stated that the WHBPA would like to pursue looking into a sign for the front of the building. [A sign for the WHBPA and a new sign for the WTBOA have been designed. They will be \$180 each, plus a \$55 artwork charge each, plus \$80 total for delivery and installation. ETA to come.]

It was suggested Emerald Downs recognize a breeder of the month or the week, similar to what they do with owners, jockeys and trainers. [Update information to come.]

The WHRC conditionally granted six days of racing to Walla Walla, Waitsburg and Dayton. The Class C tracks must meet the following conditions: 1) ESSB 5747 must pass the Legislature and be signed by the Governor; and 2) each association must provide vet assistants for the test barn, photo-finish services for all days, be willing to accept less WHRC staff working fewer hours, and the WHRC must receive \$3,000 in public or private donations for each day of Class C racing. [ESSB 5747 passed and was signed by the Governor. This allowed that the WHRC would not be required to provide \$15,800 in purse money for every day of racing authorized. An emergency clause allowed this bill to take effect immediately.]

The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.