

MINUTES
WV RACING COMMISSION
Thursday August 29th, 2024
WV Racing Commission Conference Room

The WV Racing Commission met on August 29th, 2024, to conduct business and consider administrative matters. Roll call was taken, and present was Chairman Ken Lowe Jr., Commissioner Chip Urling, and Commissioner Tony Figgaretti.

Agenda Item #1 – Approval of July 31st meeting minutes

The minutes will be approved after a few minor changes are made to the notes.

*Motion made by Commissioner Urling.
Seconded by Commissioner Figgaretti
Motion passed.*

Agenda Item #2 – Executive Director's Report

Director Joe Moore updated the commission that the parimutuel wagering comparison for FY24. With live handle across the board has decreased nearly 14% compared to FY23. Total in-state handle is down 3.5% compared to last year. Mr. Moore presented the injury reports for both Mountaineer and Charles Town. Charles Town's muscular skeletal injuries through July are 2.08 per 1,000 starts. Mountaineer's muscular skeletal injuries through May are 2.23 per 1,000 starts. A five-year handle comparison was presented for review his one gets us 19 through 23, which is pre and post-COVID. Some of the decreases at Wheeling Island in live and simulcast. I factor could have been bridge closures on the interstate that made access hard to access the track.

The large increase in exports in the dog racing is since they are the only two tracks reaming for out of state individuals. Chairman Lowe asked how the injury reports compare nationally. Mr. Moore responded that he would find this information for the commission but does not think we were necessarily an outlier in either direction. Also presented was information about the organizing and implementing the mortality review board. This board will provide insight years down the road as to what the patterns for injuries and mortality. Chairman Lowe added that the state vets and track superintendents are always welcome to chime in if Something they need, they want, we're not doing, they should be doing, because that's what we want to hear. We want to be known as a safe track state. Mr.

Mcintosh gave an update on the racing

Agenda Item #3 – Legal Update

There's nothing to update since our last meeting when the commission received the update from Michael Williams.

Agenda Item #4 – MP Requests approval of Capital Improvement - Clubhouse/Paddock Hallway Roofs

Mr. Moore presents a request for Mountaineer Park. The requests for approval of capital improvement project, Clubhouse of Paddock Hallway roof. Jim Colvin is on the phone for any questions you may have, but they are requesting \$168,826.90 to replace the roof over the clubhouse and the paddock hallway. They provided you with bids. There is money available for this project. Mr. Covin stated that he would like to get it under the \$168,000, but to be sure, that's why we're putting it for the \$168,000.

*Motion made by Commissioner Urling
Motion passed.*

Agenda Item #5 – MP Requests approval of Capital Improvement - Stable Area Asphalt Repairs

Mr. Moore presents a request for Mountaineer Park. The request for approval of capital improvement project stable area. The total cost of this project is \$40,000. The money is available for the project. Mr. Covin stated they are not paving or repaving the backside. All we are doing is we are using 240 ton of asphalt to patch existing potholes so that the horses are not stepping in potholes on the way to the track for training. And we will start at the lower half of the barn area and work until we run out of material. And then we'll probably do something similar to this again next year.

*Motion made by Commissioner Urling
Motion passed.*

Agenda Item #6 – MG Requests approval of Capital Improvement - Kennel Compound Paving

Mr. Moore presents a request for Mardi Gras. Mardi Gras has requests approval of the capital improvement project, Kennel Compound Paving. You recall in a previous commission meeting, Mardi Gras was approved an initial amount, I believe almost \$126,000. The request before you today are a supplemental request for an additional \$56,795. Adam West stated that time frame while we were waiting, we noticed a need for going ahead and paving the entire area right in front of the compound so that when they go over to the sprint path or have dog drop-offs and dog pick-ups, that they're going to be on an area that is paved, not giant potholes, not ground sinking in.

*Motion made by Commissioner Akers. Seconded by Chairman Lowe
Motion passed.*

Agenda Item #7 – MG Requests approval of Capital Improvement - Main Teller Booth Upgrades

Mr. Moore presents a request for Mardi Gras. Mardi Gras request the approval of capital improvement project, main teller booth upgrades. The request before you would expand the square footage in the main teller cage to accommodate new teller machines and an increase of one additional teller. The quote that you have before you is \$91,000. The money is available for this project. Adam West stated that We're currently in that section. The rest of the building we've upgraded and been able to upgrade and install all of our new machines that we got last year. This was the only area that was too crowded, the machine design, the way that it was designed and laid out would not fit in the current setup, so they're going to have to completely redesign that front end so that we can get our new machines installed. They're currently working with the old machines in this section still, and they're out of date, and they're actually no longer under service contract, so if they go down, they could go down and be down and not get back up. So we're looking, it's an essential part of what we do to try to get this expansion done so that we can have room for an additional teller is going to be helpful for everyone. Chairman Lowe asked How many mutual turf tellers do you have right now? Currently in that window set up, there's four, and we were expanding it to five, lengthening the cage operation there. Total tellers that they have on staff, not as much as it used to be, I can tell you that. I mean, where they've combined a bunch of jobs and stuff, and now the tellers are also the cashiers and the tip counters and all this other stuff. So, I'd say maximum amount of tellers I think that they have is nine or ten. Are you having many shutouts? There're times that the lines at the windows are so long because of all of the other things that go on with them having to get chips from the window. Mr. West affirmed yes they are people getting shut out in line. Chairman Lowe asked I hear twice I've heard you say chips. You're talking about casino chips? Yeah, they're at the same windows where they do mutual teller window tickets. They're selling poker chips or cashing out, or cashing out slot machines, or cashing out or doing sports bets tickets. So it's all encompassing in one area. And whenever those three avenues or two avenues. Tables, race bets, and sportsbooks all try to get in line to make a bet with a teller, and they have to stand there, and then they don't get their bet in. Now with sportsbooks, that's not a big deal because, you know, they, the game may not be for another couple hours, but with race betting, you know, you only got a couple minutes before you might get shut out. So them standing there really does, it's a needed addition. We definitely need another tele window and we need to get these machines installed. That's the last part of that project from last year. Okay, what you just said. The bottom line there if people are getting shut out we get a but I'm mutual

clerk here Right we need we need a we need another mutual clerk And if we have and right now we have the ability for four total in that area a fifth one would Help alleviate now. I can tell you that the new machines Have alleviated a lot of the lines at the teller window the The racing machines that we just installed for the mutual race tickets is alleviating a lot of the traffic at the window. But there's still a lot of traffic and I'm trying to make sure that we don't have anybody get shut out. Adam, would it make any sense or would it be logical if certain windows were dedicated and properly signed that said for Greyhound racing only? hat would be ideal, but I don't, I honestly, that's not within my department.

Whose department is it? That's Kay Jop's. So we need to communicate with her? I have to coordinate with Kay Jop's and have her, we can try to figure out a work out a an arrangement or work out a deal to where she has a dedicated mutual ticket seller or two on the night. Well, I know what priority is now. Joe and I'm doing this for this to Joe Moore. Are we participating or allowed to use capital improvement money from the fund for Greyhound Racing? And I take it we're paying for the whole thing when these windows are being used for two or three other reasons.Does that make sense, Joe? Mr. Moore responded with I kind of went there myself after Adam mentioned that this was It already comes with three rooms. And all encompassing booths. I thought this was a dedicated area for parimutuel clerks. Yeah. Adam, is the 91,000 the cost of the total project? Mr. West said Yes. The 91,000 would be the cost of the total project to expand the booth 10 feet to the left and then add another window and spread everybody out and reconfigure window opening counter pockets and all that other stuff.

Chairman Lowe responded with So it's... I'm going to put you on the spot and see if you can throw me out a number of how much activity at that main cage do you think is racing related versus casino and sports bar related? That is a tough question as far as trying to come up with a percentage. I can give you teller window numbers like just from mutual ticket sales in that area. I don't know as far as the right off hand.

I could probably find out. for usage, kind of. Like, I can figure out how many tickets were sold, how many vouchers were sold, how many tickets were cashed. But as far as how many race bet tickets, or how many sports book tickets there were, or how many voucher tickets were cashed out, or how... They're also cashing personal checks and doing cash advances and stuff out of these windows as well.

So there's a lot of activity that goes into it. I understand you're doing things like selling hot dogs. Joe, I don't think this is a great idea. Mr. Chair, I'm going to... We've done this in the past where we approved these type of projects, but they were pro rata based on, you know, what portion of a project would be for racing activities versus a casino activity. I believe it was Mountaineer when they did their water system years ago. The commission tabled this request to a future commission meeting pending a breakdown of the activity or even an approximate breakdown of the activity of this main cage. And then the racetrack bring us a request for an appropriate portion of that to be paid out of the capital improvement money made available by the race, from the racing commission.

Agenda Item #8 – Public Comments

No Comments

Agenda Item #9 – Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Chairman