

RACING COMMITTEE MINUTES

JUNE 13, 2006 – 2:30 P.M.

Present: Chairman Wood; Supervisors Callanan, Yepsen, Gutheil, Thompson, Sausville and Connors; David Wickerham, County Administrator; Martin Kinsella, NYS Thoroughbred Fund; Jennifer Conte, Sue Beebe, CCE; Jane DeCoteau, NYS Thoroughbred Breeders; Kate Hanna, Intern; Press.

Chairman Wood called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

On a motion made by Ms. Yepsen, seconded by Mr. Callanan the minutes of the March 14, 2006 meeting were approved unanimously.

Ms. Conte gave a PowerPoint presentation with regard to the Cornell Cooperative Extension Equine Program. The following statistics were presented:

1. New York produces horse goods and services that are valued at \$1.4 billion.
2. The national industry has a \$2.4 billion impact on the New York economy.
3. Of the 202,000 horses in New York over 70% are involved in showing and recreation.
4. Approximately 152,000 New Yorkers are involved in the industry as horse owners, service providers, employees and volunteers.
5. In 1998 there were approximately 1,900 horses in Saratoga County. In 2001 there were approximately 11,800 horses.

Ms. Decoteau said she has been with the New York Thoroughbred Breeders for ten years and has seen it grow from 70 members to over 1,000. This organization educates people who are already in the business, those people looking to come into the business and encourages young people to enter into the business. Scholarships are being offered to students who are going to equine studies at Casanova, Morrisville, Cobleskill and Cornell and internships are available with trainers at the Saratoga Racetrack, encouraging young people into the industry. Networking is also done with Cornell University, offering adult education classes for members ranging from correct worming, pasture management, fowling techniques, etc.

Mr. Kinsella distributed handouts with regard to the NYS Thoroughbred Breeding and Development fund to all committee members and highlighted some interesting facts as follows:

NYS Thoroughbred Breeding is a public benefit corporation that was created in 1973. The organization created in the early 1970's was in response to a request from the State Legislature to help with the issue of a declining dairy farming market. With the creation of an incentive fund to encourage people into the business of thoroughbred breeding, today horse breeding has eclipsed dairy farming and is now the largest segment of New York's agricultural economy. There are over 400 active breeding farms in New York State and nearly 25% of them are either in Saratoga County or in an adjoining county. Thoroughbred farms in Saratoga, Washington and Warren counties account for over 5,200 acres.

Mr. Wood said the Request for Proposal to run the New York racing franchise has been released. An electronic version will be available in the near future, he said.

Mr. Wood said the IDA report is still a work in progress.

Mr. Wood said he would like to have the next Racing Committee Meeting held at the Saratoga Racetrack. The date is to be announced.

On a motion made by Ms. Yepsen, seconded by Mr. Callanan the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Sansom