

Racing and Gaming Committee Minutes  
November 1, 2018 – 3:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Art Johnson; Supervisors Tara Gaston, Jack Lawler, Mike Smith, Matt Veitch, Mo Wright and Chairman of the Board Ed Kinowski; Supervisor Jean Raymond; Spencer Hellwig, County Administrator; Patrick McKenna, NYRA Director of Communications & Public Affairs; Mark Bardack, NYRA Marketing; Julie Stokes.

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

**On a motion made by Mr. Veitch, seconded by Ms. Gaston the minutes of the July 5, 2018 meeting were approved unanimously.**

Mr. Johnson introduced Mr. McKenna and Mr. Bardack from NYRA. Mr. McKenna handed out a 2018 Meet Summary and spoke on the highlights of the handout. He said the handle for 2018 was the 2<sup>nd</sup> all-time highest, just shy of \$660M. Travers Day and Opening Day had record attendance with the Meet having \$1.1M in paid attendance. Since 2013, there have been significant capital improvements made/planned. Those improvements are/will be: The Stretch which was the first significant improvement to the Grandstand in over 50 years; Copper Roofing for winter month's protection along with an upscale look; 1863 Club to be constructed for 2019 Season, weather permitting. Saratoga Live has a national audience of 75M viewers and broadcasts on stations such as NBC Sports for big racing days. This is also used to showcase SPAC, the Battlefield and a number of other attractions. Mr. McKenna said NYRA has a portal called SaratogaVisit.com that has the ability to advertise and highlight the offerings of the City as well as the County. He said NYRA has a Community Outreach Booth at the race course that provides one nonprofit each day of racing with an opportunity to be at the booth and interact with the thousands who visit the race course. Mr. McKenna thanked Mr. Johnson and the Committee for the opportunity to speak.

Mr. Lawler asked what the difference between 2017 and 2018 was in the handle. Mr. Bardack said there was less than 1% growth. Mr. Lawler asked if weather was a driver in the handle difference. Mr. Bardack said around Travers Day the weather turned better and the handle really took off. Mr. Johnson asked what the comparison was between on track betting versus online. Mr. McKenna said on track is much smaller because of the online betting option. Mr. Lawler asked about the concessions and how it affects NYRA's bottom line. Mr. Bardack said there are three entities that are receiving a piece of the concession revenue. Mr. McKenna said he does not have an exact breakdown. Mr. Lawler asked what that revenue stream means to NYRA and said they may not have that information now but asked if it could be sent to him.

Ms. Gaston asked when the 2019 budget would be available online. Mr. McKenna said it would be available mid-December.

Mr. Lawler asked about the Capital Improvement Plan and if the money that the Saratoga track is generating going back into that track. Mr. Bardack said with the new administration in 2013 there

has been well over \$30M spent in capital improvements. Mr. Lawler asked about the video gaming downstate. Mr. McKenna said revenue is derived from that facility and the purses are generous. Mr. Bardack said those funds are helping all facilities.

Mr. Veitch asked if NYRA has any plans for sports gaming. Mr. McKenna said what that may be at a NYRA racetrack remains to be seen as there have been no decisions made.

Mr. Johnson thanked Mr. McKenna and Mr. Bardack for attending.

Mr. Johnson said Mr. Carlson from the Saratoga Casino Hotel was on the agenda but was not able to attend.

**On a motion made by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Veitch the meeting was adjourned unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Pamela Wright  
Clerk of the Board