

Racing and Gaming Committee Minutes
June 13, 2019 12:30 p.m.

Present: Chairman Art Johnson; Supervisors Tara Gaston, Darren O'Connor, Scott Ostrander, Mike Smith, and Matt Veitch; Chad Cooke, Deputy County Administrator; Patrick McKenna, NYRA Director of Communications & Public Affairs; Mark Bardack, NYRA Marketing; Skip Carlson, Saratoga Casino Hotel; Todd Shimkus, Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce.

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

On a motion made by Mr. Veitch, seconded by Mr. Smith the minutes of the November 1, 2018 meeting were approved unanimously.

Mr. Johnson appointed Mr. Smith as his Vice Chair.

Mr. Johnson introduced Mr. McKenna and Mr. Bardack from NYRA. Mr. McKenna thanked Mr. Johnson for the opportunity to speak to the Committee. He said growth at the racetrack continues and a job fair will be held tomorrow, June 14th. There will be many hired, as there are more than 1500 employees to run the Saratoga meet. Mr. Burdick said the 1863 Club would be open. This Club has 3 floors with over 50,000 sq.ft including a full kitchen. This is the first climate controlled facility at the racecourse. Opening day will be Thursday, July 11, 2019. The race week will be five (5) days. Mondays and Tuesday are dark days. The exception will be Monday, Labor Day. On Friday, July 12th, 2019 Mariano Rivera will address the crowd after a luncheon. This will be a great way to kick off the meet. Mr. McKenna said there is an expanded relationship with Fox Sports broadcasting 500 hours and they will be on Saratoga Live every racing day. Mr. Johnson said he appreciates NYRA's investments in the track and in the County as it is a big economic driver. He said last year NYRA opened "the Stretch" and this year it will be the 1863 Club making this year bigger and better. Mr. McKenna said Travers will be broadcasted on Fox and they are very excited about that. Mr. Johnson asked if there would be a cap on attendance. Mr. McKenna said it would be capped at 50,000 every day during the meet. Mr. Johnson thanked Mr. McKenna and Mr. Bardack for attending the meeting.

Mr. Johnson introduced Skip Carlson. Mr. Carlson thanked the Committee for the invitation to speak. He said it is always nice to come and speak. He thanked the Board for their past and continued support. Mr. Carlson said the question that is always asked is how much Rivers Casino has affected them. He said they are down 25%. Investing in the future and being competitive is imperative. Their attendance is down ½ million due to neighboring facilities. Mr. Carlson said they recently signed a seven (7) year contract with the horsemen and the backstretch will remain open year round. A workforce housing project is being worked on but not going well. They are going to hold off on this a bit but hopes on the merits that it is a needed facility for the workers and the horsemen that eventually it will be approved. Mr. Carlson said sports wagering is on the horizon and there is a need for online ability to wager. He added they are exploring a constitutional amendment about that. They have committed to investing \$9M. The gaming floor will be reconfigured. There are 1800 gaming machines and that will be shrinking to 1400, there will be

an outdoor gaming terrace with 50 machines in a covered area, and a sports bar taking up a majority of the added square footage. There will also be a self-serve beverage station, new carpeting, lighting, and a new sound system. Mr. Carlson said there will be Fireworks on July 3rd. Mr. Johnson said they are doing all the right things and thanked Mr. Carlson for coming to update the Committee.

Mr. Johnson introduced Mr. Shimkus. Mr. Shimkus said the Chamber will not be hosting events on opening day or closing day this year. They will again have a Summer Sweepstake. He said the sweepstake prize is worth more than \$2,500 and encouraged everyone to enter. Mr. Johnson thanked Mr. Shimkus for the information and for coming to the meeting.

On a motion made by Mr. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. Smith the meeting was adjourned unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Wright
Clerk of the Board