

Racing Committee Minutes
February 11, 2020 – 3:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Smith; Committee Members Eric Connolly, Tara Gaston, Todd Kusnierz, John Lant, Darren O'Connor, Matt Veitch; Supervisors Phil Barrett, Alan Grattidge, Ed Kinowski, Jean Raymond and Chairman of the Board Preston Allen; Spencer Hellwig, County Administrator; Steve Dorsey, County Attorney; Craig Hayner, County Clerk.

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

On a motion made by Mr. Veitch, seconded by Mr. O'Connor, the minutes of the June 13, 2019 meeting were approved. Mr. Kusnierz abstained.

Mr. Smith announced the appointment of Mr. Veitch as committee vice chair.

A motion was made by Ms. Gaston, seconded by Mr. Veitch, to approve a resolution seeking full restoration of VLT funding in the 2020-2021 State Budget. Unanimous.

Mr. Hellwig said that this was part of the discussion in the Legislative & Research committee meeting. Mr. Hellwig said that the Video Lottery Terminals in the Racino were a function of this Board's approval. Promises were made by the State in terms of revenue to support public safety within the County and the City, and both entities rely heavily on these funds to maintain services provided on both levels. The State is collecting revenues well above and beyond the small share that comes to the County. At the County level it's \$757K, in the City's case it is over \$2M per year. Mr. Smith distributed a letter from Assemblywoman Woerner's and Senator Jordan's office which was sent to the Governor in support of restoring funding. Mr. Smith said that the first item on the Legislative Agenda is also requesting restoration of funding. Mr. Veitch said that yesterday the Mayor, Commissioner of Finance and Commissioner of Public Safety for the City of Saratoga Springs gave testimony at the State and they are working with the Legislatures to get the word out on this issue. A companion resolution is usually sent out by the City on this type of issue. Ms. Gaston said that the letter from Assemblywoman Woerner's and Senator Jordan's office only mentions the lost revenue to the City and would like to see a resolution that shows what the County is also losing. A draft of the 2011 resolution was distributed and Mr. Hellwig said that Mr. Dorsey will draft the new resolution for approval at the upcoming Board Meeting. Mr. Kinowski said that both Assembly members Woerner and McDonald strongly suggested that the resolution be kept public safety related and not infrastructure related. Ms. Gaston expressed frustration over Yonkers receiving \$19M in revenue and not having their revenue cut.

Mr. Lant said that he heard that harness racing was going to come to an end in Saratoga. Mr. Grattidge said that he believes the VLTs cannot be operated without harness racing. Mr. Veitch said that he has not heard this but will follow up with people at the Racino.

On a motion by Mr. O'Connor, seconded by Mr. Kusnierz, meeting was adjourned unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Therese Connolly
Deputy Clerk of the Board