

TTA Board of Directors Conference Call Meeting
October 3, 2017 8:00p.m.

The meeting was called to order and the roll was called with the following directors participating or joining the call in progress: Adams, Adger, Asmussen, Bradfield, Carson, Deal, Eoff, Keene, Leckinger, Moore, Peek, Savage, Sheffield, Stephens, Tracy and Witt. Directors Few, Mallet, Melcher, Taylor and Vardeman were absent. TTA Executive Director Mary Ruyle, Accreditation/Racing Manager Jennifer Gibbs, Accountant Cheri Grant and Director of Sales Tim Boyce also participated.

Director Carson made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 24 Board meeting, the September 11 Board conference call meeting, the September 26 Executive Committee conference call meeting and the October 2 Nominating Committee conference call meeting. Director Asmussen seconded and the motion carried unanimously among those participating and voting.

Ruyle and Grant presented the unaudited financial statements for the fiscal year ending 8/31/17, as well as a draft budget for the FYE 8/31/18. Director Adger made a motion to approve the draft budget. Director Deal seconded and the motion carried unanimously among those participating and voting.

Director Keene made a motion to adopt a capitalization threshold of \$2,500 in accordance with current tax policy. Director Savage seconded and the motion carried unanimously among those participating and voting.

Grant requested consideration of increasing the amount currently budgeted for payroll over the next six months to allow additional hours for scanning a backlog of TTA records into a digital format. Director Asmussen made a motion to add up to \$6,000 to the budget for payroll. Director Deal seconded and the motion carried unanimously among those participating and voting.

Boyce reported that he is presently working on contracts for the 2018 2-Year-Old Sale, which should mail within two weeks, with a sale date of April 10 and a consignment deadline of mid-January.

Ruyle presented updates for the Racing, Membership, and PAC committees, as well as the Educational Fund.

Director Sheffield reported that the next Roses to Ribbons event will be held at Retama Park on Saturday, October 21st. Ruyle also stated that The Paddock Foundation has received a \$2,000 contribution from the Charles Jago Elder Foundation in Houston.

Ruyle discussed an invitation from the American Horse Council to renew an organizational membership for a fee of \$750. Director Asmussen made a motion to renew membership in AHC at a fee of \$750 for one year. Director Adger seconded and the motion carried unanimously among those participating and voting.

Ruyle reviewed the slate of candidates for the upcoming TTA Board of Directors election as recommended by the Nominating Committee, as follows: Central Region – Ron Ellerbee and Brant Schafer; East Region – Sonny Ellen and Teo Mallet (incumbent); At-large: George Bryant, Jimmy “Scooter” Dodwell, Corey Johnsen, Wes Melcher (incumbent), Susan Moulton, Brent Savage (incumbent), Doug Smith, and Fred Taylor, Jr. (incumbent). Director Keene made a motion to approve the proposed slate of candidates. Director Tracy seconded and the motion carried unanimously among those participating and voting.

President Leckinger began his report by discussing the Sam Houston Race Park 2018 Thoroughbred Stakes schedule, in which several stakes were eliminated but the Groovy and Bara Lass Stakes remain.

He then provided details on the TRC Funding Proposal that was approved at the September 20 TRC meeting, triggering the publication in the Texas Register of proposed rules to greatly increase license fees for the Class 1 horse tracks, while lowering fees for Gillespie County Fair and the “paper” licenses – licenses for which there is no facility in place or where live racing is not being conducted.

Leckinger also addressed the TRC budget shortfall, which prompted the Funding Proposal, and the lack of meaningful budget cuts enacted by the TRC. Further, it has recently come to light that the funding proposal, which provides for regulation of 20 race days at each Class 1 track, does not pertain to a calendar year, but rather the TRC’s fiscal year which began September 1st. This means that the current Quarter Horse meet at Lone Star Park and the Thoroughbred meet at Retama Park count toward those 20 days each for 2018.

After discussion, it was decided that Leckinger shall draft a position paper to be reviewed by the full board for approval, then distributed to Texas government officials and possibly shared through social media. A counter-proposal addressing license fees may accompany the position paper.

Other ideas discussed included op/ed pieces, articles in newspapers and other publications, radio and television exposure through interviews with Texas horsemen and trainers, widespread use of social media, and conducting horsemen’s meetings at the racetracks as soon as possible.

One idea for a counter-proposal would allow the reduced fees for “paper” licenses to be contingent upon applying for and receiving race dates with immediate opening of a simulcast facility, with dates and purse funds transferred to tracks running live meets. Otherwise, the previous, higher fees would apply.

Ruyle advised that the proposed rules should be published in the October 6 edition of the Texas Register, starting the 30-day comment period. The next TRC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 8th.

A date for the next regular board meeting is to be determined.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:20 a.m.