

LOUISIANA STATE RACING COMMISSION MINUTES – March 13, 2023 Emergency Meeting

As transcribed by Mary E. Lee DiLeo, Certified Court Reporter

COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE

Benjamin J. Guilbeau, Jr., *Chairman*
Louis Reine, *First Vice Chair*
Dr. Patrick Bernard, *Second Vice Chair*
Leslie M. Bouie
Thomas B. Calvert
Lane T. Cortez
Donald "Don" Cravins
Eddie J. Delahoussaye
K. R. "Ron" Finkelstein, O.D.
Mike R. McHalfey
Deano Thornton

ABSENT

Roy Griggs
Ravi K. Sangisetty

APPROVED
At the Commission Meeting of
4/17/2023
(Date)

Executive Director
Louisiana State Racing Commission.

The meeting of the Louisiana State Racing Commission (LSRC) was called to order by the Chairman on Monday, March 13, 2023 at 10:00 AM on the Zoom Conference Call. Roll call was taken; a quorum was present.

I. ASSOCIATION REQUEST

A. PURSE TRANSFER

1. **Approval** of Purse Transfer from Delta Downs to Evangeline Downs, Contingent upon Agreement between Evangeline Downs and Louisiana Downs for 61 Specific Race Dates for Each of their 2023 Thoroughbred Meets to be Submitted with Full Application Packets to LSRC Headquarters by April 6, 2023 for Approval at the April 17, 2023 Commission Meeting.

Commissioner Cortez and the Chairman incorporate the transcript of the February 24, 2023 Committee Meeting at Evangeline Downs be incorporated into the record.

Mr. John Duvielh, Counsel for Louisiana Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association (LaHBPA), informs that the LaHBPA Board has approved the reduction to 61 specific race days for Evangeline Downs and Louisiana Downs 2023 thoroughbred meets as submitted in LaHBPA's Packet and the \$1,800,000 purse transfer from Delta Downs to Evangeline Downs. Mr. Steve Kuypers, General Manager of Delta Downs, states that Boyd Gaming is in agreement with the 61 race day calendars as presented. Mr. Matt Crawford, Director of Racing at Louisiana Downs, states that Louisiana Downs is in agreement with the 61 race day calendars as presented.

Commissioner Reine and the Chairman incorporate the two letters from Louisiana Downs into the record.

Mr. Arthur Morrell, horse owner, breeder, and former state representative, asks if the length of the meets will be the same. Commissioner McHalfey responds that the length of the meet is the same with some race days removed in between.

The Chairman recognizes the letter from Jason Boulet, Senior Director of Racing at Fair Grounds, regarding the race date changes and the effect on the full racing calendar. Mr. Kuypers informs that they are hoping to start the next Delta Downs thoroughbred meet around October 18th rather than October 4th to give them some time after the transferred Fair Grounds quarter horse meet to complete repairs as requested by LaHBPA. Mr. Crawford states that they want to keep the calendar as agreed upon but could work out race dates in the future with the other associations to ensure a better spread through the year. The Chairman requests Commissioners Cortez and McHalfey to incorporate Mr. Boulet's ideas into discussions about future race dates.

Mr. Duvieilh informs that all parties had agreed to a \$1,800,000 purse transfer from Delta Downs to Evangeline Downs in tandem with the race dates reduction, but then Louisiana Downs reneged on its original agreement to the purse transfer and requested the transfer to be limited to \$1,000,000 in the past week. Mr. Kuypers states that Delta Downs is in agreement with LaHBPA to transfer \$1,800,000 in purse money to Evangeline Downs. Mr. Crawford informs that the proposed race dates changed three times in discussions and that a \$1,000,000 purse transfer would keep Louisiana Downs and Evangeline Downs at the same purse levels. He says that the reduction of dates is Louisiana Downs' priority.

Mr. Chris Richard, LSRC-Licensed Trainer, asks how this affects Delta Downs' purses. And if this is a one-time situation. The Chairman states that this is a one-time approval due to the current circumstances. Mr. Benard Chatters, LaHBPA President, responds that this would maintain the same purse structure at Delta Downs while increasing purse structure for summer thoroughbred racing to motivate horsemen to participate in Louisiana year-round.

Mr. Glen Delahoussaye, LSRC-Licensed Trainer, asks how sports betting and Historical Horse Racing (HHR) have impacted purse structures since being instituted. Mr. Duvieilh responds that sports betting revenue for purses still needs to be appropriated by the legislature and HHR impact on purse revenue is minimal for Evangeline Downs and Louisiana Downs because they are only starting to expand their OTBs and HHR offerings.

Commissioner Bouie motions to approve the \$1,800,000 purse transfer from Delta Downs to Evangeline Downs, to approve a reduction to 61 total race days per meet as agreed to by all parties for the 2023 thoroughbred meets of Evangeline Downs and Louisiana Downs due to force majeure emergency, and to approve Louisiana Downs to run 7 races per day on the race days they overlap with Evangeline Downs; Commissioner Bernard seconds; Poll Vote conducted by Mr. Charles Gardiner, Executive Director of LSRC, in which Yea means to approve the motion and Nay means to oppose the motion; 10 – Yea, 0 – Nay; motion carries.

II. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Reine motions to adjourn; The Chairman seconds; motion carries.



Charles A. Gardiner III
Executive Director