



Ohio State Racing Commission

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Mike DeWine
Governor

Scott Borgemenke
Chairman

Minutes of the Ohio State Racing Commission Meeting held on June 27, 2019

1-The Ohio State Racing Commission (Commission) held its monthly meeting June 27, 2019 at the Riffe Center, 77 South High Street, Columbus, Ohio, Room 1948, at 10 am.

2-Commission Chairman Scott Borgemenke called the meeting to order. Commissioners Beth Hansen, Greg Simpson and Thomas Winters were present. Commissioner William Patmon Jr. joined the meeting after item five of the agenda.

3-Commissioner Winters moved to approve the minutes of the May 22, 2019 Commission meeting. Commissioner Simpson seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

4- Executive Director Bill Crawford discussed Executive Director approvals. Commissioner Simpson moved to ratify the Executive Director's approvals. Commissioner Hansen seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

5A-Executive Director Bill Crawford discussed Delaware County Agricultural Society 2019 Meet Request. Commissioner Winters moved to approve Delaware County Agricultural Society 2019 Meet Request. Commissioner Simpson seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

6-Executive Director William Crawford discussed Commission approval of Mr. Donald Hoovler and Mr. Hugh Beatty as trustees for the Harness Horsemen's Health and Retirement Fund. Commissioner Hansen moved to approve Mr. Donald Hoovler and Mr. Hugh Beatty as Trustees for the Harness Horsemen Health and Retirement Fund. Commissioner Simpson seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

7-Jeff Johnston, who is regional manager for the Jockey Guild, spoke regarding Commission rules. The Jockey Guild uses the Association of Racing Commissioners International (ARCI) to develop model rules which the Jockey Guild suggests these model rules to the various state jurisdictions. Mr. Johnston provided specific ARCI model rules for the Commission to consider possible changes to its rules.

8- Dr. James Robertson, Commission consulting veterinarian, gave an update on catastrophic horse fatalities at Ohio racetracks. He stated in June there were five catastrophic breakdowns through June 27th. In 2019 there has been 20 catastrophic deaths with 19 Thoroughbred and 1 Standardbred due to training or racing.

9-Sherry White, Commission Fiscal Officer, gave her monthly financial report. She stated the Commission currently has a surplus of approximately twelve percent compared to last year.

10-Chairman Borgemenke and Commissioner Winters recognized the exemplary service of Jerry Knappenberger to the Ohio horse racing industry upon his passing. John Oberle, outside counsel for Gaming and Leisure Properties spoke regarding an amendment to R.C. 3769.07 in the budget bill.

11-Christopher Hicks spoke regarding Commissioner Simpson. Mr. Hicks provided documents to the Commission including the meeting minutes from the April 2019 Clermont county republican party meeting along with a letter from the Ethics Commission. He asked the Commission to take action against Commissioner Simpson. Chairman Borgemenke asked the Attorney General if the Commission has jurisdiction. The Attorney General stated that the Ethics Commission is the appropriate agency for Mr. Hicks concerns. A copy of Mr. Hicks remarks is attached.

12-There being no further business, Commissioner Winters moved to go into executive session to discuss personnel matters and updates on pending legal cases in Ohio Courts. Commissioner Simpson seconded the motion. The motion to go into executive session was unanimously approved by roll call vote. Chairman Borgemenke stated after executive session, the commission would only move to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Winters moved to go out of executive session. Commission Hansen seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

13-Commissioner Winters moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Hansen seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously approved.

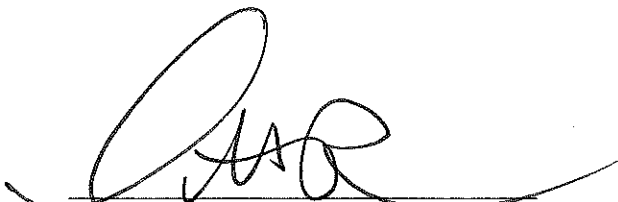
The public meeting adjourned at 12:15 pm.

Date, Time & Place of Next Meeting

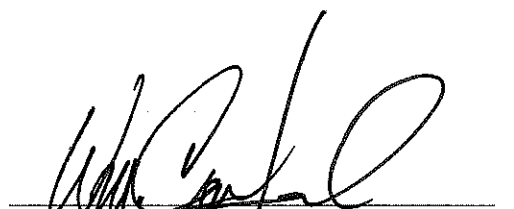
Thursday, July 23, 2019 @ 10 am

77 South High Street, Room 1952

Columbus, Ohio 43215



Scott Borgemenke, Chairman



William Crawford, Executive Director

RACING COMMISSION – DRAFT REMARKS

I am Chris Hicks of 444 Woodwick Ct., Cincinnati Ohio. I appreciate the opportunity to address this Commission at public participation time. My topic is the integrity of this Commission and particularly that of Commission Member Greg Simpson.

On April 17, 2019 in the Republican Executive Committee meeting in Clermont County, Ohio, a body of which Mr. Simpson is Chair and of which I am a member, Mr. Simpson discussed at some length that, in his role as a member of this Commission, racing interests wished to give him money that he legally could not accept. He discussed his intent to set up PACs under the Clermont County Republican Party to mask the money. He also discussed routing the money to other political candidates, masking the money and his role in securing the contributions and having it come back to the benefit of the Clermont County Republican Party via the candidates.

He was, in my view, brazen. How brazen? He even mentioned that he could get money from casino interests. That, even though they are not regulated by this Commission, they come before it for simulcast so he could get them to pay. He was almost giddy.

During his presentation, a member, Nathan Schuler, actually spoke up that Mr. Simpson's plan seemed "Like crooked Hillary stuff."

I have noticed before that, Party Secretary Chris Mehlman records at least some meetings. If such a recording exists, it will support my points and that I am not exaggerating in the slightest.

The episode was documented in the minutes of that meeting in sanitized form. They said:

- I. Republican Club or PAC discussion: Some possible donations to the party may not be able to take due to conflicts of the Party. Some donations were rejected because it became a conflict of interest due to the Chairman being on the racing committee. Chairman Simpson to find out from Ethics commission to make sure that club or PAC is Ok to utilize for certain donations.

Again, these minutes were highly sanitized. The actual discussion was much more direct. Mr. Simpson spoke of an overt plan to route money through PACs and candidates to hide improper contributions. I have provided a copy of those minutes.

I am a person who stands for ethics and integrity. But I understand that all people and organizations have weaknesses. How they respond when those weaknesses come front and center is what reveals character. I tend to not speak up until I see a pattern, sort of a "three strikes." Mr. Simpson has a clear pattern.

A political candidate, whom I am prepared to name, told others and myself that Mr. Simpson offered to get him \$50,000 from racing interests in return for that candidate endorsing Mr. Simpson for county commissioner. The candidate told me, and others, not so much with an intent to be a confidant but because they were stunned by the brazenness of the offer and, I think, wanted people to know they declined.

Recently, it came to my attention that in 2017, Mr. Simpson inquired with the Ethics Commission about using his position on the State Fair Board to make money. Part of their reply said, "Specifically, you have asked" . . .

- Can your business's staff and legal counsel solicit assistance from businesses or individuals if you are personally prohibited from making the solicitation?

I find it incredible that such a question was even asked. I am providing a copy of the letter.

That coupled with the plot announced in the Clermont County Republican Executive Committee, plus the \$50,000 offer to a candidate, is highly disturbing.

Institutions such as Racing and Casino Commissions naturally should be under a microscope. Their members should be held to the highest standard. In our culture, we speak of avoiding "impropriety" or the "appearance of impropriety." That truly should apply here.

I am not familiar with the details of your governance. I believe that Mr. Simpson should resign or be removed from this Commission. Participation here is a privilege in service to the people of Ohio. Not for personal gain or for the gain of political cronies and allies.

I ask that, for the good of this Commission and the people of Ohio, Mr. Simpson resign. To have openly spoken of plots to hide contributions from racing interests is wrong; to have offered to route contributions from those interests to a candidate, in return for an endorsement, is wrong. Finally, to have asked about such things in 2017, in writing, shows a lack of discernment to avoid impropriety or the appearance of impropriety.

I do not think it wise that people on this Commission also be in roles of county party chairs or be seeking elective office. Frankly, this body should ask the Attorney General for clear opinions on compatibility of office to, again, avoid even the appearance of impropriety.

To the Commissioners, don't delay. Act today. Your institution of this commission is more important than any one member. For the good of the institution, Mr. Simpson should step down. If he will not, he should be removed as possible under your governance.

To Mr. Simpson, you know what I am saying is true about the Executive Committee discussion and the offer of \$50,000 in return for an endorsement. Own it and act with integrity now. No lies. Action.

Thank you.