

**STATE OF MAINE
MAINE STATE HARNESS RACING COMMISSION**

In re: 2022-2023 BIENNIAL BUDGET)
REVISIONS PURSUANT TO) **DECISION AND ORDER**
8 M.R.S. § 267)

INTRODUCTION

On May 16, 2023, the Maine State Harness Racing Commission (“Commission”) held a hearing pursuant to 8 M.R.S. § 267(1) and Chapter 21 of the Maine State Harness Racing Commission Rules to receive testimony regarding whether the 2022-2023 biennial budget should be revised to include a discretionary expenditure. The revision requested is a discretionary expenditure of \$51,000 to provide operational support to Maine's pari-mutuel fairs wherein each fair would receive \$1,000 per race day, except the Topsham and Union Fairs which would receive \$2,000 per race day.

A quorum of the Commission was present during all stages of the proceedings. Chair Harry Center II, Don Marean, Patricia Varnum, and Diane Dunn participated and voted as Commission members. The April 26, 2023, Notice of Hearing that was provided to interested parties via email and posted on the MHRC’s website was admitted without objection as Exhibit 1. The Notice of Hearing was provided to all persons who receive distributions from the funds established by 8 M.R.S. §§ 281, 298, 299, 300, and 7 M.R.S. § 91.

FACTUAL FINDINGS

Shane Bacon, Executive Director of the Commission, first presented the request for the \$51,000 discretionary expenditure in operational support for Maine’s pari-mutuel fairs. He testified that this support has in recent history been given to the fairs and that it would serve the best interests of the harness racing industry by increasing their operating budgets. Mr. Bacon

also testified that he received a telephone call from the Union Fair personnel and that there was some question if the Union Fair would conduct racing this year and likely not next year. Mr. Bacon answered questions from the Commission regarding the requested budgetary revision and his suggestion that the Commission defer any consideration of including Union Fair in the revised budget proposal until more information was received. The Commission accepted Mr. Bacon's testimony and there was no opposing testimony.

CONCLUSIONS AND ORDER

Based on the testimonial and documentary evidence in the record, the Commission finds that revising the budget to include a discretionary expenditure of \$41,000 to provide operational support to Maine's pari-mutuel fairs in the amount of \$1,000 for each parimutuel fair except Topsham Fair which shall receive \$2,000 is consistent with Maine Revised Statutes, Title 8, Chapter 11, and best serves the interest of the harness racing industry. The Board declined to include supplemental money to the Union Fair unless and until more information is received.

Accordingly, it is ORDERED the 2022-2023 budget be revised to include a discretionary expenditure of \$41,000 provide operational support to Maine's pari-mutuel fairs except the Union Fair. Each fair (except the Union Fair) shall receive \$1,000 per race day, except the Topsham Fair, which shall receive \$2,000 per race day.

RECORD VOTE

After motion made and seconded, the Commissioners voted unanimously, 4-0, that the 2022-2023 biennial budget be revised to include a discretionary expenditure of \$41,000 to provide operational support for Maine's pari-mutuel fairs as more fully set forth above. The Commission found that the discretionary expenditure of \$41,000 to provide operational support for Maine's pari-mutuel fairs as described above is in the best interests of the harness racing

industry and will promote harness racing in Maine. The Board further voted to delegate signing this Decision and Order to the Chair without further review.

So Ordered,

Dated: May 16, 2023



Harry Center II, Chair
Maine State Harness Racing Commission