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2  
3 **VIRGINIA RACING COMMISSION**

4 COLONIAL DOWNS  
5 BALLROOM, 4TH FLOOR  
6 10515 COLONIAL DOWNS PARKWAY  
7 NEW KENT, VA 23124

8 Thursday, September 17, 2020 at 11:00 a.m.  
9

10  
11 **COMMISSION MEMBERS:**

12 D.G. Van Clief, Jr., Chairman  
13 J. Sargeant Reynolds, Jr.  
14 Stephanie B. Nixon

15 **COMMISSION STAFF:**

16 David S. Lermond, Jr., Executive Secretary  
17 Kimberly C. Mackey, Business Manager  
18 Rhonda Davis, Pari-Mutuel Wagering and Licensing  
19 Coordinator

20 **ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE:**

21 Elizabeth B. Myers, Esquire  
22

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1           CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Ladies and Gentlemen,  
2 thank you very much for taking time to be here  
3 this morning. I think it's going to be a fairly  
4 brief meeting and I'd like to go ahead and call  
5 to order today's meeting of the Virginia Racing  
6 Commission.

7           I would ask that as was the case when we  
8 convened here in June, that everybody please  
9 maintain appropriate social distancing, and while  
10 we're not talking, we'll keep our masks on. So  
11 I'll take mine off for just a moment.

12           We're actually missing today two  
13 commissioners. Commissioner Siegel had a  
14 previous conflict and we knew he wasn't coming.

15           We received a call from Commissioner  
16 Hudgins just a few minutes ago and an issue has  
17 arisen of an emergency nature that she had to  
18 tend to with her business, so she is on her way  
19 to that site and can't make it here with us this  
20 morning.

21           We do have three commissioners to vote and  
22 thus a quorum for the conduct of business.

23           Our first order of business is approval of  
24 the minutes from the June 25th VRC meeting. To  
25 my fellow commissioners, those were distributed

1 to all of us some days ago. Presumably, you had  
2 a chance to peruse them. Does anybody have any  
3 questions or any modifications that you feel need  
4 to be made? If not, we need a motion to approve.

5 COMMISSIONER NIXON: I make a motion.

6 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Thank you.

7 COMMISSIONER REYNOLDS: I second the  
8 motion.

9 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Thank you, and those  
10 in favor, please signify by voting aye.

11 NOTE: The Commission votes aye.

12 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: The June 25th meeting  
13 minutes are hereby approved.

14 We now have the public comment period. Is  
15 there any topic relevant to the Commission or our  
16 industry that anybody wants to address here this  
17 morning? If not, thank you very much.

18 That takes us to new business. We do have  
19 three issues that we need to take action on and  
20 the FOIA laws require us to be here in person,  
21 despite the fact these aren't going to take long.  
22 That is why we're here this morning.

23 Mr. Lermond is going to take us through the  
24 first two, which are requests for funding  
25 approval. Dave, do you want to handle Items A

1 and B under new business?

2 MR. LERMOND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Thank you.

4 MR. LERMOND: As you said, the first two  
5 items are both requests from the VHHA. Debbie  
6 Warnick, understandably, is at Woodstock getting  
7 ready for their meet which will start tomorrow,  
8 so I told her I would be happy to present these  
9 two requests on her behalf.

10 The first one is the money from the  
11 Virginia Breeders' Fund that will go towards the  
12 eight Virginia-bred stake races that will be run  
13 at Shenandoah Downs. The good news is when I  
14 looked at this four or five months ago, not  
15 knowing what was going to happen with COVID, I  
16 had a much lesser estimate of how much would be  
17 available, but since the OTBs have opened back  
18 up, account wagering has remained very strong.

19 It would be 150,000 that would be available  
20 for this purpose and I would seek a motion to  
21 approve that.

22 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Any questions for Dave  
23 on the allocation? If not, we need a motion to  
24 approve it as set forth.

25 COMMISSIONER REYNOLDS: So moved.

1 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Thank you.

2 COMMISSIONER NIXON: Second.

3 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Thank you. All in  
4 favor, please signify by voting aye.

5 NOTE: The Commission votes aye.

6 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Thank you very much.  
7 Motion passes.

8 Next is the VHHA regarding their  
9 benevolence budget, I believe.

10 MR. LERMOND: Behind Tab Three of your  
11 books, you'll see a letter to me from Debbie  
12 Warnick. They're requesting \$2100 to be used for  
13 meal tickets and some group meals for the  
14 horsemen that are staying at Shenandoah Downs.

15 It's a very modest request, but I believe  
16 that's all they feel that they need to fulfill  
17 this purpose. I would recommend approval.

18 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Okay. Thank you.

19 COMMISSIONER REYNOLDS: Can I ask a  
20 question?

21 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Yes. We do have a  
22 question.

23 MR. LERMOND: Okay.

24 COMMISSIONER REYNOLDS: Mr. Lermond, is  
25 this their entire budget? Is that the only

1 expenditure for the budget?

2 MR. LERMOND: That's correct,  
3 Commissioner Reynolds. The harness folks have  
4 accumulated a nice little nest egg in this  
5 breakage budget. As you know, it can't be spent  
6 for anything other than expenses that are  
7 approved by us, and with the short meets and not  
8 being stabled at Colonial Downs, the expenditures  
9 lately have not been what they used to be.

10 I did speak to Debbie and said if you guys  
11 can come up with some creative ideas of how to  
12 use some of these funds that would fit into the  
13 definition of benevolence, that we could  
14 certainly consider that in future years, but  
15 they're just requesting the 2100 this year.

16 COMMISSIONER REYNOLDS: Thank you.

17 MR. LERMOND: You're welcome.

18 COMMISSIONER REYNOLDS: Would it be  
19 appropriate to ask? I know Debbie couldn't be  
20 here because they're on top of their race dates,  
21 but given the fact that they do have over 50,000  
22 in this fund, and to your question, would it be  
23 possible for them to report back to us and  
24 indicate?

25 We don't want them to spend money just to

1 be spending money, obviously, but have they given  
2 some thought to what they really might need over  
3 there? There are some constructive uses that  
4 they might address for this and we'd be curious  
5 to know.

6 MR. LERMOND: I'd be happy to do that.

7 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: All right. That being  
8 said then, we do need a motion to approve.

9 COMMISSIONER NIXON: I make the motion.

10 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Thank you. I'll  
11 second it. All those signify their approval by  
12 voting aye.

13 NOTE: The Commission votes aye.

14 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: The budget is approved  
15 and set forth as requested.

16 That takes us to a request submitted by the  
17 VHBPA for five stakes races at Laurel and I will  
18 call on Mr. Petramalo to report on that.

19 MR. PETRAMALO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

20 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Thank you.

21 MR. PETRAMALO: We had scheduled on the  
22 last day of Colonial's meet September 2nd, five  
23 Virginia-bred stakes races. Of course we were  
24 not able to run them. What we'd like to do, what  
25 we are asking today to do is to get your approval



1 to run those races at Laurel.

2 As you may remember, during the period of  
3 time when Colonial was not operating from 2014  
4 through about 2018, we routinely ran anywhere  
5 from five to nine Virginia-bred stakes races at  
6 Laurel, and one year we even ran a couple at  
7 (inaudible).

8 So what we'd like to do is go back to  
9 Laurel just for this unusual circumstance that we  
10 find ourselves in and run five races. The races  
11 are the Jamestown, which is a five and one half  
12 furlong on the turf for two-year-olds.

13 Then we have a turf sprint for the boys and  
14 girls, the colts and geldings. The boys' race is  
15 the Punch Line; the girls' race is the Tyson  
16 Gilpin.

17 Then we have two distance races for boys  
18 and girls. The Brookmeade at a mile and one  
19 sixteenth for fillies and mares and the Bert  
20 Allen mile and one sixteenth for colts and  
21 geldings.

22 The purses would be 75,000; 60,000 would  
23 come from the horsemen's purse account and 15,000  
24 per race would come from the Breeders' Fund.

25 I believe that at our December meeting you

1 may have already approved that use of the  
2 Breeders' Fund money. That's basically what we'd  
3 like to do.

4 The Maryland Jockey Club and the Maryland  
5 horsemen have been very accommodating and very  
6 happy to host the races. The races will be on  
7 Friday, October 9th. Our view was it really  
8 didn't make much difference which day we were on  
9 because we're without spectators.

10 Also, by putting it on Friday, we've  
11 eliminated some potential conflicts with other  
12 racing in the Mid-Atlantic. So with that  
13 explanation, unless you have any questions.

14 COMMISSIONER NIXON: I have a quick  
15 question.

16 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Yes.

17 COMMISSIONER NIXON: I don't recall the  
18 dates, but were the nominations out at that point  
19 for these races? Meaning were there many --

20 MR. PETRAMALO: You know, the nominations  
21 were due on August 19th. I don't know because we  
22 were in the process of shutting down then.

23 COMMISSIONER NIXON: Right.

24 MR. PETRAMALO: I don't know whether the  
25 racing secretary's office actually took

1 nominations for those five races.

2 COMMISSIONER NIXON: Right. I was just  
3 curious.

4 MR. PETRAMALO: I did point that out to the  
5 racing secretary at Laurel and I think she was  
6 probably going to follow up to see whether there  
7 were nominations to at least get a jump start on  
8 recruiting horses.

9 Let me also say this with regard to  
10 recruiting horses. We have a very limited  
11 population of true Virginia-bred horses. So what  
12 we did in terms of purse distribution, the purse  
13 distribution will be 60/20/10, first, second and  
14 third, and fourth through last will get a flat  
15 \$5,000, which is a good sum.

16 Our thought being if we want to fill these  
17 races, we're going to have to give people  
18 incentive to bring that Virginia-bred down from  
19 New York or wherever it might be. So that's the  
20 only unusual thing. The Maryland Jockey Club was  
21 delighted with that.

22 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Frank, I don't recall  
23 what the -- the previous occasions where the  
24 races were run with Laurel, but I seem to  
25 remember that your contract included in its

1 letter business elements.

2 Is there any handle sharing or revenue  
3 sharing of any sort here or is it simply a matter  
4 of you send purse money, they host the races and  
5 the Virginia-breds get an opportunity to run for  
6 the money?

7 MR. PETRAMALO: No revenue sharing. You  
8 are correct. In the past, we have had various  
9 kinds of deals. In the early days, we were  
10 getting a share of the wagering, but in the last  
11 two years we were there, we didn't get any. The  
12 Maryland horsemen were very sensitive to that  
13 issue in terms of setting precedent, but in the  
14 last two years, we didn't get anything other than  
15 the opportunity to race there.

16 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Right. I understand.  
17 Okay. Thank you. Any other questions? If there  
18 are none, then we need a motion to approve the  
19 running of these five Virginia-bred stakes as  
20 outlined by Mr. Petramalo to occur on October 9th  
21 this year at Laurel.

22 COMMISSIONER REYNOLDS: So moved.

23 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Thank you.

24 COMMISSIONER NIXON: Second.

25 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Thank you. All in

1 favor, please signify by voting aye.

2 NOTE: The Commission votes aye.

3 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Motion passes. Thank  
4 you.

5 MR. PETRAMALO: Mr. Chairman, can I take up  
6 another five minutes? I promise I won't go  
7 beyond that.

8 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Certainly. We've got  
9 time this morning.

10 MR. PETRAMALO: A lawyer's promise of five  
11 minutes is worthless.

12 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: We'll put the clock on  
13 you.

14 MR. PETRAMALO: I just wanted to explain  
15 some of the other things that we were able to do  
16 in cooperation with the track and particularly  
17 with the racing secretary's office to kind of  
18 wind up the meeting.

19 As you know, we were in a snake pit from  
20 the very start. Our opening day was canceled  
21 because the heat index was 106 degrees and we all  
22 concluded that that was not safe for the horses.

23 The following week, the hurricane dumped  
24 six to seven inches on the course and after  
25 inspection, it was clear that the course was not

1 safe. The course wasn't safe for racing.

2 The following day after three races we lost  
3 power. All the power between Williamsburg and  
4 New Kent was out and then the following week,  
5 Covid-19 struck. Twenty-five percent of the  
6 jockey colony turned up positive. So that was a  
7 tough situation.

8 I've been using the plural we. Let me  
9 explain briefly how decisions were made.

10 The racetrack, represented by John Marshall  
11 and Jill Byrne and Allison DeLuca, in effect the  
12 regulatory authority represented by  
13 Dr. Caruthers, the state vet and the stewards,  
14 particularly Chief Steward Jack (inaudible) and  
15 the horseman's organization and myself, we met  
16 after, during and before each of these incidents  
17 that I've described to discuss what type of  
18 action should be taken and there was total  
19 consensus.

20 There was never any dissent about whether  
21 we should cancel because it's 106 or whether we  
22 should shut down because of the COVID-positive,  
23 et cetera, so it worked out very well.

24 But unfortunately, when the race meet was  
25 canceled, it was August 19th or somewhere around

1       there. We were left with about maybe somewhere  
2       between 400 and 500 horses on the grounds and  
3       maybe up to 200 people still in the dormitories.  
4       It was a problem that we had to work through with  
5       the racing secretary's office and the owners and  
6       trainers because they had no place to go.

7               The tracks in the area, well, even outside  
8       the area as far as Arlington Park in Chicago were  
9       willing to take horses but not the people that  
10      came along with the horses for two weeks. They  
11      were saying send us your horses, but the trainers  
12      and the grooms, et cetera, they have to wait two  
13      weeks. They have to quarantine before they come.  
14      So that was a serious problem we had to work  
15      through.

16             Also, it was the money issue. These folks  
17      had been here for just six full days of racing  
18      and many did not get an opportunity to run or  
19      those that did run maybe picked up a few dollars.  
20      It was a tremendous cost to now pick up and go  
21      someplace else.

22             One trainer came in and told me he wanted  
23      to go back to Florida. He had five horses; \$700  
24      a horse to ship them, that was \$3500.

25             So what we as an organization decided to

1 do, we contributed to 42 trainers \$500 each to  
2 help defray the costs of relocating and we didn't  
3 make any distinction between a trainer with three  
4 horse or a trainer with ten horses. It was well  
5 received.

6 we also helped the back stretch workers get  
7 home or get to where they wanted to go, whether  
8 it was bus tickets to get back to Florida or in  
9 one case, we helped with an airline ticket to get  
10 a hot walker back to California.

11 That was our principal program to help with  
12 the shutdown.

13 But then we implemented what we call a  
14 cancellation compensation program. We found that  
15 of the six canceled days that were carded, there  
16 were 524 horses scheduled to race on those six  
17 days. The HBPA decided to send each owner \$800  
18 and each trainer \$250.

19 Here is where the numbers come from. If  
20 you may recall, maybe you don't, the purse  
21 distribution at Colonial included from I think it  
22 was fifth through last, you got \$800; if you were  
23 a trainer you got \$250.

24 So what we did was just apply that same  
25 formula to the 524 horses that were carded. We



1 also expanded it to include 97 horses that were  
2 stabled on the ground but never got the  
3 opportunity to get on the card, either because  
4 they had entered and the race and it didn't fill  
5 or if the race filled, the racing secretary  
6 didn't use that particular race or at any given  
7 time.

8 Bottom line is we put together a  
9 compensation program that awarded \$656,000. The  
10 first checks went out last Thursday and we are  
11 continuing to follow up because there has been a  
12 problem getting enough information in terms of  
13 not only addresses, but more importantly, tax  
14 information. In order to send out a check, we  
15 need a w-9 form because at the end of the year a  
16 1099 goes out.

17 But anyway, those are two programs that we  
18 put together that were very well received.

19 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Thank you for that  
20 report. I, candidly, wasn't aware of that and  
21 I'm sure it was extremely well received. I  
22 imagine you purchased quite a good bit of good  
23 will and hopefully that will show up next year.

24 MR. PETRAMALO: That was the last line on  
25 the cover letter that went with the check.

1 Please come back and see us next year.

2 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Exactly. Yeah. Well,  
3 I think that sounds like a very positive step and  
4 candidly, I imagine that Nancy Pelosi and Mitch  
5 McConnell could take a lesson from you on how to  
6 issue dollars. Thank you very much, Frank.

7 All right. That takes us to the section  
8 were commissioners can comment on any issues.

9 MR. LERMOND: Mr. Chairman?

10 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Yes. Sorry.

11 MR. LERMOND: Jeb Hannum wanted to give us  
12 a brief report on the VEA, what they've been  
13 doing with the steeplechase folks.

14 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Okay. Thank you very  
15 much, Dave. In fact, we'll pause. Jeb, we look  
16 forward to your report and I should probably  
17 invite Mr. Marshall on behalf of Colonial Downs  
18 Group if you want to bring us up to date on  
19 anything. We have plenty of time this morning so  
20 feel free. Jeb.

21 MR. HANNUM: Thank you, Commissioners. I  
22 just wanted to talk you through a little bit  
23 about what the VEA has been doing sort of behind  
24 the scenes, just to support the different aspects  
25 of the VEA program. As you all know, we support

1 the entire industry.

2 So the steeplechase season was really,  
3 every single meet up and down the east coast was  
4 canceled this year. You know, very difficult.  
5 Meets were trying to reschedule and do things  
6 with different formats and each week, more  
7 bad news kept coming through for the National  
8 Steeplechase Association and so at the very end  
9 of the season, the Virginia Gold Cup and the  
10 Middleburg spring races were still trying to do  
11 something to try to salvage the season and have  
12 some racing just to enable people to race and to  
13 get some money out.

14 So the Gold Cup, I can't remember the exact  
15 date, but it was in June and then the Middleburg  
16 went. Or actually, excuse me. I think  
17 Middleburg went first and then the Gold Cup.

18 But anyway, the point was that the VEA was  
19 able to come in and help. Because of no  
20 sponsorships and no ticket sales, the revenues  
21 were reduced to literally zero.

22 So we figured out what it was going to cost  
23 to put the races on bare bones and taking into  
24 account all of the new safety protocols that had  
25 to be applied in terms of enhanced security and

1 temps being taken and all of the things  
2 steeplechase meets never had to do before, and a  
3 lot of them are operating with staff that are  
4 volunteers and coming in once a year to put the  
5 races on.

6 So the VEA was able to come forward with  
7 operational support money for the Middleburg  
8 spring race and for the Virginia Gold Cup, which  
9 when enabled those races to go forward.

10 Middleburg had some money because it was  
11 their 100th anniversary this year. They had  
12 raised money for purses and then HBPA was able to  
13 help the Virginia Gold Cup with purses, so we  
14 were able to find some money from different  
15 sources.

16 So that really salvaged the steeplechase  
17 season, which was really important for all of  
18 those horsemen, and I think it speaks to the fact  
19 those two races were in Virginia and were it not  
20 for the VEA and the relationship that those meets  
21 have with the HBPA, that wouldn't have happened.

22 They didn't have any in Maryland or  
23 Pennsylvania or any other state, so I think it  
24 speaks to the unique model we have in Virginia  
25 which is so beneficial for all horsemen. So I

1 think that's really a great thing that we have  
2 here.

3 Looking forward to the fall, the fall  
4 steeplechase races are under similar situation.  
5 I think there are seven race meets that are  
6 looking to go now, three of which will be in  
7 Virginia.

8 Once again, the VEA is providing some  
9 operational support money to help them go forward  
10 because some of them will have spectators, some  
11 will have reduced spectators, but essentially,  
12 they have no meaningful revenue.

13 The VEA is doing that for Middleburg fall,  
14 for the fall Virginia Gold Cup and for Foxfield  
15 and unfortunately, Montpelier decided not to  
16 race.

17 So the other thing VEA is doing is we  
18 provided some money to the two point-to-points,  
19 the Old Dominion hunt and the Blue Ridge hunt to  
20 have point-to-point. So the Old Dominion ran  
21 last week, had a fabulous day. We had a  
22 wonderful course. The ground was perfect. There  
23 were over 75 horses entered to race. It all went  
24 very well and Blue Ridge is this coming up  
25 Saturday, again with really, really good entries

1 to help set up the horses for later in the  
2 season. Again, that wouldn't have happened  
3 without the VEA's support.

4 So when we talked about this support, there  
5 was overwhelming support. How do we help every  
6 aspect of the industry? So that's just a nice  
7 reflexion of what the VEA board members think  
8 about all of the different components of the  
9 industry.

10 The National Steeplechase Association also  
11 does a live video stream out because this year  
12 even more important without spectators, if you're  
13 going to have the races it's nice for people to  
14 be able to see them, particularly the owners, so  
15 the VEA made a contribution to the National  
16 Steeplechase Association to help support the live  
17 stream of the races. So that is important.

18 So I just wanted to acknowledge all of  
19 that, and then switching gears a little bit, the  
20 Shenandoah Downs harness meet will start  
21 tomorrow. Same schedule that we have had in the  
22 past, but not under the authority of the  
23 Commission this year because we won't have  
24 pari-mutuel wagering. So that will be under the  
25 regulation of the USTA.

1           So fortunately, we have had an opportunity  
2 to learn a lot from the HBPA and how we can  
3 implement the safety protocols that we need and  
4 lessons learned. So fingers crossed, the  
5 Shenandoah Downs meet will go forward and we'll  
6 be able to get that taken care of.

7           Dave and his staff have been very helpful  
8 in giving us advice about putting on the meet  
9 because now the VEA are responsible for the drug  
10 testing and paying for the judges and all of that  
11 aspect, which before Dave had handled, so we  
12 appreciate Dave's support in that regard.

13           So fingers crossed, we get the meet done.  
14 I wanted to let you know about those things that  
15 are going on.

16           CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Great. Thank you for  
17 that report as well. It's very gratifying to see  
18 Virginia's racing organizations be so flexible  
19 and step in. I know it has been a lot of hard  
20 work for everybody to try to respond in a  
21 productive way to this crisis and it sounds like  
22 you've done it extraordinarily well. Thank you.

23           MR. HANNUM: Thank you.

24           CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Mr. Marshall, you're  
25 not required to report on anything, but we'd love

1 to give you an opportunity if you have anything  
2 to report to us.

3 MR. MARSHALL: Sure. I'll take the  
4 opportunity to update you on a few things.

5 Frank summed up the conclusion of the meet  
6 very, very well. There are a lot of details that  
7 support his overview. But on the commercial side  
8 of the closure of the meet, we were able to  
9 successfully wrap up the pieces and contracts  
10 with vendors, most of which did not hold us to  
11 any commitments we had beyond the last date that  
12 we raced and let us out of those agreements or  
13 extended credit to us for future use, which was  
14 great.

15 The HBPA did essentially enunciate the  
16 benevolence this year with the good things that  
17 they have done, led by Frank and Jill with  
18 Allison in the stable area during those last two  
19 weeks of occupancy. Very well done and we were  
20 pleased to be a participant in that.

21 I'd also like to point out that CBG began  
22 VEA Revshare, HHR Revshare contributions  
23 August 15th as contracted to do, so that process  
24 is well on its way.

25 Rosie's Dumfries, we remain on schedule to



1 open in January of 2021. Construction has moved  
2 full steam ahead to where construction should be  
3 complete by December 8th and that's when our  
4 operating team will move in, hire, train,  
5 execute, be ready to open related to the license  
6 that this Commission had already approved at the  
7 last meeting and we're also very mindful of the  
8 condition set forth by this Commission on that  
9 license and we're working with the executive  
10 director to satisfy that condition as prescribed.

11 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Thank you very much  
12 and thank you and your team as well for your  
13 flexibility and response to this throughout this  
14 pandemic.

15 In your case, if you didn't know what force  
16 majeure was before this year, we all know now.  
17 You certainly had a lot to deal with. So thank  
18 you for doing it with efficiency and grace.

19 MR. MARSHALL: You're welcome.

20 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Now we'll go to  
21 Commissioners' comments. Mr. Lermond, is there  
22 anything else we need to add to the agenda before  
23 we get there?

24 MR. LERMOND: I don't think so.

25 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Let's start with

1 Commissioner Nixon.

2 COMMISSIONER NIXON: I just look forward to  
3 COVID-free racing next year and I'd just like to  
4 commend the horsemen on the compensation fund.  
5 I'm sure that really went a long way to helping  
6 those folks out. That's it.

7 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Thank you.  
8 Commissioner Reynolds.

9 COMMISSIONER REYNOLDS: I want to thank  
10 everybody for getting us through a really, really  
11 tough year and here is to a much better 2021. I  
12 can't wait until that ball drops in New York,  
13 bringing in the next year. Hoping it will be  
14 better for all of us. Thank you for all you have  
15 done this year.

16 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: I think we're all  
17 looking forward to getting 2020 in the rearview  
18 mirror. Hindsight is 20/20. We'd like to get  
19 there.

20 COMMISSIONER REYNOLDS: Exactly.

21 CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: I'll offer a couple of  
22 comments, too. Just listening to everyone and  
23 experiencing some of this from afar, also having  
24 talked to fellow commissioners as well as our  
25 executive secretary, as well as members of the

1 stakeholders in the industry, I am mindful that  
2 we're in a very unusual period and that's not too  
3 unusual for this Commission. We've been in a few  
4 and generally, we like to remain as alert to  
5 being as helpful and constructive to this  
6 industry as we can.

7 we've had some opportunities to do some  
8 things that most Commissions probably don't get  
9 involved in over the years and we'd like to be  
10 nimble and alert and helpfully constructive where  
11 we can, whether it's pushing from behind or  
12 leading from the front; whatever is appropriate.

13 In that regard, I feel that with the lack  
14 of meetings this year and usually we have reports  
15 at our meetings and we managed to stay in front  
16 of all of the issues that way, I feel a little  
17 bit disconnected.

18 So I'm looking for ways -- I just want to  
19 throw it out right now. I don't have an action  
20 plan and it doesn't need to be complicated,  
21 either, nor should it take a lot of time.

22 I'd like to make sure this Commission stays  
23 plugged in to the issues that we have in the  
24 industry, the questions that may arise and to the  
25 opportunities where we might be of service.

1           whether it's collaborating with the  
2 industry on an economic impact study, updating  
3 our five-year strategic plan, which is probably  
4 due for that fairly soon, or whether it's being  
5 responsive to circumstantial problems such as the  
6 ones that you all have outlined today that you've  
7 had to respond to through the course of 2020.

8           So I think we want to get some follow-up.  
9 I'll ask my fellow Commissioners to do it as well  
10 as our stakeholders, to whether or not we might  
11 be well served, and I'll ask our executive  
12 secretary as well, to develop a little more in  
13 the absence of meetings, regular reporting  
14 process, whether or not we might put together  
15 an informal industry committee that would include  
16 a commissioner or two, just to make sure we are  
17 synchronized with the issues that all of you have  
18 to think about every day.

19           When and if we do need to step in, it will  
20 not take long to bring us up to speed so we can  
21 do that. That's what is on my mind this morning  
22 and I just wanted to throw that out.

23           We do not need a closed session today;  
24 therefore, I do need a motion to adjourn the  
25 meeting.

1                   COMMISSIONER NIXON: I make a motion.

2                   COMMISSIONER REYNOLDS: Second.

3                   CHAIRMAN VAN CLIEF: Thank you. None are  
4 opposed. We stand adjourned. Thank you all for  
5 taking the time to join us this morning.

6                   NOTE: This meeting of the Virginia  
7 Racing Commission adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

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CERTIFICATE OF COURT REPORTER

1  
2 I, Sandra G. Spinner, hereby certify that having  
3 first been duly sworn, I was the Court Reporter at  
4 the meeting of the Virginia Racing Commission at the  
5 time of the hearing herein.

6 Further, that to the best of my ability, the  
7 foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of  
8 the proceedings herein.

9 Given under my hand this 30th day of September,  
10 2020.

11  
12  
13 Sandra G. Spinner

14 SANDRA G. SPINNER  
15 COURT REPORTER  
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