

**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 August 25, 2022, the Maine State Harness Racing Commission (“Commission”) held a public 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 discretionary expenditures. The first revision requested is a discretionary expenditure of \$55,000 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. The second revision is a discretionary expenditure to provide one \$500 grant to the Cornish Fair and one \$500 grant to the Pembroke Fair, both of which are non-pari-mutuel fairs.

A quorum of the Commission was present during all stages of the proceedings. Chair Harry Center II, Barry Norris, Don Marean, Patricia Varnum, and Diane Dunn participated and voted as Commission members. The July 19, 2022 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 §§ 281, 298, 299, 300, and Title 7 § 91.

FACTUAL FINDINGS

Shane Bacon, Executive Director of the Commission, first presented the request for \$55,000 discretionary expenditure in operational support for Maine’s pari-mutuel fairs. He testified that

this support has been historically given to the fairs and that it would serve the best interests of the harness racing industry. Mr. Bacon also testified regarding the request to provide two \$500 grants, as discretionary expenditures, to the Cornish Fair and the Pembroke Fair. Mr. Bacon explained that the exhibition demonstrations at these fairs did not involve wagering and helped to bring harness racing to a broader portion of the state. It was Mr. Bacon's opinion that authorizing the revision to the budget to allow each non-pari-mutuel fair to receive a \$500 grant was in the best interests of the harness racing industry. Mr. Bacon answered questions from the Commission regarding both budgetary requests. 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 \$55,000 to provide operational support to Maine's pari-mutuel fairs is consistent with Maine Revised Statutes, Title 8, Chapter 11, and best serves the interest of the harness racing industry. The Commission additionally finds that the budgetary revision to provide one \$500 grant to the Cornish Fair and one \$500 grant to the Pembroke Fair, both of which are non-pari-mutuel fairs, best serves the interest of the harness racing industry.

Accordingly, it is ORDERED the 2022-2023 budget be revised to include a discretionary expenditure of \$55,000 provide operational support to Maine's pari-mutuel fairs. Each fair shall receive \$1,000 per race day, except the Topsham and Union Fairs, which shall receive \$2,000 per race day. It is additionally ORDERED that the 2022-2023 budget be revised to include a discretionary expenditure of \$500 each to the Cornish Fair and the Pembroke Fair, for a total of \$1,000 between both.

RECORD VOTE

After motion made and seconded, the Commissioners voted unanimously, 5-0, that the 2022-2023 biennial budget be revised to include a discretionary expenditure of \$55,000 to provide operational support for Maine's pari-mutuel fairs.

After motion made and seconded, the Commissioners voted unanimously, 5-0, that the discretionary expenditure of \$55,000 to provide operational support for Maine's pari-mutuel fairs is in the best interests of the harness racing industry and will promote harness racing in Maine.

After motion made and seconded, the Commissioners voted unanimously, 5-0, that the 2022-2023 biennial budget be revised to include a discretionary expenditure of \$1,000 to provide a total of two \$500 grants, one each to Cornish Fair and Pembroke Fair.

After motion made and seconded, the Commissioners voted unanimously, 5-0, that the discretionary expenditure of \$1,000 to provide grants to two non-pari-mutuel fairs is in the best interests of the harness racing industry and will promote harness racing in Maine.

Dated: 9/2/2022



Harry Center II, Chair
Maine State Harness Racing Commission