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CHRB NEWS RELEASE

APRIL 25, 2002

BOARD SETS MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR WORKER HOUSING

INGLEWOOD, CA – The California Horse Racing Board approved seven emergency regulations Thursday establishing minimum standards for employee housing and sanitation facilities in stable areas as well as health and safety measures.

The regulations, which implement housing provisions of a new state law (Article 28/AB 471), apply to all backstretch worker housing being provided by associations. The regulations do not supplant local ordinances. They will remain in effect until the Board develops and approves permanent regulations, also required by the new law.

The emergency regulations establish minimum requirements for habitable rooms, such as adequate light and ventilation. They require separate toilet, bath, and shower rooms for each sex. They require such health and safety measures as pest control, regular garbage collection, smoke detectors, and evacuation plans in case of fire.

The regulations provide for regular inspections of housing by CHRB officials in conjunction with local authorities. The inspectors will check for such things as hot and cold running water, the cleanliness of facilities, and damaged roof coverings, windows and doors.

The CHRB staff now will begin the process of developing permanent regulations, a process that will include public hearings. The Board has 18 months from the effective date of the law to approve the permanent regulations.

In other business, Chairman Alan Landsburg opened the monthly meeting at Hollywood Park by recognizing the life and contributions of John Mabee, the prominent thoroughbred owner and breeder who died Wednesday. Plans for a memorial service at Del Mar Racetrack are pending.

The CHRB staff reported that Advance Deposit Wagering (ADW) handle totaled \$22,990,000 from January 25 through April 14. This represented 4 percent of the \$573 million combined California on-track, off-track, and ADW handle for that period. Of the ADW handle wagered on races run in California, 85 percent was wagered on thoroughbred races at Santa Anita, Bay Meadows, and Golden Gate Fields, 10.5 percent on harness races at Cal Expo, and 4.5 percent on quarter-horse races at Los Alamitos.

Chairman Landsburg noted that because billions of dollars are wagered on California races, even if ADW represents only a small percentage of that total handle, the numbers still are significant.

Representatives of the three ADW operations (XpressBet, TVG, and YouBet) provided updates to the racing commissioners, focusing principally on their marketing efforts and plans to increase the distribution of their programs. For example, TVG has launched a massive campaign in conjunction with the opening of Hollywood Park involving thousands of television, radio, and print advertisements. Both TVG and Youbet, which offer wagering on Hollywood Park races, reported a surge in new accounts this week.

TVG executives described their new programming, including the weekly “Finish Line” recap show; “The Works,” a daily show featuring workouts by Kentucky Derby and Kentucky Oaks contenders; and “The Quarters,” a nightly show from trackside at Los Alamitos.

Commissioner John Harris encouraged the various operators to cooperate in the area of signal distribution. He wants fans at home to be able to watch and wager on the programs without needing to subscribe to more than one satellite and/or cable service.

Vice Chairman Roger Licht said he will hold a meeting of the CHRB Pari-Mutuel Operations Committee to deal with concerns that he and some of the other commissioners have over ADW issues relating to horsemen’s agreements, racetrack agreements, and market access fees. That meeting will be held June 5, the day before the regular Board meeting at Bay Meadows.

The commissioners approved licenses for horse-racing meetings of the San Joaquin Fair at Stockton from June 12 through June 23 and the Alameda County Fair at Pleasanton from June 26 through July 7.

In discussing the fair meets, Chris Korby, executive director of the California Authority of Racing Fairs, indicated he is working with the CHRB and the industry for a solution to the high rates that horseman are paying for workman’s compensation insurance, a problem that could reduce field sizes at the fairs. He said CARF also is involved in recruitment efforts to bring more horses to the fairs.

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