

**NEW MEXICO HORSE RACING COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING**

**Date:** February 20, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.

**Place:** NMRC Boardroom; 4900 Alameda Blvd., NE, Albuquerque, NM and Zoom Video Conference – Meeting ID: 829 2216 9342

**Members Present:** Commissioners John Buffington, Billy Smith, and Robert “Bob” Pitre.

**NMRC Staff Participating:** Executive Director Ismael Trejo, In-House Counsel Richard Bustamante, and Law Clerk Denise Chavez.

<i>AGENDA ITEM</i>	<i>RECORDING #</i>	<i>DISCUSSIONS/CONCLUSIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS</i>	<i>ACTION TAKEN</i>
<b>Public Session 1:</b> <b>I. Call to Order and Roll Call</b>	<b>0:01:48 – 0:02:05</b>	Meeting called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Commissioner Billy Smith. A quorum was present.  Executive Director Ismael Trejo, In-House Counsel Richard Bustamante, and Law Clerk Denise Chavez were also present.	No Action Taken.
<b>II. Pledge of Allegiance</b>	<b>0:02:07 – 0:02:24</b>		Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
<b>III. Approval of Agenda</b>	<b>0:02:32 – 0:02:54</b>	Commissioner Smith asked if there were any changes to the agenda today. No changes to today’s Agenda.	Motion to approve the agenda as submitted made by Commissioner Buffington. Commissioner Pitre second the motion. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

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<b>IV. Approval of Minutes:</b> January 16, 2025 – Regular Commission Meeting	<b>0:02:58 – 0:03:14</b>	Commissioner Smith asked if the minutes for the January 16, 2025, regular meeting were reviewed and if there were any changes. There were no changes.	Motion to approve the minutes of the January 16, 2025, meeting made by Commissioner Buffington; Second by Commissioner Pitre. Motion passed unanimously.
<b>V. Commissioners' Reports</b>	<b>0:03:17 – 0:03:21</b>	None	No Action Taken.
<b>VI. Agency Director Reports:</b> A. NMRC Report	<b>0:03:23 – 0:12:13</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Director Trejo began reporting on Sunland Derby weekend. He said mutuel handle was just a bit over 4.2 million that weekend, which is a significant increase over the 2.8 million that was wagered on that event last year. Attendance was a little over 14k people – nice attendance. He reported that if you did not watch the race, you missed a very exciting stretch run between two very competitive horses. It was a very exciting race to watch!</li> <li>• Executive Director Trejo reported about the press conference last week to inform the industry of what is going on with the NMRC's drug testing program. The agency has received a lot of support from</li> </ul>	No Action Taken.



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		<p>Sunday, February 9, 2025. In overnight races, the NMHBA contributed \$774,000.00 which was \$73,000.00 less than in 2024. It averaged 8.74 NM Bred per day, 638/73 for three a day.</p>	<p>No action taken.</p>
<p><b>VII. Executive Session:</b></p> <p><b>A) NMHA v. NMRC (Pending Litigation)</b></p> <p><b>B) Alexander v. NMRC (Pending Litigation)</b></p> <p><b>C) Amestoy v. NMRC (Pending Litigation)</b></p> <p><b>D) IMO: Joe M. Davis (Licensing)</b></p> <p><b>E) IMO: Ruidoso Downs (Licensing)</b></p>	<p><b>0:24:05 – 0:24:41</b></p>	<p>Chairman Smith called for a motion to enter into executive session. Vice-Chairman Buffington moved for the Commission to enter into executive session to discuss the items listed in the agenda, pursuant to Sections 10-15-1H(1), H(3) and H(7) of the Open Meetings Act authorizing closed sessions for matters related to issuance, suspensions, renewal or revocation of a license; deliberations on adjudicatory proceedings and pending or threatened litigation.</p>	<p>Motion to enter into Executive Session made by Commissioner Buffington. Commissioner Pitre seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.</p> <p><b>No action taken on Agenda Items VII (A - E).</b></p>
<p><b>VIII. <u>Unfinished/New Business and/or Action Items:</u></b></p>	<p><b>1:43:25 – 1:43:39</b></p>	<p>In-House Counsel Bustamante affirmed the Commission only discussed in Executive Session those matters listed under Items 7. A-E which were pending litigation and/or licensing matters as identified under Item VII of the meeting Agenda, in accordance with NMSA 1978, Sections 10-15-1(H)(1), (3) and (7) of the Open Meetings Act.</p>	

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<b>A. Review of NMRC 2024 Audit</b>	<b>1:43:43 – 1:53:33</b>	NMRC’s 2024 Audit findings were provided by Scott Peck of MP Group, Inc.	No Action Taken.
<b>B. IMO: Joe M. Davis (Licensing)</b>	<b>1:53:44 – 2:03:51</b>	After reviewing the entire record provided by Mr. Davis and hearing the pleas of Mr. Davis to allow him to be licensed in NM in open session, the Commissioners unanimously voted to decline his request for a license in NM. The Commission noted Mr. Davis is licensed in 3 other jurisdictions and suggested if he can go at least 2 years in those other jurisdictions without any violations, he may come back to the Commission and request to be licensed by the NMRC.	Motion to deny Mr. Davis’ request for a license with NMRC made by Commissioner Buffington. Commissioner Pitre seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.
<b>C. Approvals for Sunland Park</b>			
<b>1. Request for Ratification of Approval to Shut Simulcasting on January 21, 2025 Due to Inclement Weather</b>	<b>2:05:06 – 2:06:05</b>	Mr. Dustin Dix of Sunland Park briefly stepped away from his office, so Executive Director Trejo requested ratification of approval on behalf of Sunland Park to shut down simulcasting on January 21, 2025. The request was made due to several tracks closing for the day because of inclement weather. Sunland Park had no signals to simulcast.	Motion to ratify the approval to shut simulcasting on 1/21/2025 made by Commissioner Buffington. Commissioner Pitre seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.
<b>2. Request for Ratification of Approval to Amend 2025 Racing Officials (Mutuel Manager and Clerk of Scales)</b>	<b>2:06:10 – 2:06:36</b>	Mr. Ahmad Mughni of Sunland Park requested ratification of approval to amend Sunland Park’s 2025 Racing Officials as previously approved.	Motion to ratify the approval to amend Sunland Park’s 2025

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<p><b>3. Request for Ratification of Approval to Amend 2025 Shue Fly Stakes Nomination Blanks</b></p>	<p><b>2:06:38 – 2:06:59</b></p>	<p>Tarriea Fields, Mutuel Manager, was out sick on January 23, 2025 and Dustin Dix filled in for the day. Additionally, Joree Sriver, Racing Secretary, was out sick on January 25, 2025, Sean Winsor filled in for the day.</p> <p>Mr. Mughni requested ratification of approval to amend Sunland Park’s 2025 Shue Fly Stakes Nomination Blanks. Specifically, the request was to reconfigure the purse distribution for a 6-horse payout versus a 10-horse payout. The reason for a 6-horse field was due to 8 horses out of the 14 fastest times during the trials tested positive for illegal substances and were subsequently placed on the steward’s list, making them ineligible for entry.</p>	<p>Racing Officials made by Commissioner Buffington. Commissioner Pitre seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.</p> <p>Motion to ratify the approval to amend Sunland Park’s 2025 Shue Fly Stakes Nomination Blanks made by Commissioner Buffington. Commissioner Pitre seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.</p>
<p><b>4. Request for Ratification of Approval to Amend 2025 Post Times &amp; Wagering Format (Super Bowl Sunday and Sunland Derby Day)</b></p>	<p><b>2:07:02 – 2:07:23</b></p>	<p>Mr. Mughni requested ratification of approval to amend Sunland Park’s 2025 Post Times &amp; Wagering Format on Super Bowl Sunday and Sunland Derby Day.</p>	<p>Motion to ratify the approval to amend Sunland Park’s 2025 Post Times &amp; Wagering Format made by Commissioner Buffington.</p>




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<p><b>2. Request for Approval of 2025 Post Times &amp; Wagering Format</b></p>	<p><b>2:09:28 – 2:15:42</b></p>	<p>Mr. Moreland took the opportunity to introduce Mr. Lonnie Barber back to SunRay Park’s team and the new Racing Director, Mr. Tim McKernan, to the Commission.</p> <p>Mr. Moreland requested approval of SunRay Park’s 2025 Post Times &amp; Wagering Format as submitted.</p>	<p>Motion to approve SunRay Park’s 2025 Post Times &amp; Wagering Format made by Commissioner Buffington. Commissioner Pitre seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.</p>
<p><b>E. Approvals for Ruidoso Downs</b></p>			
<p><b>1. Request for Approval to Amend 2025 Primary Application</b></p>	<p><b>2:16:10 – 2:16:56</b></p>	<p>Mr. Rick Baugh requested approval to Amend Ruidoso Downs’ 2025 Primary Application to indicate that Ruidoso Downs will go from a mixed meet to a straight QH meet due to flooding damage from last year, litigation and sustainability issues.</p>	<p>Motion to approve to Amend Ruidoso Downs’ 2025 Primary Application made by Commissioner Buffington. Commissioner Pitre seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.</p>
<p><b>2. Request for Approval of 2025 Stakes Schedule</b></p>	<p><b>2:17:00 – 2:17:52</b></p>	<p>Mr. Baugh requested approval of Ruidoso Downs’ 2025 Stakes Schedule as submitted. Mr. Baugh reported that he is working with Ms. Barber of NMHBA and asked if the Commission would give Executive Director Trejo permission to approve</p>	<p>Motion to approve Ruidoso Downs’ 2025 Stakes Schedule with the understanding that there is still negotiating and will</p>



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<p><b>3. Request for Approval of 2025 Purse Schedule</b></p> <p><b>4. Request for Approval of 2026 &amp; 2027 Nomination Blanks</b></p> <p>    <b>a. 2026 All American QH Futurity &amp; Derby</b></p> <p>    <b>b. 2026 Mountain Top NM Bred QH Futurity &amp; Derby</b></p>	<p><b>2:17:55 – 2:18:39</b></p> <p><b>2:18:40 – 2:19:42</b></p>	<p>any changes made if more money is added pursuant to those discussions with Ms. Barber and then Mr. Baugh will ask for ratification of that approval next meeting.</p> <p>Mr. Baugh requested approval of Ruidoso Downs' 2025 Purse Schedule. Note, there was an error for the 7.5/N3 and 7.5/N/2. Those should be switched.</p> <p>Mr. Baugh requested approval of Ruidoso Downs' 2026 &amp; 2027 Nomination Blanks as submitted.</p>	<p>bring this matter back for ratification as all is finalized made by Commissioner Buffington. Commissioner Pitre seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.</p> <p>Motion to approve Ruidoso Downs' 2025 Purse Schedule with the amendment discussed made by Commissioner Buffington. Commissioner Pitre seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.</p> <p>Motion to approve Ruidoso Downs' 2026 &amp; 2027 Nomination Blanks made by Commissioner Buffington. Commissioner Pitre</p>

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c. 2026 Ruidoso QH Futurity & Derby d. 2026 Rainbow QH Futurity & Derby e. 2026 Zia QH Futurity & Derby f. 2027 All American Triple Crown			seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.
<b>X. Adjournment at 11:18 AM</b>		Chairman Smith adjourned meeting.	

  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 3-20-25  
 Billy G. Smith, Chairman                      Date

  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 3-20-25  
 Executive Director Ismael Trejo                      Date