

MARYLAND HORSE INDUSTRY BOARD – HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING
April 23, 2009

Meeting called to order at 12:10 PM.

Committee members present were: Dr. Kathleen Anderson, Dr. Amy Burk, Dr. Elizabeth Callahan, Karen Fulton, Dr. Marla Stevens, J. Michael Hopkins, Dr. John W. Lee, Jr., and Dr. Amy Polkes.

Also present were: Rob Burk, Crystal Kimball and Pegeen Morgan.

Committee members unable to attend: Dr. Siba Simal, Dr. Doreen Hill, Erin Pittman, Dr. Nathaniel White, II.

1. Motion was made to accept the January Meeting Minutes of the MHIB.

- **Moved: Mike Hopkins**
- **Second: Karen Fulton**
- **Motion passed**

- There was some discussion regarding the inauguration outcome mentioned in the January meeting minutes.

2. Racetrack Veterinarians update by Dr. Anderson.

- Dr. Anderson commended the State for their quick action on a recent suspected herpes case. She noted that the Maryland system is one of the most advanced in the country. The turnaround time in this case was 4 hours.
- Dr. Anderson spoke of a Maryland based Thoroughbred rescue that placed over 150 horses in the previous year. She noted that they were highly recommended. Rob questioned if they were a licensable facility. Leighton Farm, Thoroughbred Placement and Rescue 301-579-6898.

3. UMD-College of Ag. And Natural Resources update by Dr. Burk.

- Dr. Burk stated that the quarterly newsletter would be coming out soon and any topics of interest from this meeting would be included in the publication.
- She discussed the Rotational Grazing Demonstration Farm in Howard County. Horses will begin grazing the system this week. Rob stated that if Dr. Burk emailed the information about upcoming pasture walks to him he could forward it to the committee.

- Dr. Burk stated that in November they will have the Maryland Horse Conference. Most likely it will occur in Howard County.
- Dr. Lee asked how the Mid-Atlantic Nutrition Conference went, and stated that his clients had nothing but good things to say. Dr. Callahan was in attendance and stated that she was very happy with the conference. Dr. Burk stated that you could obtain CE credits, and that the equine section was the best attended session. Dr. Burk asked for recommendations on topics for 2010 and members of the committee recommended “Growing Horses” as a topic.

4. MD Assoc. of Equine Practitioners update by Dr. Callahan

- Dr. Callahan spoke of the impact of the economy on the care of their horses in the State. She stated that breeding was down significantly this year, regardless of breed. Dr. Lee echoed the statement. Dr. Anderson noted that she has heard comments from colleagues in New York about the negative impact of the economy. Dr. Lee went farther to note that the extent of care has reduced, in difficult cases the owner will opt to go with the cheapest way out.
- Crystal asked if the MAEP would become active in the near future. There has been a discussion about joining other States in the region. Dr. Lee thought that regional meetings by AAEP might help generate more interest.

5. MD Horse Council – Licensed Stable Operator update by Karen Fulton.

- Her farm is weathering the economy well, but she has noticed that the fields of regional shows have been notably down.

6. MD Racing Commission update by Mike Hopkins.

- There is no longer a hyperbaric chamber at the Maryland Thoroughbred track. Mike noted that Dr. Runde had submitted information on the matter and indicated that he felt strict veterinary oversight was necessary. Rob asked if there were any other chambers in the State intended for equine other than the one Dr. Anderson co-owned. There was one other chamber operated by Dr. Riddle.
- Mike reported that Fair Hill received a \$50,000 grant for an aerator through legislation.
- TOBA now mandates that in all graded stakes races they want pre-race samples drawn and tested for TCO₂ for all horses racing in those events. Mike reported that they did it for the Barbara Fritchie and he feels that a random selection would be much more logical due to the logistical problems. They will do a random selection of 3 samples for all races other than the Preakness.
- Mike reported that they are working with Pimlico on the new NTRA Safety Alliance Accreditation Program. The only issue not addressed has been regarding necropsies related to horses perishing on the track. Mike has talked with Dr. Hohenhaus and he was directed to Dr. Napote. He reported that they do not go along with the NSAID rule required by NTRA, and Mike stated that Maryland is more stringent.
- Mike spoke about the Magna / Maryland Jockey Club bankruptcy proceedings. Dr. Anderson asked if anything would happen before the next meeting of the committee.

- Mike stated that there is a hearing on the way Magna intends to auction the tracks. He stated that there is about \$140 million in unpaid debt.
- The judge on the case related to the Slots Commission throwing out the case related to the Jockey Club dismissed the case.
- Anne Arundel County has not yet decided on whether to allow zoning for a slots facility at Arundel Mills mall. Mike was unclear on the status of the Cecil, and Baltimore facilities. The Wicomico facility is being prepared for slots.

7. Legislative Synopsis by Rob Burk.

- Rob supplied the committee with a list of all of the bills related to horses that passed the 2009 Legislative Session. The committee reviewed the bills.

8. Review of Self Certification / Contiguous States CVI Exemption / Show Organizers Reporting Requirements / Electronic EIA Reports / CVI Documents / Passports update by Dr. Stevens.

- Rob reviewed the history of the self certification regulations and policy.
- Crystal Kimball commended the committee for its work, and noted the suspension of the self certification requirements as a direct positive outcome for the industry as a result of this committee.
- There was discussion of the policy regarding the suspension of requirement for horses exhibited in Maryland competitions coming from contiguous States, the District of Columbia, and New Jersey. It was noted that CVI's were never required for auctions of horses being shipped from contiguous states that have current coggins.
- Dr. Lee asked if there were any shows other than fairs that were multi-species exhibits.
- **A motion was made that the committee does not recommend that the Self-Certification program be put in place. The Committee further stated that until a detailed report was conducted by the MDA – Animal Health Section detailing the purpose of the program, what diseases of concern would be reduced as a result of said program, and whether said program would effectively reduce disease incidence the committee does not recommend instituting this program.**
- **Moved: Dr. Callahan**
- **Second: Karen Fulton**
- **Motion Passed**
- Rob stated that the electronic coggins were now accepted in the State electronically however the State labs are not yet set to do them.
- Dr. Anderson stated that the MDA needs to release this information in a press release. The info is not yet readily available to equine practitioners in the State.
- Dr. Stevens reported that a team is being put together, headed by Dr. Pierce, to make the electronic coggins available in Maryland State labs. Dr. Stevens noted that Dr. Hohenhaus would also like the group to work on making a Mid-Atlantic passport possible.

9. CEM update by Dr. Stevens.

- Dr. Callahan indicated she felt it was ridiculous that a client whose stallion who is 25 years old, with DJD, no longer breeding, and already cleared 3 CEM tests is being asked to be put through further CEM testing.
- Dr. Stevens discussed the efforts to make the U.S. CEM free.
- Rob stated that there were two stallions identified in the State of Maryland as having potentially being exposed to the CEM positive animals found in other States. One stallion has been cleared through testing and the other is in the middle of testing. A statement from Dr. Hohenhaus was supplied to the committee.

10. Lab fees challenged update by Dr. Stevens.

- The State lab is no longer allowed to charge for non-livestock necropsy, and disposal.

11. Animal Health funding for PCR by Rob Burk.

- Dr. Jacobs sent an email to Rob requesting funding from the MHIB for a new equine dedicated PCR machine. The cost for the new machine would be \$29,436.10 plus shipping. An additional \$19,000 was requested to update their older system.
- Dr. Anderson questioned how much they would actually use it for equine versus other species.
- Rob stated that the MHIB has not made any decisions on future funding. Rob felt that if the grant program is brought back that they would recommend Animal Health submit a grant request.
- There was continued discussion on how to use this equipment to raise revenue from surrounding jurisdictions.
- Dr. Anderson stated that it would be premature for the committee to make a motion until a formal request came in, detailing the need.
- Mike suggested that there should be enabling legislation to allow the Department to charge for these services.

12. Equine Massage update by Rob Burk.

- Rob supplied the committee with a statement from the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners related to the legality of massage on equine.

13. Florida Polo Pony update by Rob Burk, Crystal Kimball and Dr. Stevens.

- There is suspicion that it was caused by an overdose of selenium.

14. Equine Euthanasia / Disposal Clinics / Composting by Dr. Lee.

- Dr. Lee discussed the fact that the knacker in their area will be closing down.
- Rob discussed the response from Dr. Hohenhaus to the committee stating that the State will make necessary moves in time of emergency to handle mass disposal.
- Rob invited the committee to attend the 2009 Maryland Horse Forum, and he invited the committee to visit www.mdhorseforum.com.

- The committee discussed that we still have a mounting problem. Rob asked if any of the committee members would like to be involved in the planning process.
- There was discussion over the status of Valley Protein as it relates to bovine processing.
- The committee thought that these topics should be part of the Maryland Horse Forum. Dr. Lee suggested that there was a person in Virginia who should be brought in.
- Rob stated that Assistant Secretary McMillan stated that MDA – Animal Health should approach the committee in the future on topics related to horses. He indicated he was in agreeance with many of the previous decisions of the committee.
- Crystal felt that the committee should have a 2 hour meeting on this topic by all important players to discuss this topic. Rob felt that at the Forum they can address the topic, but Crystal felt that we should see that Secretary Hance and the renderers be present. Members of the committee felt that the discussion should be more controlled.
- Dr. Lee requested that a motion to send a letter to Secretary of Agriculture stating that the committee thinks that the mounting issue of lack of option for equine euthanasia and disposal is a mounting issue that needs to be addressed in the future. Noting that the topic will be discussed at the Maryland Horse Forum. No motion was made.

15. Review of MHIB-HAC motions and results to date by Dr. Lee.

- There was discussion on the previous motions.
- Motion six of the committee from October 2006 had been completed.
- Motion nine of the committee from October 2006, the committee asked that the committee restate that they would like the website updated with the AAEP guidelines for infectious disease. They do not require a payment or membership for access. Dr. Anderson felt it was ridiculous that this had not been completed as of yet. This is an important document that is regularly updated.
- **A motion was made that the committee recommend to the Secretary of the Department of Health and the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture that they feel rabies should be required for all horses that are in contact with the general public be vaccinated for rabies.**
- **Motion: Dr. Anderson**
- **Second: Dr. Polkes**
- **Motion Passed**

16. Other business by Crystal Kimball.

- Crystal reported that one of the diseases that went missing from Fort Detrick was VEE.

Meeting Adjourned at 2:15 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rob Burk