

Colorado Racing Commission
April 9, 2025
Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

The regular scheduled meeting of the Colorado Racing Commission ("Commission") was held on Wednesday, April 9, 2025 via video conference provided by Zoom. The meeting was called to order at 9:29 AM.

Members Present

Kjersten Davis, Vice Chair

Jeff Ruebel, Member

Jonathan Horowitz, Member

John Hammes, Member

Members Absent

Tameka Sampson, Chair

Racing Staff Present

Sarah Killeen, Assistant Attorney General for Division of Racing Events

Kelly Haralson, Interim Director of the Division of Racing

Emily Maurer, Criminal Investigator Division of Racing

Sanela Simic, Auditor Division of Racing

Emmalie Baxter, Compliance Inter Division of Racing

Dania Cobos-Bejarano, Administrative Assistant Division of Racing

Michael Phibbs, Senior Director of the Specialized Business Group (SBG)

DECISION ITEMS:

1. Approval of February 12, 2025 Minutes

Minutes approved for 2/12/2025

2. Bally's Arapahoe Park Simulcast Request Extension dates for 2024-2025 - Shannon Rushton
Bally's Arapahoe Park

Shannon Ruston, Executive Director of Operations/Director of Racing & General Manager at Bally's Arapahoe requested an extension from the previous contract date ending 4/20/2025 to 9/11/2025.

Motion made by Commissioner Hammes to approve the extension of dates. A second was made by Commissioner Ruebel.

Motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEM:

3. Greyhound welfare account update - House Bill 23-1041 - Sanela Simic, Division Auditor

Sanela Simic, Division Auditor mentioned that the Division has received a deposit in the amount of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) for this calendar year and the next steps will be to schedule a meeting with the adoptions to discuss further welfare distribution and process.

4. Updates concerning the 2025 Racing Season - Interim Director, Kelly Haralson and Shannon Ruston

Michael Phibbs, Senior Director of the Specialized Business Group (SBG) mentioned that he still has not heard from Bally's Arapahoe Park if they will be HISA this year which is requiring electricity. Senior Director Phibbs mentioned that the meet application is due by April 18, 2025 and that the Division intends to follow all rules and regulations this year.

Shannon Ruston, Executive Director of Operations/Director of Racing & General Manager at Bally's Arapahoe commented that his corporate officers have instructed him that Bally's Arapahoe Park needs to be HISA this year due to the loss of handle last year. Mr. Ruston has explained that everything is in motion to get the sixteen (16) barns which will be eight hundred (800) stalls up and running by July.

Michael Phibbs, Senior Director of the Specialized Business Group (SBG) commented that Bally's Arapahoe Park needs to commit to HISA or not. That way the Division can make staffing plans to participate in HISA or not.

Commissioner Horowitz commented that the Division is acting like the track's parent, and he feels like the Division is already saying there will be no meet this year if the track is not a HISA track.

Michael Phibbs, Senior Director of the Specialized Business Group (SBG) commented that it's the Divisions job to make sure the track is regulated and follows rules, regulations and statutes in Colorado. The Division has timelines, and contract rules they need to follow as well.

Commissioner Hammes commented that he doesn't understand why Bally's Arapahoe Park didn't submit the required application to the county in January rather than March.

Kim Oliver, Colorado Horsemen Association (CHA) President, commented that she is worried about the number of horses they will get this year and that the handle will be much less due to the HISA/HIWU contract and that the purse fund needs to be addressed.

Shannon Ruston, Executive Director of Operations/Director of Racing & General Manager at Bally's Arapahoe, commented that when he was explaining why Bally's lost so much money last season to Bally's president and CEO, George Papanier and CFO that Mr. Papanier made a comment to Mr. Ruston stating so you are telling me that we are going to be HISA compliant in 2025.

OTHER:

5. Interim Director's Report

Kelly Haralson, Interim Division Director wanted to provide the date requirements for this racing season:

- Bally Arapahoe Park Opening day - 8/16/2025
- CHA contract 30 days open to start training - 7/17/2025
- 60 days prior to present meet application to Commission- 5/18/2025
- Application due to the Division for review - 4/18/2025

She also mentioned that the interviews are scheduled for the Director position and that the Division has advertised for the state Steward position and state Veterinary.

Interim Director Haralson asked the status of Bally's Arapahoe Park and the fixed odds wagering.

Shannon Ruston, Executive Director of Operations/Director of Racing & General Manager at Bally's Arapahoe responded that they anticipate withdrawing from fixed odds wagering.

6. Public Comment

Mark McGregor commented that by being HISA compliant, it allows the track to send out their signal to other tracks with a 3% revenue.

Fran Frank emailed a comment to the Division regarding registering thoroughbreds with HISA if the horse has not raced within the last year.

Adjournment

The April 9, 2025 meeting of the Colorado Racing Commission was adjourned at 10:43 a.m.

Minutes Approved by the Commission



Janina Rivera, Business Analyst Division of Racing

I certify these minutes were approved by the Commission on the 10th day of June
2025.