

NEW MEXICO HORSE RACING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING

Date: June 23, 2026

Place: NMRC Boardroom; 4900 Alameda Blvd., NE, Albuquerque, NM and on Microsoft Teams

Members Present: Chairman Billy Smith, Commissioner John Buffington, and Commissioner Bob Pitre.

NMRC Staff Participating: Executive Director Ismael Trejo, In-House Counsel Richard Bustamante, and Senior Paralegal David Dominguez.

<i>AGENDA ITEM</i>	<i>DISCUSSIONS/CONCLUSIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS</i>	<i>ACTION TAKEN</i>
Public Session 1: I. Call to Order and Roll Call	Meeting called to order at 9:04 a.m. by Chairman Smith. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.	No Action Taken.
II. Pledge of Allegiance		Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
III. Approval of Agenda	Chairman Smith asked if there were any changes to the agenda today. There were no changes.	Motion to approve the agenda made by Commissioner Buffington. Commissioner Pitre seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

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IV. Approval of Minutes A. Commission's May 21, 2026, Regular Meeting	Chairman Smith asked if the minutes for the May 21, 2026, Special Meeting were reviewed, and if there were any changes. There were no changes.	Motion to approve the May 21, 2026, minutes made by Commissioner Buffington. Commissioner Pitre seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
V. Commissioners' Reports	Chairman Smith stated he went to Santa Fe yesterday and indicated that everything is moving forward regarding getting Ruidoso Downs back together, but that it would take a little more time than he thought. Chairman Smith added that it is a lot more complicated than he thought.	No Action Taken.
VI. Agency Director Reports A. NMRC Executive Director Report	Director Trejo thanked the Downs at Albuquerque's Don Cook for pushing forth the effort to distribute the purses equally to the horsemen/owners, for some races which had to be cancelled due to some unfortunate incidents that occurred. Director Trejo added the Commission is still awaiting the results of the Ruidoso Futurity and Derby post-race drug test results to ensure the races were run in the fairest of ways possible. Chairman Smith asked Director Trejo how much longer it will take for the results. Director Trejo answered it could take a few more weeks to maybe a month.	No Action Taken.

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	Chairman Smith asked Don Cook if the lighting at the racetrack has been figured out or if the track would instead run the meet during the day rather than have evening racing. Don Cook stated it is complicated and they will triple check before the 10 th of July to make sure it is 100%. Chairman Smith added the crowds have been good.	
VII. NM Horse Breeder's Association Reports	Executive Director of the New Mexico Horse Breeders Association was unavailable today to present her reports.	No Action Taken.
VIII. Executive Session: A. Keeton v. NMRC (Pending Litigation) B. Alexander v. NMRC (Pending Litigation) C. Sterling v. NMRC et al (Pending Litigation) D. Zia Park LLC v. NMRC and Western Gaming, LLC (Pending Litigation) E. San Juan Board of County Commissioners v. NMRC (Pending Litigation) F. Mescalero Apache Tribe v. NMRC (Pending Litigation) G. Downs at Albuquerque (Licensing) H. New Mexico State Fair (Licensing) I. Ruidoso Downs (Licensing)		Motion to enter into Executive Session made by Commissioner Buffington. Commissioner Pitre seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

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J. Sunland Park (Licensing) K. SunRay Park (Licensing) L. Zia Park (Licensing)		
Public Session 2: IX. <u>Unfinished/New Business and/or Action Items:</u> A. Request for Approval of Second Half of 2026 Regular Commission Meetings (July – November) B. Approvals for Ruidoso Downs 1. Request for Ratification for Approval to Raise all Overnight Purses 10% (Trials & Stakes Races Excluded) Beginning June 12, 2026 2. Request for Ratification for Approval to Increase the Purse	Director Trejo requested approval of the following meeting dates for the second half of 2026 for Regular Commission Meetings: • Thursday, July 16, 2026, at 9:00am in Albuquerque. • Thursday, August 20, 2026, at 9:00am in Albuquerque. • Thursday, September 24, 2026, at 9:00am in Albuquerque. • Thursday, October 15, 2026, at 9:00am in Albuquerque. • Thursday, November 19, 2026, at 9:00am in Albuquerque. Don Cook, on behalf of Ruidoso Downs, requested the ratification of approvals of items B. 1 through 3.	Motion to approve the remainder of meeting dates for 2026 was made by Commissioner Buffington. Commissioner Pitre seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Motion to approve items B. 1 through 3 was made by Commissioner Buffington. Commissioner Pitre seconded the motion.

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from the NMHBA 10 Stakes Races from \$50,000 to \$75,000. 3. Request for Ratification for Approval to add \$500.00 to all Overnight New Mexico Bred Races (Trials and Stakes Excluded) 4. Request for Ratification for Approval to Run 11 Races on Saturday, June 06, 2026 5. Request for Ratification for Approval of a Variance for Friday, June 05, 2026	Mr. Cook requested the ratification of approval to run 11 races on Saturday, June 06, 2026, due to the consolation race in the stakes schedule which was not in the condition book. Mr. Cook requested the ratification of approval of a variance for Friday, June 05, 2026, due to the track's ambulance taking out about 120 feet of the outside rail, forcing cancellation. Commissioner Buffington asked if the purses were distributed equally. Mr. Cook confirmed that was the case.	Motion passed unanimously. Motion to approve was made by Commissioner Buffington. Commissioner Pitre seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Motion to approve was made by Commissioner Buffington. Commissioner Pitre seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

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6. Request for Ratification for Approval to Run 11 Races on Sunday, June 21, 2026	Mr. Cook requested the ratification of approval to run 11 races on Sunday, June 21, 2026, as a new race was added to make up for some of the cancelled races.	Motion to approve was made by Commissioner Buffington. Commissioner Pitre seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
X. Adjournment	The meeting was adjourned after completion of items on the agenda.	Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Commissioner Buffington. Commissioner Pitre seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.


Chairman Billy Smith


Executive Director Ismael Trejo