

Stephanie B. Nixon, *Chair*
John F. Tanner, Jr., *Vice Chair*
Bette Brand
Gillian Gordon-Moore
Stuart C. Siegel

Waqas Ahmed
Executive Secretary



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Minutes of the Commission Meeting Held March 26, 2025, at 1:00 p.m.

Location: State Corporation Commission, Tyler Building, Courtroom C, 1300 East Main Street, Richmond, Virginia

In Attendance

Commission Members Stephanie B. Nixon, Chair
John F. Tanner Jr., Vice Chair
Bette Brand
Gillian Gordon-Moore (attending remotely due to distance)
Stuart C. Siegel

Commission Staff Waqas Ahmed, Executive Secretary
Ada Caruthers, Equine Medical Director
Andy Conway, General Admin Manager
Kimberly Mackey, Director of Operations
Elizabeth B. Myers, Counsel
Israel Saavedra, Compliance Officer

The March 26, 2025, meeting of the Virginia Racing Commission (VRC or Commission) was called to order by Chair Stephanie B. Nixon at 1:00 p.m. A roll call confirmed the presence of Vice Chair John F. Tanner, Jr., Commissioner Bette Brand, Commissioner Gillian Gordon-Moore (participating remotely due to distance), and Commissioner Stuart C. Siegel. With a quorum established, Chair Nixon began the meeting.

Chair Nixon made a few opening comments, congratulating Dr. Yolanda Lopez for serving as the Commission's veterinarian for the past few years. Dr. Lopez will be joining the Kentucky Racing Commission and Gaming Corporation. Also, Jack Houghton, presiding steward for our meets at Colonial Downs will be retiring. Mr. Houghton has been a voice of reason at the track for many years and thanked him for his service to VRC.

The floor was opened for public comment with a three-minute limit per speaker and a request to keep comments tailored to the agenda items. There were no public comments.

Chair Nixon moved to approve the minutes from the previous meeting held on December 3, 2024, as corrected. Vice Chair Tanner moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner Siegel. Director Mackey confirmed that staff had no further changes and recommended approval. All commissioners present voted yes. The motion carried.

Chair Nixon moved to approve the minutes from the previous meeting held on February 14, 2024.

Commissioner Siegel moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner Brand. Director Mackey confirmed that staff had no further changes and recommended approval. All commissioners present voted yes. The motion carried.

Representatives from the Virginia Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association (VHBPA), Aidan Turnage-Barney and Colonial Downs Group, Frank Hopf, gave an update regarding the 2025 Virginia Derby.

Representatives from the Great Meadow Foundation, Virginia Gold Cup, and presiding judge Ted Zimmerman (attending remotely) presented the Virginia Gold Cup Association's Limited License to conduct race meetings in 2025. Dr. Alfred Griffin, co-chair and director of racing for the Virginia Gold Cup Association highlighted that on May 3, 2025, the 100th running of the Virginia Gold Cup will take place with a post time of 1:00 p.m. Vice Chair Tanner moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner Brand. All commissioners present voted yes. The motion carried.

Representatives from Colonial Downs and the Virginia HBPA presented a technical amendment for Colonial Downs to amend its Limited License to conduct race meeting in 2025. On Thursdays at 10:45 a.m., during the live race meet, National Steeple Chase (NSA) races will be run on a separate card, providing on-track pari-mutuel wagering only. Commissioner Brand moved to approve, seconded by Vice Chair Tanner. All commissioners present voted yes. The motion carried.

Representatives from the Virginia Equine Alliance (VEA) presented a proposal for the promotion, marketing, sustenance and growth of the Virginia Horse Industry. The request is for a \$655,000 grant. Authorization of the grant is contingent upon revenues exceeding the appropriated amounts. The propose of this appropriation is to develop programs or award grants for the promotion, marketing, sustenance, and growth of the Virginia horse industry, including horse breeding. The campaign aims to build upon the foundation laid by the 2024 campaign to raise awareness of Virginia's equine industry. Commissioner Siegel moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner Brand. All commissioners present voted yes. The motion carried.

During the second comment period, Mr. Shores gave a moment of reflection as he reminisced on the 2025 Virginia Derby Day.

With no further business, Chair Nixon entertained a motion to adjourn. The motion was unanimously approved, and the meeting concluded at 1:56 p.m.

