

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

Waqas Ahmed  
*Executive Secretary*



**Virginia Racing Commission**  
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### **Minutes of the Commission Meeting Held September 15, 2025, at 1:00 p.m.**

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

**In Attendance**

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

**Commission Staff & Presenters** Waqas Ahmed, Executive Secretary  
Brian Wolford, Deputy Executive Secretary  
Kimberly Mackey, Director of Operations  
Israel Saavedra, Director of Licensing and Investigations  
Eris Jones, Director of Audit and Compliance  
Katreena Lewis, Director of Policy and Licensing  
Jack Sours, Colonial Downs Group  
Tom Eshelman, Virginia Gold Cup Association  
Darrell Wood, Shenandoah Downs  
Aidan Turnage-Barney, Virginia Equine Alliance

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The regular meeting of the Virginia Racing Commission was called to order at 1:00 p.m. on September 15, 2025, by Chair Stephanie B. Nixon. A roll call confirmed all commissioners were present, establishing a quorum. A motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting of June 4, 2025, was made by Commissioner Gordon-Moore, seconded by Commissioner Siegel, and passed unanimously. Chair Nixon announced an adjustment to the agenda, moving the Agency Update to the beginning of New Business and taking public comments on specific items as they arose.

Executive Secretary Waqas Ahmed provided an agency update, formally introducing the new executive team: Deputy Executive Secretary Brian Wolford, Director of Audit and Compliance Eris Jones, and Director of Policy and Licensing Katreena Lewis. He stated the agency's focus is on developing a new strategic plan and budget amendment to make Virginia a national model for racing authorities.

Under New Business, a motion to readopt the agency's remote attendance and electronic meeting policy for another year was moved by Commissioner Siegel, seconded by Commissioner Brand, and approved unanimously.

The Commission then addressed the request from Colonial Downs Group to surrender the licenses for its Dumfries and Breakers satellite facilities. Staff presented their findings from closure walkthroughs, confirming the procedures were orderly. A motion by Commissioner Siegel, seconded by Commissioner Gordon-Moore, to approve the closures and accept the license surrenders with staff's recommended conditions passed unanimously.

The Commission next considered the primary item of business: a request from Colonial Downs Group for licenses to operate a new satellite facility, "Roseshire," in Henrico County. After a staff report on the pre-opening walkthrough, Mr. Jack Sours presented the project, detailing the new upscale brand, 175 HHR terminals, community contributions, and extensive security plans. The matter was then opened to public comment, during which numerous speakers addressed the Commission. Several residents, along with Henrico County Board of Supervisors Chairman Dan Schmidt and State Senator Schuyler VanValkenburg, voiced strong opposition. Their primary arguments centered on the applicant's circumvention of the public hearing process, the legal insufficiency of relying on a 33-year-old pari-mutuel referendum that predated HHR technology, and concerns about security and community impact. Henrico County's legal counsel further argued that the 1992 referendum was not "valid and unexpired" for HHR terminals under the Commission's own regulations. Other speakers expressed support for the new facility, citing the lawfulness of the application and the positive, safe environment at existing Rosie's locations.

Given the extensive testimony, the Commission moved to enter a closed session for consultation with legal counsel. Upon returning, the Commission certified that only lawfully exempted matters were discussed. Staff restated their recommendation to approve the license, noting that based on legal advice, the application was valid under current law. A motion to approve the Roseshire license with five specific conditions, including a final certificate of occupancy, a cap of 175 HHR machines, and annual community benefit reporting, was made. The motion was approved unanimously by a roll call vote.

Finally, the Commission received informational updates from operators. The Virginia Gold Cup Association reported a successful hurdle trial on its improved course ahead of the International Gold Cup. Colonial Downs announced its summer meet exceeded \$100 million in total handle over 44 race days. Shenandoah Downs reported a good opening weekend for its fall harness meet, highlighting the positive reception of its new multi-purpose barn.

The next meeting was announced for December 15, 2025. With no further business or public comment, the meeting was adjourned.

