Minnesota Racing Commission Meeting

Monday, June 15, 2026

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CANTERBURY PARK LOCATION
1100 CANTERBURY ROAD, STE. 100
SHAKOPEE, MN 55379
TELEPHONE: 952-496-7950
FAX: 952-496-7954
MN.GOV/MRC

MINNESOTA RACING COMMISSION

RUNNING ACES LOCATION
15201 ZURICH STREET, STE. 212
COLUMBUS, MN 55025-7908
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Full Commission Meeting
Monday, June 15, 2026 – 4:00 p.m.
Nutrena Conference Center
1801 Dudley Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55108

AGENDA

1) Call to Order

2) Roll Call

3) Adoption of Agenda

4) Approval of Minutes - May 18, 2026, Commission Meeting

Action Items

5) Authorizing Resolution to Proceed with Rulemaking and Publish Request for Comments: Proposed Amendments to Rules Governing Horse Racing, Minnesota Rules, Parts 7869-7897

Informational Items

6) Status Reports
   a. Canterbury Park Entertainment
   b. Running Aces Casino, Hotel, and Racetrack

7) Chief Veterinarian Report

8) Presiding Judge Report

9) Chief Steward Report

10) Executive Director's Report
   a. Contract Approvals
   b. HISA/HIWU Update
   c. Personnel Update
   d. ADW Report
   e. Licensing Report
   f. Other

11) MQHRA/MHRI/MNHBPA/Thoroughbred Breeders' Fund Advisory Committee Reports

12) Future Meetings - Monday, July 20, 2026 – Full Commission 4:00 pm Nutrena Conference Center

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13) Adjourn

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Item 4 –
Minutes from Commission Meeting
May 18, 2026

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Full Commission Meeting

Monday, May 18, 2026 – 4:00 p.m.
Nutrena Conference Center
1801 Dudley Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55108

MINUTES

Call to Order:

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order – Vice Chair Koob called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Roll Call:

Agenda Item 2 – Roll Call - Present – Vice Chair Koob, Benjamin, Colombo, Dehn, Goodman, Place. Commissioner Vekich joined online. A quorum was acknowledged.
Other participants – Kyle Gustafson (Executive Director, Minnesota Racing Commission), Penny Nelson, (Deputy Director, Minnesota Racing Commission), Joseph Newton (General Council, Minnesota Racing Commission), John Groen (General Manager, Canterbury Park Entertainment), Aaron Bedessem (Director of Marketing, Running Aces Casino, Hotel and Racetrack) Cathy Dessert (Vice President, Minnesota Harness Racing, Inc.), Emily Palmen (Administrative Director, Minnesota Harness Racing, Inc.), Claudia Goebel (Vice President, Minnesota Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association), Richard Bremer (Chair, Minnesota Thoroughbred Breeders' Fund Advisory Committee).

Adoption of Agenda:

Agenda Item 3 – Approval of Agenda – Vice Chair Koob amended the agenda to add Richard Bremer, Chair, of the Minnesota Thoroughbred Breeders' Fund Advisory Committee to Item 11. Commissioner Dehn motioned to approve the amendment and the agenda; Second by Commissioner Place; Motion passed.

Approval of Minutes:

Agenda Item 4 – Approval of Minutes – Commissioner Benjamin amended Item #10 to be motioned by Commissioner Goodman. Commissioner Colombo motioned to approve the amendment and April 16, 2026, minutes; Second by Commissioner Vekich. Motion passed.

Discussion Item

Agenda Item 5 –- Finance Committee Report

Finance Committee Chair Dehn shared that the Finance Committee reviewed MRC Account Information and ADW Trends.

Action Items

Agenda Item 6 – Breeders' Fund Equine Research Grant Authorization

Dr. Hovda presented. Commissioner Benjamin motioned to Approve the Breeders' Fund Equine Research Grant Authorization; Second by Commissioner Colombo. Commissioner Place recused herself. Motion Passed.

Agenda Item 7 – Canterbury 2026 Live Racing Request

a. Approval of Seasonal Racing Official – Paddock Farrier

Commissioner Dehn motioned the Approval of Seasonal Racing Official – Paddock Farrier; Second by Commissioner Goodman. Motion passed.

Informational Items

Agenda Item 8 – Status Reports

A. Canterbury Park Entertainment, LLC -

Mr. Groen – Live Racing starts Saturday, 3 days over the course of the weekend. Canterbury is re-engaged in a live racing fan-based marketing in a way that they haven't since Covid. Bringing back $2.00 night and a Jockey center piece focus on Sundays. He Handed out the Canterbury Park pocket schedule. New events include adding Beagle racing to the dog race line up. New team members are getting along very well. The racetrack is getting very positive reviews about the condition of the track and turf. Canterbury met with the original designers of the racetrack who came with the data going back to

1985 on the dirt samples, working on testing to make sure where track needs to be. The challenge as talked about is the horse side. The on-track horses count at 490, last year at this time was 632. There is a few large trainers and stables that aren't on site yet, but we do expect to be down a fair percentage in terms of horses opening weekend. We have 21 races, 7 races Saturday, Sunday and Monday, 133 horses entered. Last year on opening weekend, we filled 22 races with 186 horses, which was 8.4 horses per race, this year 6.3. We have 12 Jockeys on site, which is down a little bit from previous years. Canterbury did reinstate the Shipping Loan Program where they provide up to $1,000 a horse interest free to any trainer. Legislative session ended and unfortunately the initiatives that Canterbury put forward did not go through.

B. Running Aces Casino, Hotel and Racetrack

Mr. Bedessem – The Kentucky Derby was awesome, couldn't fit anymore in the building and grateful for the nice weather which allowed to spread everybody out, great kickoff. First race night turned out to be nice, we are appreciative of judges and Steve who were able to push the last race through, so we didn't have any issues with the lightning, it was a very successful first night. Overall, for staffing we are sitting pretty good. We're very excited this year about new things, adding some new nonprofits, having vendors out here on race nights, and doing some different things to enhance racing. We've got qualifying races tomorrow.

Agenda Item 9 – Chief Veterinarian Report

Dr. Hovda – Veterinarian's are at full staff. Catch up on where I've been, March was at the Racing Medication Testing Consortium, also March was the ICRAV International Conference in Melbourne. Coming up HISA Equine Exercise- Associated Sudden Death 2-day workshop, will report back in July. Meet today to talk about our mandatory HISA Drills which we will be doing on Wednesday at 10:30, then the following week we will review and go over what we learned, and what can we do better.

Agenda Item 10 – Executive Director's Report

- **A.** Contract Approvals – Running Aces new contracts for card shufflers and computer servers.
- **B.** HISA/HIWU Update – Nothing to add.
- **C.** Personnel Update – Fully staffed for seasonal positions.
- **D.** ADW Report - in the packet
- **E.** Licensing Report - in the packet
- **F.** Other – Approved a Canterbury Park Variance Request to allow jockey agents to represent three jockeys regardless of journeyman or apprentice status. The variance shall remain in place until the end of the 2026 race meet. We may consider whether or not to pursue a rule change in the future. Update on Aftercare Grant, May 15th deadline for organizations to notify with intent to apply, we did receive notice from 4 different organizations, will start performing site visits. The due date for applications is June 1st.

Agenda Item 11 – MQHRA/MTA/MHRI/MNHBPA Reports

MHRI – Ms. Dessert – gave an example of how the research the commission is funding is working. Doctor Sian has been doing some atrial fibrillation research on horses at running bases, and one of those horses was my horse. She diagnosed him and he had surgery to correct that this winter and he's now racing tomorrow at Northfield, we are grateful for that. Successful Horse Expo, there were three standardbreds there representing plus a standardbred adoption that took place. We are looking forward to kicking off the season.

Ms. Palmen – First two Fair Races of the season at Cannon Falls, our next will be July 4th and July 11th.

MNHBPA – Ms. Goebel – Last Friday night at Canterbury Park was the Abijah Run for the Roses Fundraiser, great turnout. HBPA office is actively welcoming horsepersons back this week. Looking forward to a successful meet starting Saturday.

MN Breeders Fund Advisory Committee – Mr. Bremer - Thoroughbred Yearling sale will be at Canterbury Park on September 6th. Current numbers in Minnesota are 71 registered Mares for this year. Will probably end up with between 60 and 65 registered foals. We peaked in 2014 with 275 foals, that is approximately a 77% drop in the number of Minnesota foals. This decline in full crop is happening nationwide. Using the same dates, North America, which includes Canada in

Draft

2014, there were 23,000 foals and last year there were 17,300, a 25% drop nationwide. These numbers won't hit Canterbury for two or three years, so the situation will get worse. I have an idea for not a total solution, but something that might help. I will run it by the Breeders Fund Committee and the HBPA and hope to be here next month with more details. I would like all of you to learn more about the Thoroughbred industry in Minnesota, beyond just Canterbury. So, I'm extending an open invitation to come to my farm down in Lake City and to see an actual Minnesota Thoroughbred farm.

Agenda Item 12 – Future Meetings
Commission meeting June 15, 2026 - Nutrena Conference Center @ 4:00 pm.

Agenda Item 13 – Adjournment – Vice Chair Koob adjourned the meeting at 5:09 p.m.

THESE MEETING MINUTES HAVE BEEN APPROVED ON THIS XXXX DAY OF XXXX, 2026 BY A QUORUM OF THE MINNESOTA RACING COMMISSION.

Draft

Item 5 –

Action Items

A. Authorizing Resolution to Proceed with Rulemaking and Publish Request for Comments: Proposed Amendments to Rules Governing Horse Racing, Minnesota Rules, Parts 7869-7897

Informational Items

Item 6 -

Status Reports

A. Canterbury Park
Entertainment, LLC

B. Running Aces
Casino, Hotel and Racetrack

Item 7 –
Chief Veterinarian Report

Veterinarian's Report
Canterbury Park

Medication Violations - 0

DVM Violations - 0

Samples Submitted

- Quarter Horse Post-race testing - 0
- Thoroughbred post-race testing - 56
  - Blood and Urine - 48
  - Blood only - 7
- TCO2 -15
- Out of Competition Testing - 14
- Special (needles, syringes, bottles, etc.) - 0
- Workout - 11

Current Veterinarian's List (Real time from 9/2024 through June 6, 2026)

- **Total - 94**
  - Bled - 3
  - Ill - 17
  - Injured - 16
  - Non-Ill - 2
  - Unsound - 34
  - Medication Problem - 0
  - Workout Needed - 8
  - Intraarticular Corticosteroid Injection (HISA) - 14

MRC 180-day Restricted List Horses Examined - 72

HISA 150-day Layoff Reports - 22

Horses Working for DVM

- **Total - 11**
  - Off greater than one year - 3
  - 4-Year-old and greater first-time starters - 1
  - On Vet's List (MN and other states) - 7
  - Cornell collar - 0
  - Steward's List - 0
  - Other - 0

Ambulance Use

- **Total - 0**
  - Backside
  - Detention Barn
  - Racetrack
    - Main
    - Turf
  - Paddock
  - Training Track

Deceased Horses

- **Total - 1**

Veterinarian's Report
Canterbury Park

- Racing
  - Dirt Track
  - Turf Track
  - Starting Gate
  - Paddock
- Training
- Illness/Other - 15-year-old pony horse

Race Days Canceled Due to Heat – 0
Race Days/Races Canceled Due to other – 1 race (lightning) 6/4/2026

Claims (Successful - 8 ($82,500)

Claims Voided Due to Veterinary Reasons - 0

Veterinarian's Report
Running Aces Harness Park
May 2026

Medication Violations Reported by Industrial Laboratories

- Racing – 0
  - NSAIDS – 0
  - CORTICOSTEROIDS – 0
  - OTHER – 0
  - Out for split sample or appeal – 0
- Workout – 0
- Other – 0

DVM Violations – 0

Post-race Testing

- Blood Only – 24
- Blood and Urine – 100

Workout Samples – 0
Research Samples – 0
OCT – 1
TCO2 tests – 50

Current Veterinarian's List – 10

- Bled - 1
- Ill – 7
- Injured – 0
- Non-Ill – 1
- Unsound – 1

Horses Working for DVM

- Off > year – 0
- On Vet's List – 1
- Cornell collar – 0

Ambulance Use

- Backside – 0
- Racetrack – 0

Deceased Horses

- Racing – 0
- Illness/Other – 0

Other – 0

Item 8 –
Presiding Judge Report

MINNESOTA RACING COMMISSION

Running Aces
CASINO • HOTEL • RACETRACK

Judges Monthly Report - May 2026

Running Aces welcomed back the trotters and pacers for the 55-day 2026 harness racing meet on Sunday, May 17th. Opened in 2008, Running Aces is the summer base for horsemen from Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, and the Dakota's. Live racing is conducted every Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday through September 19th.

Most of the Minnesota Racing Commission staff have remained the same as last season. John Yinger returns as the Presiding Judge. Michael Hall and Pete Hanley are back as associate judges. Director of Racing Steve Carpenito oversees the Running Aces racing office staff which has remained unchanged for the last few seasons.

It's always a challenge to fill the entry box at the beginning of the meeting, and this year is no exception. Currently we are averaging 65 entries per racing card. These numbers should improve as more horses get qualified each week. Plus, the 2-year-olds will start to appear in the next couple of weeks.

The training and driving colony remain constant year after year with a few exceptions. The father – son team of Terry and Casey Leonard, one of the top stables in Illinois, will be a welcome addition to Running Aces this season.

Changes in the whipping rule has resulted in several infractions as the drivers adjust their styles to the new "wrist action only" guidelines. The judges have issued nine (9) rulings thus far this meet.

Inappropriate use of the whip (6)	$250 Fine
Failed Breath-analyzer (1)	$250 Fine
Incomplete Health Paperwork (1)	$1000 Fine
Excessive Leaning Back (1)	$100 Fine

Below are the Average Stats for Running Aces,

Month	Races	Entries	Starters	Horse Per Race	Purse	On Track	Total Handle
May	8.9	65.0	62	6.2	$73,814	$11,568	$213,568

John Yinger
Presiding Judge

Michael Hall
Associate Judge

Pete Hanley
Associate Judge

Item 9 –
Chief Steward Report

CANTERBURY PARK RACING STATS
SUMMARY
2026

	SAT 5/23	SUN 5/24	MON 5/25	TOTAL WEEK	*TOTAL MEET*
ACCIDENTS	0	0	0	0	*0*
MN BRED RACES	1	1	0	2	*2*
CLAIMS	2	2	1	5	*5*
DECLARATIONS	4	4	3	11	*11*
DISQUALIFICATIONS	0	0	0	0	*0*
INQUIRIES	0	0	0	0	*0*
RULINGS				0	*0*
STARTERS	*45*	*40*	*37*	*122*	*122*

Respectfully submitted,

BOARD OF STEWARDS

MARTIN HAMILTON

REUBEN RIVERA

SAL IORIO

CANTERBURY PARK RACING STATS
SUMMARY
2026

	THU	SAT 5/30	SUN 5/31	TOTAL WEEK	*TOTAL MEET*
ACCIDENTS		0	0	0	*0*
MN BRED RACES		1	1	2	*4*
CLAIMS		0	2	2	*7*
DECLARATIONS		3	5	8	*19*
DISQUALIFICATIONS		0	0	0	*0*
INQUIRIES		0	0	0	*0*
RULINGS				0	*0*
STARTERS		*38*	*34*	*72*	*194*

Respectfully submitted,

BOARD OF STEWARDS

MARTIN HAMILTON

REUBEN RIVERA

SAL IORIO

Item 10 – Executive Directors Report

A. Contract Approvals
B. HISA/HIWU Update
C. Personnel Update
D. ADW Report
E. Licensing Report
F. Other

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Minnesota Racing Commission

May 2026 Licensing Report

Class C Applications Processed at Canterbury Park: 636

Class C Applications Processed at Running Aces: 264

Class C Large Racing/Gaming Vendors: 0

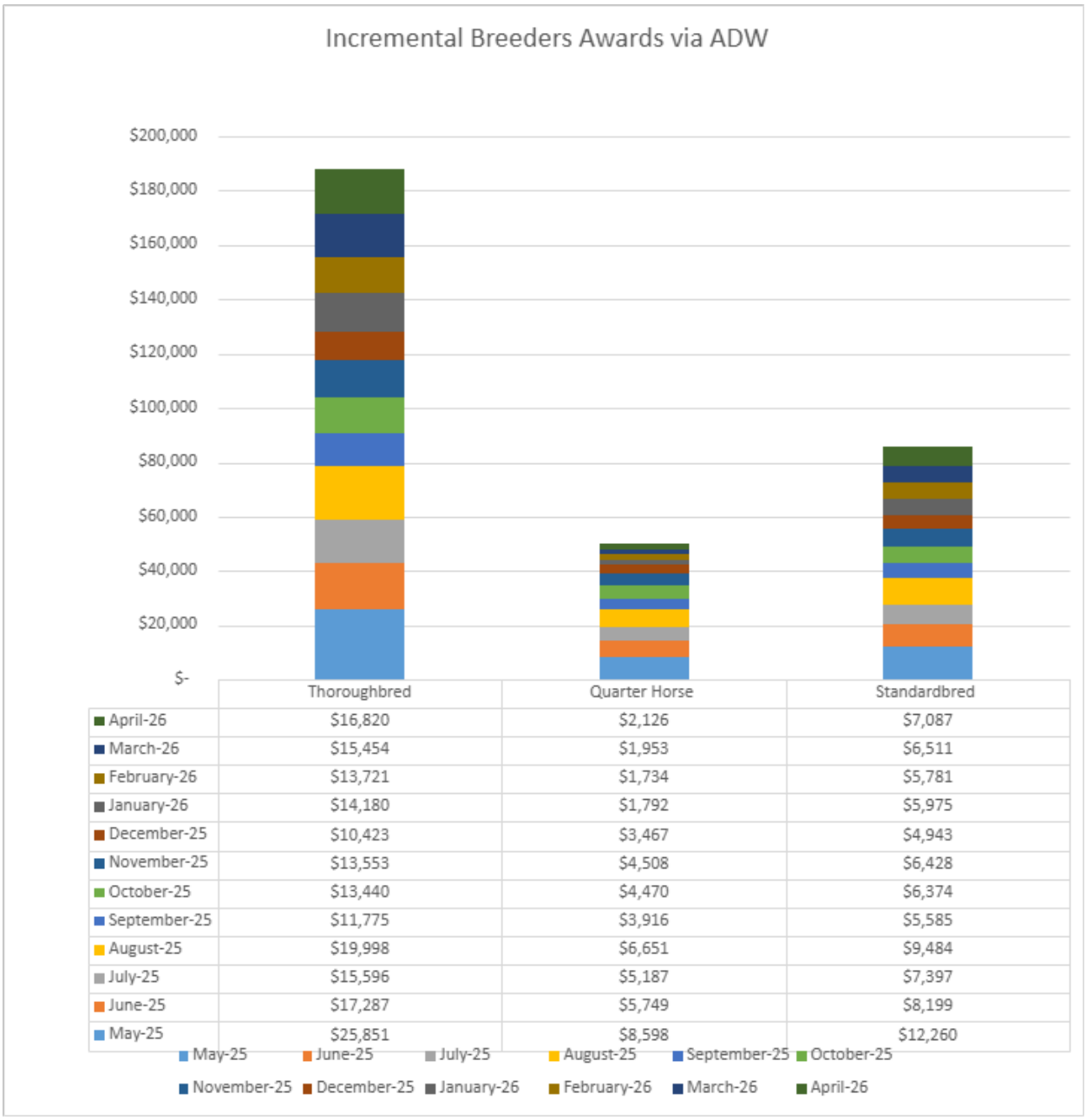
Class C Small Racing/Gaming Vendors: 2

Class C Non-racing/Gaming Vendors: 15

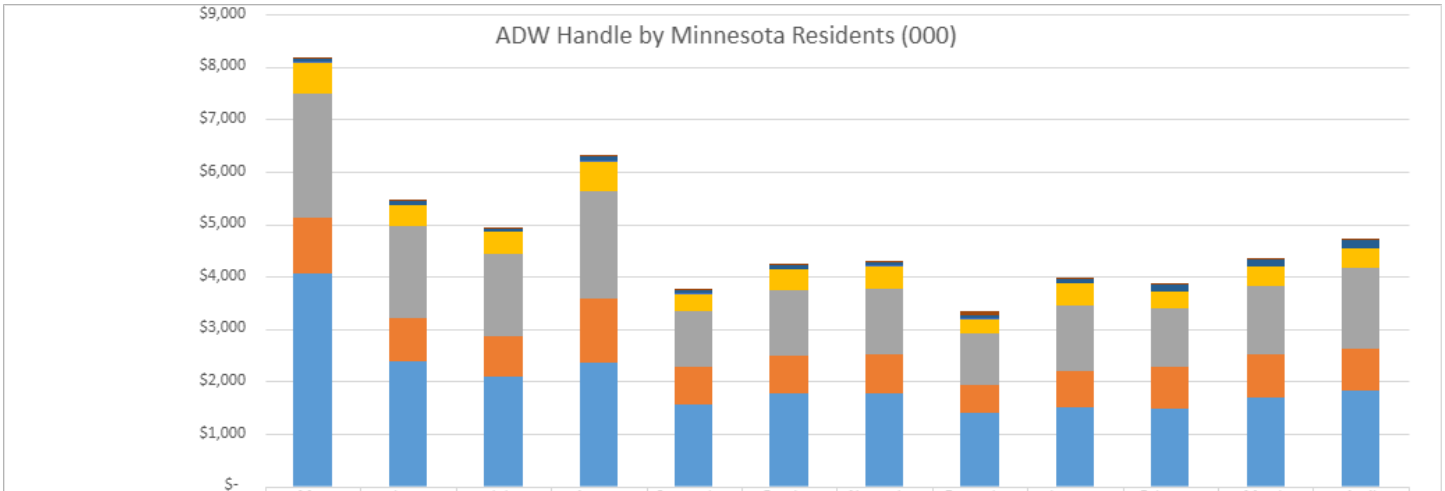
Class C Licensing Fees for May 2026: **$39,305**

Fingerprint Fees for May 2026: **$6,075**
(Fingerprint fees are forwarded to Public Safety for processing reports)

Fines Collected during 2026 Racing Season: **$1,850**



	Thoroughbred	Quarter Horse	Standardbred
April-26	$16,820	$2,126	$7,087
March-26	$15,454	$1,953	$6,511
February-26	$13,721	$1,734	$5,781
January-26	$14,180	$1,792	$5,975
December-25	$10,423	$3,467	$4,943
November-25	$13,553	$4,508	$6,428
October-25	$13,440	$4,470	$6,374
September-25	$11,775	$3,916	$5,585
August-25	$19,998	$6,651	$9,484
July-25	$15,596	$5,187	$7,397
June-25	$17,287	$5,749	$8,199
May-25	$25,851	$8,598	$12,260



	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April
Premier Turf Club	$-	$-	$-	$-	$-	$-	$-	$-	$-	$-	$-	$-
Horse Tourneys	$18	$16	$22	$20	$15	$25	$31	$86	$31	$19	$21	$17
Lien Games	$65	$74	$51	$98	$44	$81	$61	$63	$76	$119	$125	$168
WatchandWager.com LLC	$-	$-	$-	$-	$-	$-	$-	$-	$-	$-	$-	$-
eBet Technologies	$11	$13	$8	$12	$24	$17	$13	$8	$17	$0.3	$0.6	$1.2
NYRA Bets (NewCo Ventures)	$587	$386	$436	$558	$331	$388	$426	$267	$422	$318	$367	$369
TVG (ODS Tech)	$2,384	$1,771	$1,562	$2,059	$1,056	$1,246	$1,250	$1,002	$1,246	$1,110	$1,320	$1,536
Xpressbet, LLC	$1,061	$825	$778	$1,224	$717	$715	$756	$537	$694	$798	$821	$787
Twinspires.com	$4,053	$2,370	$2,084	$2,355	$1,555	$1,781	$1,763	$1,387	$1,506	$1,489	$1,685	$1,836

Item 12-

A. Future Meeting – Monday, July 20, 2026, 4:00pm Nutrena Conference Center