

**MINUTES OF THE 6th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF
YARRA VALLEY RACING INC.
HELD ON
WEDNESDAY, 25TH NOVEMBER 2009
THE GRANDSTAND, FIRST FLOOR
YARRA GLEN RACECOURSE
VICTORIA**

PRESENT (Committee Members):

Mr. Barry Coulthard (Chairman)
Mr Reg Hodgson – Treasurer
Mr. Brett Shambrook – CEO

In Attendance:

Mr. R. G. Hodgson	Mr T. McKinnon
Ms. G. Coulthard	Mr. G. Latta
Mr. H. Leaf	Mr. D Long
Ms. J. Madden	Mr. A Smith
Ms E. Irving	Mr. P. Goodie
Ms. B. Leaf	Mr. K. Wacey
Ms. W. De La Rue	Mr. G Wood
Ms B Taylor	Ms. S Wood
Mr E. Bartosh	Mr. A. Schache
Mr. R Wilson	Mr. R. Forrest
Mr G Fletcher	Mr. J. Simmonds

Minutes:

Mr. A. Kelly (Transcripts Plus) – www.transcriptsplus.com.au

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The **Chairman (B. Coulthard)** declared the meeting open at 7.03 pm and welcomed all attendees. In opening, he thanked attendees for taking the time to join the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

Hugh Gilmour

3. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 26th NOVEMBER 2008

#1 MOTION

That the minutes of the previous AGM, held on 26th November 2008 be received and accepted as a true and correct record.

Moved: Mr G Latta

Seconded: Ms. B. Taylor

CARRIED

3.1 Business Arising

Nil.

4. TO RECEIVE THE BOARD REPORTS UPON THE TRANSACTIONS OF THE CLUB FOR THE 2008-2009 FINANCIAL YEAR

4.1 Chairman's Report

The Chairman said:

"First of all, it is my privilege and pleasure to present my third report to you as Chairman of Yarra Valley Racing Incorporated.

We've had a fantastic year, with excellent attendances at all our thoroughbred and harness meetings. We've managed to have a healthy profit. We've recorded record package sales, including over \$500,000 at our Friday Christmas party meeting, and we have completed a number of infrastructure projects. You've only got to walk around the course, and you can see those yourself.

Our Melbourne Cup Day harness meeting, continues to attract a huge crowd. Last year, we had something like 9,000 people. Our attendance this year, was up 34%, and we had nearly 12,000 people, which is an excellent result for the harness group, and for the club as a whole.

The club was nominated for two awards at the Country Racing Victoria awards day, and for the third year in a row, we received the Victorian Country Club of the Year award. We also won the Victorian Country Racing event of the year, for our Christmas party meeting.

I'd just like to say that in the re-vitalisation of the club, it's tended to be that the thoroughbred side of things have had all the glory, we've won the awards, but, that changed a couple of weeks' ago at the Harness Racing Awards. I'd like to acknowledge a number of awards that were given that night.

First of all, Brett, our great Chief Executive, received the award as Secretary of the Year. Graham Wood, received a Distinguished Service medal for his input and work over many, many years in the harness group. Congratulations, Graham, and very well done; well deserved. [Acclamation]

We also won an award, or the harness group won an award, for the best event, which was the Melbourne Cup meeting. We also won an award for the best presented track.

I think that it's great to see the ledger being balanced, and the harness guys receiving some acknowledgement for their great work over many, many years. I have a lot of pleasure as Chairman of this club, but one of my greatest pleasure, was seeing the smile on the faces of all the harness guys at that awards night, so congratulations and well done - and well deserved.

I also would like to congratulate and thank all our staff, suppliers, sponsors, members and supporters for helping us achieve such a wonderful result.

The Board continues to identify and implement projects, and a number of these were completed during the season. These include:

- The purchase of approximately \$120,000 worth of high-use portable equipment such as tables, chairs, umbrellas and fencing. This equipment paid for itself in the first year of operation, and will provide positive cash benefits to the club going forward. I think that particular move is one of the best things that we've done, and we're certainly reaping the rewards of doing that.
- We also were able to install a bore to assist the club to maintain training facilities and grounds. The result wasn't perhaps as good as we had hoped. That water is actually being used on the harness track, so it is helping in terms of our water usage. Water is always a problem here, and we are still working on other matters, to try and enhance the track in terms of presentation of the track and its facilities. So, water is definitely an issue, and we will continue to address that matter.
- We also were able to complete re-surfacing of the harness track.

- Also, we were able to upgrade the corporate and marquee area, including the permanent installation of power, and, once again, that's an enormous cost saving to us, in terms that we don't have to hire generators, etc.
- We also purchased a new harness mobile, and that's obviously got the benefits to our harness guys.

Projects

Projects planned for the new future include - in fact some of these have already been completed, but I will go through them:

- We've got new perimeter fencing that's been done. We had a sand track upgrade, which was well needed, and we've now got some pretty happy trainers.
- We've also done some modifications to the Long Bar. That has been completed, and I think you'll see the benefits as you look out there or as you were coming in. That grassed area is going to prove to be a wonderful asset for the club.
- We've also installed new asphalt driveways, and once again, this helps the facility of the club.
- We've installed a permanent children's playground, and once again, we're trying to enhance what the club provides for our clients, and in this particular case, it's a great benefit to families that come to our facility.
- We had one chicken that came home to roost, and that was the air-conditioning in the members' lounge above the mounting yard. We've replaced that air-conditioning to not considerable, but at some expense, to the club.
- We're also planning in the future to construct new disabled toilets below the main grandstand. That should happen in the very near future.
- We've also created a new food, wine and craft market at the racecourse, entirely managed by the club. We've had three markets to date, and they have been successful, and are cashflow positive.
- We've also, in conjunction with the council, installed new drainage along the north boundary. I think that's just about completed. That will provide us with more water in the dam, and also help to provide us with less risk of the marquee area being flood during heavy rain.

Racecourse revitalisation program

I'd like to just comment briefly on the Racecourse Revitalisation Program. Negotiations are continuing with that. That's been an ongoing long-term thing. I must say, that we're not too sure where that's going. It's been a little bit frustrating with the time that it has taken, but it is moving forward to some sort of completion, hopefully in the near future. As I said, I'm not too sure where we're going, but we'll wait with interest to see what happens there.

Sponsors

The club continues to receive excellent support from sponsors, and I would like to thank, in particular, Minter Ellison - sponsors of the Cox Plate Day, NMIT - sponsors of the Yarra Valley Cup, and SEWU and Drive - sponsors of the Pacing Cup.

We continue to receive funding for our projects from Racing Victoria Limited, Country Racing Victoria, Harness Racing Victoria, Victorian Government and the Shire of Yarra Ranges, and I would like to thank them for their support and assistance.

Victorian bushfires

One item I would like to mention is that many of our staff, members, trainers and supporters were affected by the tragic bushfires of 7th February 2009. On behalf of the club, I wish them all the best in their recovery and re-building process.

During and after the bushfires, the Yarra Valley Racing Centre, was used as a refuge by about 500 people, and was used as a staging centre by the emergency services. Our staff worked extremely long hours on a

voluntary basis, providing three meals a day for over 500 people, and looking after the requirements of emergency services.

On behalf of the Board, and the Yarra Valley community, I would like to thank Brett Shambrook and all his staff for an outstanding effort under very difficult circumstances. I also thank them for their continued hard work for the club. I think their efforts during that time, were very, very special. [Acclamation.]

Closing remarks

Thank you also my fellow Board members and subcommittee members for their hard work during the season. I'm blessed, as the Chairman, to have such a great group of people to work with.

Finally, thank you to all members for your continued support, and I hope you enjoy the coming racing season. Thank you."

4.2 Treasurer's Report

The **Treasurer (Mr Hodgson)** said:

"The report has also been circulated. I hope you have all had a chance to read it. I've only presented, therefore, a summary of it.

The revenue, excluding capital grants, was \$3,838,000, nearly 21% up on the previous years. It's a great result.

The major drivers of this revenue growth were:

- Other raceday revenue
- Member subscriptions and admissions
- COPE industry funding
- Raceday food and beverage increases

They were the major drivers to \$660,000, nearly \$661,000 in revenue growth for the year.

Profits from operations for the year were \$313,000. This includes capital grants of \$143,600. These grants were treated as income, and were made up of a contribution of \$108,000 from CRV towards the female jockeys and drivers' room and \$30,000 from the Office of Racing for raceday equipment.

Of particular interest, raceday package income increased 39%, from \$815,000 in 2008 to \$1,132,600 in 2009. This is the first time that Yarra Valley Racing raceday package sales has exceeded \$1m - a great result. Package sales in fact quadrupled over the past four years.

Income from non-raceday functions also increased, up to \$188,000, 16% higher than the other year, and this highlights the effective income generated by the club's facilities, so we're not just relying on racing to get our income.

As in the previous year, management maintained a focus on improving grounds and facilities, and the President has already nominated a number of things that have been done, so I won't repeat them again.

The 2009 season has been another successful milestone in the club's history, both from a financial and performance standpoint. The awards bear witness to this. Our peers think the same. This outcome, reflects the professionalism of the club's management and the team, and we provide our compliments. Thank you." [Acclamation]

#2 MOTION

That the transaction reports of Yarra Valley Racing Incorporated be received.

Moved: Mr R Forrest

Seconded: Mr G Latta

CARRIED

#3 MOTION

That the financial statements for the year ended the 30th of June 2009 and the Auditor's Report be received.

Moved: Ms G. Coulthard

Seconded: Ms E Irving

CARRIED

5. TO ELECT ONE THOROUGHBRED MEMBER TO THE BOARD OF THE CLUB

The **Chairman** explained each year, one member of the Board that is elected by the thoroughbred section of the club retires, and is subject to election if they so desire. He added, in this particular case, Kevin Wacey was the retiring member and was the only candidate for the position.

He therefore declared: Kevin Wacey as being re-elected to the board for a term of three years. [Acclamation]

6. TO ELECT ONE HARNESS RACING MEMBER TO THE BOARD OF THE CLUB

The **Chairman** noted, similarly, one harness racing member retires, and in this particular case it was Toby McKinnon, who was the only candidate for the position. He declared him elected to the board for a term of three years. [Acclamation]

The **Chairman** duly thanked both persons being elected to the board for the next three years, and highlighted the civility that the members had provided the board, adding a strong and firm foundation was able to be provided in terms of the board membership, which was very much appreciated.

7. APPOINT AN AUDITOR FOR 2009-2010 SEASON

The **Chairman** advised the meeting that the provision of the external audit services is contained within the club's service level agreement with Racing Victoria Limited, for the delivery of financial services, and was subject to a three-year regional tender process. He added, the appointment of the club's auditor for 2009 and 2010, would be ratified following consultation with RVL and after having given consideration to the outcome of the tender process.

#4 MOTION

That the appointment of an auditor for the 2009-2010 financial year be subject to the RVL tender process for provision of these services to the Bay and Ranges group of clubs.

Moved: Mr T McKinnon

Seconded: Mr G Woods

CARRIED

8. NOTICE OF MEMBER BUSINESS

Nil.

9. GENERAL BUSINESS

9.1 Question and Answer Session/General Comments

- **Ms W De La Rue** indicated she did write to the CEO with regard to the seating in front of the Members', elaborating that the day she attended on the Cox Plate Day, the seats were very dirty. She asked if that was part of a cleaning issue, or whether members had to accept such a situation as the norm on a raceday. The **CEO** responded that he appreciated the letter sent, and why he called Ms De La Rue to thank her. He noted not everyone takes the time to give feedback in a positive manner in the letter. He said the cleanliness of the chairs in that instance on the day was not acceptable, and he had discussions with his ground staff on the matter and informed them they were on notice to improve in that area. He encouraged all members to provide him with feedback on any concerns.
- **Mr Bartosh** indicated he was the Secretary of the Yarra Glen RSL, and thanked the club for allowing it to use the grounds for two race meetings for its poppy appeal, where \$1,800 was collected in the two days. He also noted three days were carried out at the IPA and \$700 was collected in 2005, so \$2,800 was collected thanks to the generosity of the community and the race attendees. He presented the CEO with a Certificate of Appreciation from the RSL. He added, the funds collected went towards grants for buying scooters, wheelchairs, etc, for veterans in need, and general veteran welfare. The **Chairman** responded it was the club's pleasure to offer the opportunity.
- **Ms Betty Taylor** asked if the club was going to make its awards four in a row. The **CEO** noted once it is won for a full three years, a club is barred for five years. The **Chairman** said the award was shared with Moe, so technically speaking it was two and-a-half. The **CEO** added, the next goal is to win the Harness Club of the Year.
- The **CEO** made a general comment in relation to the year's activities, including: the challenge for the club over the next few years - which he said is no different to any racing club or any sporting club - was to try and grow revenue sources going forward. He said one cannot rely on racing events all the time. He said the club had reinvested any profits it made back into facilities, whether it be air-conditioning, equipment, asphaltting, the lawns, general beautification of the course. He noted the reality of where the club came from five or six years' ago where a lot of facilities were run-down, adding the air-conditioning on the AGM meeting floor was fully funded by the club at a cost of about \$185,000, and the old air-conditioning in the members' lounge had shown the need to upgrade it, which might need to be added to in the future. He also noted plans to build the disabled toilets downstairs which might be added to in the form of an owners/trainers' lounge as well with memorabilia and historic information. He also noted upgrades that had occurred in other areas, but stressed the need to be mindful of the need for careful planning over the next few years where there might be an emergency, such as one washed out Melbourne Cup Day, which might take three to four years to recover from. As such, success needed, he said, to be put in perspective. The **Chairman** added, that it was time to put some funds in the bank to allow for unplanned events.
- **Mr Leaf** noted the amalgamation of the two codes turned everything around. The **CEO** responded that he had only been in the position four years, but that when there is a board meeting, harness or thoroughbred subcommittee, that everyone sees it as one club, and all events are relied on to be successful. He said 26 racing events were held this year, with non-raceday events such as weddings, the market, caravan clubs, a rave party in a few weeks' show the club is trying different things to improve its revenue and spread the risk over a number of events during the year. The **Chairman**, on behalf of the membership and the board, again conveyed its thanks to the CEO and his staff for their work during the year.

10. CLOSURE

The **Chairman** thanked attendees for their input, and invited them to a light supper and refreshments. He declared the meeting concluded at 7.40 pm.

Minutes approved:

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Signature of Chair

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Date