

The Racing Committee was called to order at 1:23 p.m. by Fairs Committee Chairperson Gabe Wand.

- Roll was taken by Michele Kopiec. Present were Chris Antonacci, Steve Bateson, Sam Beegle, Dave Bianconi, Jason Bluhm, Marilyn Breuer-Bertera, Barry Brown, Roy Burns, Michael Carter, Stacy Chiodo, Cara Collins, Kim Crawford, Sal DiMario, Cathy Dessert, Joe Faraldo, Mark Ford, Joe Frasure Jr., Rich Gillock, Sam Hedington, Mark Loewe, Don Marean, Rich Mattei, Steve McCoy, Chris McErlean, Joe Morris, Dr. John Mossbarger, Steve Oldford, Steve O'Toole, Joe Pennacchio, Dr. Andy Roberts, Jason Roth, Ray Schnittker, Tina Schrock, Jason Settlemoir, Dein Spriggs, Mike Sweeney, Ashley Tetrick, Mike Torcello, Gabe Wand, Cathy Webb, Shawn Wiles, Russell Williams, and Dr. Scott Woogen.

- **2026 Proposed Rule and Bylaw Changes**

The following proposed rules were discussed and voted upon during the session:

- Proposal #1 – accepted
- Proposal #2 – tabled
- Proposal #3 –accepted as amended to approve 6.15 and table 7.02
- Proposal #4 – tabled
- Proposal #5 – rejected
- Proposal #6 –accepted
- Proposal #9 – accepted as amended

- **Regulatory Committee Update**

Michele Kopiec gave updates on the USTA Officials Program and online exam testing:

- The USTA hosted the Racing Officials Accreditation Program at Eldorado Scioto Downs in June 2025, training 28 students from the U.S. and Canada. Fourteen passed on their first attempt. The 2026 program is planned for Lexington, KY (Sept. 27–Oct. 4). The USTA also conducted two Ohio-based continuing education programs, reaching 50 officials, with additional sessions planned for 2026.
- The USTA recently implemented SpeedExam, a secure, online testing platform, to enhance accessibility, efficiency, and exam security for driver/trainer testing. The transition addresses challenges associated with in-person proctoring, geographic barriers for applicants, and test anxiety, while maintaining rigorous exam integrity standards. SpeedExam provides advanced security features including AI-powered proctoring, live and recorded video and audio monitoring, screen recording, behavior flagging, and identity verification through government-issued ID. Exam questions and answers are randomized to ensure fairness and prevent duplication. The platform offers expanded functionality that may support future online testing for additional licensing (officials). Test exams have been taken and have a pass rate of 76%.

- **Pari-Mutuel Committee Update**

- Mark Loewe provided an update on Graded Stakes, currently available in USTA pedigrees for races in the US and Canada, and soon to be shown in past performance lines for eTrack race pages and Pathway reports. Process includes purses, track size, and field size to determine grade. Will be expanding “restricted” grade to including more stake races including, sire stakes and next generation. Highlights the great promotional tool that grades are. Eight additional new graded stakes and 36 restricted have been added for 2026. 347 races in total.
- Michael Carter spoke on Strategic Wagering. Over \$20 million in guaranteed pools with over \$30 million wagered at 18 member tracks. Reminded tracks to submit invoices within 30 days or no later than January 8, 2027.

- **Driver/Trainer Committee Update**

- Steve Oldford gave an amateur driving club update.
- Oldford also discussed the idea to provide directors with a list of applicants who have successfully completed the written exam and subsequently become licensed, as a way to provide follow-up and assistance, if needed.
- Mike and Gail McNeely of VanGundy Insurance Agency, gave an in-depth overview of the disability income program with accidental death and dismemberment as well as Equine liability and mortality written by VanGundy, underwritten by Chubb insurance. A 9% increase in rates for 2026 goes into effect May 1, 2026. New enrollments by April 1, 2026 will lock in current rate and save 9%. As of February 1, 2026, there are 3,500 USTA members eligible for coverage with 107/4% opting in to the voluntary program. Mike and Gail encourage directors to promote the program to their horsemen. Informational pamphlets are available for distribution and a PDF version is available on the USTA website.

- **Fairs Committee Update**

- Gabe Wand recommends all fairs to submit their matching funds grant applications.

As there were no other matters to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:31 p.m.