

Agency Name:
Washington Horse Racing Commission
6326 Martin Way, Suite 209
Olympia, WA 98516-5578
Robert M. Leichner
(360) 459-6462
<http://www.whrc.wa.gov/>

Agency Responsibilities:

- Licensing and regulation of parimutuel horse racing.
- Encourage the development of the equine industry.
- Chapter 67.16 RCW
- Chapter 67.17 RCW
- Title 260 WAC

Organization Chart and Budget:
Agency size – 28.5 FTEs

Robert M. Leichner, Executive Secretary – responsible for all agency operations. Reports to the Commission.

Robert J. Lopez, Administrative Services Manager – reports to the Executive Secretary.
Activities managed: Investigations, licensing, information technology, human resources, public records.

Funding:

- Horse Racing Commission, fund 169, for all activities
- Appropriation: \$4,647,400 for the 03-05 biennium
- Source: parimutuel tax, licensing fees, daily live race fee, advance deposit wagering source market fee.

Washington Horse Racing Commission:

- five-member commission
- four legislative ex-officio members
- elects one of its members as chair
- meets once a month

Issues:

The most pressing issue confronting the Horse Racing Commission is the continued decline of revenue for Commission operations. Ninety-five percent (95%) of the Commission's operating funds are provided from the parimutuel tax on the amount wagered at for-profit racetracks, which has steadily declined in recent years. This has caused a decline in the horse racing industry that adversely affects the for-profit racetrack (Emerald Downs), the non-profit racetracks (Dayton, Kennewick, Waitsburg and Walla Walla), horse owners and breeders, trainers, grooms, racetrack personnel and the state's agricultural industry.

The decline in revenue may cause one or more of the non-profit racetracks to cease operations. The passage of ESSB 6481 (Ch. 274, WA Laws 2004) may provide needed revenue to the horse racing industry. That legislation allows telephone or Internet betting on horse races within or outside the state, by bettors who have established accounts with Commission-approved advanced deposit wagering service providers. In addition, the 2004 Legislature authorized the Commission to increase its license fees to maintain necessary funding for its operations.

The key stakeholder groups are:

Emerald Downs racetrack in Auburn, the only for-profit racetrack in Washington.

The Washington Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association (WHBPA), Inland HBPA and Inland Empire Horsemen's Association are organizations that focus on improving the economic health of the horse racing industry for horse owners, trainers and their employees and represent the interests of the industry before state and federal governments, industry organizations, and trade associations

The Washington Thoroughbred Breeders Association (WTBA), is a nonprofit organization composed of persons interested in the breeding and improvement of thoroughbred horses. The WTBA strives to foster and preserve the traditions of thoroughbred horses in Washington.

Non-profit (Class C) racing associations facilitate horse racing on weekends in conjunction with local community events. These racing associations receive funding for purses (prizes) from the Commission and do not pay a parimutuel tax.

- Sun Downs racetrack (Kennewick) – 10 days of horse racing beginning the first weekend in April.
- Walla Walla Frontier Days – 2 days of horse racing in early May.
- Waitsburg Days of Real Sport – 2 days of horse racing in mid-May.
- Dayton Days – 3 days of horse racing Memorial Day weekend.
- Walla Walla Frontier Days – 3 days of horse racing Labor Day weekend.

Board Member Listing by Board Position

HORSE RACING COMMISSION (GS070)

Agency 185 - Washington Horse Racing Commission	Senate Conf. Y	Positions: Maximum 007
Authority Governor	Public Disc. Y	Minimum 000
Authoriztn. RCW 67.16.012	Term Length 072	Actual 005
Rem. Auth. ??	Meetings/Yr. 07	

Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
001	Vacca, Ralph 12725 SE 312th Street, Apt. B-101 Auburn, WA 98092	A	C	06/05/2003	01/17/2009
		Terms Served	02		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public		

Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
002	Christenson, Gary 3004 Lybarger St. SE Olympia, WA 98501	A	C	06/05/2003	01/17/2007
		Terms Served	01		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public Race Horse Breeder		

Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
002	Christenson, Gary 3004 Lybarger St. SE Olympia, WA 98501	A	C	01/25/2002	01/17/2007
		Terms Served	01		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public Race Horse Breeder		

Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
003	Roland, Judith D. 1015 Pike Street NE Auburn, WA 98002	A	C	04/04/2000	01/07/2006
		Terms Served	01		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public		

Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
004	Kruger, Hartly 4429 East North Glenngrae Lane Spokane, WA 99223	A	C	06/05/2003	01/17/2008
		Terms Served	02		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public		

Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
005	Hallowell, Alfred (Dr.) 37006 160th SE Auburn, WA 98092	A	C	01/27/2004	01/17/2005
		Terms Served	01		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public		