

Good Morning, Honorable Chairman Angel Bolques Jr., Chairperson of the Committee on Culture, Youth, and Sports, Parks, and Recreation of the 35th Legislature, Honorable Senators, Staff, and the Listening and Viewing Audience:

I am Shaine Gaspard, Chief Operating Officer for Southland Gaming of the Virgin Islands, I am proud to share the progress of the development of the Clinton E. Phipps racetrack.

The last time I had the opportunity to come before this committee to provide an update, we had just completed the construction of the grandstands, an achievement accomplished in just four short months after breaking ground. At that time, I invited each of you to visit the Clinton E. Phipps Racetrack and experience the new grandstands firsthand. Many of you have taken that tour.

I am proud to report that now thousands of Virgin Islanders have been afforded that opportunity, some united by their passion for racing competition and others just to enjoy a day at the races with family and friends.

I am happy to share this progress with you today.

## 1. Approved Permits

### a. Major CZM Permit #CZT-3-18

- i. Extension & Transfer Approved February 9, 2023
- ii. Modification Approved February 23, 2023

### b. Building, MEP & Site Permits

- i. Grandstand, New Cistern, Retaining Wall, Ramps & Elevator Building Permit; Approved
- ii. Grandstand Accessory Building, Mechanical, Electrical & Plumbing Permits; Approved
- iii. Site Electrical & Data WAPA Plan; Approved

iv. Jockey Locker Room Building, Mechanical, Electrical & Plumbing Permits; Approved

v. Vet, Testing & Saddling Barn Building Mechanical, Electrical & Plumbing Permits; All Approved

vi. Isolation Barn Building, Mechanical, Electrical Permits; Approved

vii. Equipment Storage Building & Electrical Permit; Approved

viii. Pony Barn Building & Electrical Permit; Approved

ix. Secondary Barn Building & Electrical Permit; Submitted, Pending Approval

x. Main Barn Building & Electrical Permit; Prepared for October/November 2024 Submittal

c. Conditional Certificate of Use:

i. Grandstand & Grandstand Accessory Buildings; Approved 5/3/24

ii. Jockey Locker Room; Approved 5/3/24

iii. Vet, Testing & Saddling Barn; Approved 5/3/24

d. Final Permits & Certificate of Occupancy:

i. Grandstand; Final App Submitted 9/3/2024, Final Inspection on 9/10/24, Final CO = Soon

ii. Grandstand Accessory Buildings; Final App Submitted 9/3/2024, Final Inspection on 9/10/24, Final CO = Soon

iii. Jockey Locker Room; Final App Submitted 9/3/2024, Final Inspection on 9/10/24, Final CO = Soon

iv. Vet, Testing & Saddling Barn; Final App Submitted 9/3/2024, Final Inspection on 9/10/24, Final CO = Soon

v. Isolation, Equipment, Pony & Secondary Barn = Expected in October 2024

vi. Main Barn = Expected in Nov/Dec 2024

## 2. Construction Progress: Total Project now 80% Completed

a. Phase 1 – Project Commencement, Completed October 31, 2023

i. Phase 1 Civil for the Primary Construction Area & Laydown Yard = 100%

ii. Grandstand Structure, New Cistern, Retaining Walls, Slab & Main Sidewalk = 100% Complete

b. Phase 2 – The Push to Carnival, Completed May 3, 2024

i. Phase 2 Civil for the Initial Parking Lot, Perimeter & Interior Fencing, Utilities & Stormwater = 100% Complete

ii. Grandstand Accessory Buildings = 100% Complete

iii. Jockey Locker Room = 100% Complete

iv. Vet, Testing & Saddling Barn = 100% Complete

v. Ticket Booth = 100% Complete

c. Phase 3

i. Phase 3 Civil for continued Parking Lot, Utilities, Stormwater, Fencing & Road to Isolation/Equipment = 80%

ii. Grandstand, Grandstand Accessory Buildings, Jockey Locker Room and Vet, Testing & Saddling Barn = 100% Complete

iii. Isolation Barn = 95%

iv. Equipment Storage Building = 95%

v. Pony Barn = 90%

vi. Secondary Barn = 50%

vii. Main Barn = Planned to begin in Mid-October and be completed end November 2024

viii. Landscaping = 25%

### 3. Horsemen Support by SGVI

a. SGVI successfully implemented a subsidy program wherein SGVI provided funds to help support racehorses exercising at the Clinton E. Phipps Racetrack leading up to May 3<sup>rd</sup> Race Day

b. These funds were used to buy the horses' feed, vitamins, and hay.

c. Vouchers were disbursed to the VIHRC, which confirmed and approved the list of registered horses and their respective owners.

Since our last meeting, horse racing fans have witnessed incredible moments on the track. They have seen horses like Pure Speight from St. Croix claim victory in the Lieutenant Governor's Cup, Ghostinyou from the British Virgin Islands triumph in the Governor's Cup, and top contenders from St. Thomas, such as Bingo Star, race to the finish line in thrilling fashion. They have also cheered on legendary Virgin Islands jockeys like Kevin Kreiger as they race to victory. A day at the races is a time when the entire island comes alive, as many witnessed.

Advances have been made to the ticket purchasing process, which has been modernized with the introduction of online sales and digital ticketing. Multiple points of entry to the facility have been established. Customers can now select from general admission, premium folding stadium seating, parking, and VIP packages, all conveniently delivered to their mobile devices via QR codes for seamless access.

I want to thank Commissioner White and the Department of Sports, Parks, and Rec for putting in countless days and hard work to get to the finish line on race days. I also want to thank the owners, trainers, and jockeys from the Greater Virgin Islands who showcased their talents on May 3 and June 30.

As the parent of a severely disabled child, one of the most meaningful moments during the races was seeing the disability seating being used as it should, providing access and inclusion for all. Seeing those individuals enjoying race day with their families and sharing in the excitement was truly uplifting.

The facility has 8 ADA parking spaces, ADA ramps on either side of the grandstands, and 20 ADA wheelchair-accessible seating spaces with great views in the grandstand, ensuring that families never have to choose between attending the races or staying home with their loved ones because of accessibility issues. It's about ensuring everyone in our community can experience the excitement of race day together, regardless of their ability.

Every race day gathers families, friends, and neighbors who share in the excitement of horse racing, from the youth who eagerly cheer for their favorite horse to the seniors who pass down stories of races past.

Southland Gaming is proud to be part of that excitement and to do our part to return the tradition of horse racing at the Clinton E. Phipps track.

Thank you.