

Dear Fellow Members,

As members of the FTBOA, we are reaching out to all Association members, to share this message of URGENCY. A message about, and raising questions pertaining to trust, transparency, intent, competence and commitment of those in an executive capacity and/or on the Board of Directors of the FTBOA.

For many years, FTBOA members have relied upon and trusted the Association, its Executive Director, and elected Board of Directors and officers, to support and advance the interests of those who breed, own and/or race thoroughbreds in the state of Florida. We, as members, trusted that our voices were heard, and our participation was both welcome and respected. That reality may fast become a fond memory though, unless immediate and decisive action is taken by membership to right what seems to be egregious wrongs by the Board.

Following are a number of concerns, that you may not be aware of. Please read them, as we believe that well-informed members that care about their thoroughbreds, and the direction and future of the Association, are the backbone of the FTBOA.

1. For starters ... as a result of what may best be described as a stealth-like surreptitious rewriting of by-laws, the FTBOA Board of Directors has essentially stripped the membership of rights and summarily transferred those rights to the Board.
2. The FTBOA Board of Directors is now all but self-appointed. That means that members, and that includes all of us, are (for all intents and purposes) no longer involved in the process of selecting individual Association members to run for a spot on the Board. We believe that is unacceptable.
3. Again, as a result of changes to the by-laws, without membership approval, the Board of Directors has significantly increased the power of the Board, while simultaneously reducing that of membership/members. We do not believe that the by-laws of the FTBOA were ever intended to create an omnipotent Board of Directors. We believe that is unacceptable.
4. One of the new bylaw changes allows for "write in candidates". However no biography or list of members interested in running appears anywhere. Perhaps this was the Boards attempt to placate the membership regarding the election process. This bylaw change essentially removes all hope of any change in the Board since individual write-ins would be scattered among the membership making it more difficult for a new candidate to receive a majority vote. You therefore have lost the right to petition to nominate a candidate for the Board of Directors ballot.
5. Many members made good faith efforts to approach the board, and offer concepts related to creating various committees, the intent being for members to participate. We believe it was a wonderful and potentially very productive idea. The good news? After months and months of delay after delay, the idea did come to fruition.

The Bad News ... not even one of the numerous FTBOA members that participated in offering committee concepts, or thoughts, or ideas, or

perspectives, or opinions related to the committees concepts, was even contacted, much less offered a position on any committee. What we do see on the committees are board members, spouses, and FTBOA employees. We believe that is unacceptable, insulting, and blatant to the point of raising questions pertaining to conflicts (s), and possibly good faith.

6. And the list goes on

As you might imagine, many FTBOA members have expressed varying degrees of disappointment, dismay and disgust with what appears to be a calculated effort by some on the board to take over the FTBOA, and exclude opportunities for members in general to participate in the process. The actions of some on the board speak louder than words, and we hope that you may now better understand what is happening, and why we are so very concerned.

We do not want or need a surreptitious omnipotent FTBOA. We want and need a transparent FTBOA that we can proudly support. An Association that earns and maintains the trust and support of its members through honesty, integrity, and a work ethic that strives for and embraces, the goal being to attain excellence. An FTBOA whose goal is to enhance the chances for Florida thoroughbred owners and breeders, and their stock, to be successful.

We recognize how URGENT the situation is, and hope you may now better understand why we are reaching out to as many members as possible to join us in our effort.

More than fifty members in good standing have signed the required petition and the appropriate filing of documents has been done to assure that a Special Meeting will be held. At the Special Meeting, membership will vote to approve the newly proposed by-laws which we strongly support.

With your help, and hopefully your vote, membership will once again have a voice, and the FTBOA will be accountable for its actions.

Enclosed is a condensed version of the proposed bylaw amendments that have been submitted, a proxy form for voting and a complete copy of the amended bylaws. If you are unable to attend the Special Meeting, but want your voice to be heard, please provide your proxy (attached) to cast your vote. This may be the last chance that the membership will ever have to regain its voice.

The FTBOA Board is counting on member indifference to win the day. We as members, though, intend to not only prevail, but also make it very clear that members/membership genuinely cares, is strong; and will no longer blindly trust those who are not worthy.

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