



Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: March 29, 2016 – 3:00 p.m.

Place: Boston Convention and Exhibition Center
415 Summer Street, Room 104 A/B
Boston, Massachusetts

Present: Chairman Stephen P. Crosby
Commissioner Gayle Cameron
Commissioner Lloyd Macdonald
Commissioner Bruce Stebbins
Commissioner Enrique Zuniga

**Time entries are linked to
corresponding section in
Commission meeting video**

Call to Order

See transcript page 2

[3:02 p.m.](#) Chairman Crosby called to order the 185th Commission meeting. He noted that the approval of the minutes will be put off until Commissioner Macdonald arrives.

Research and Responsible Gaming

See transcript pages 2-32

[3:03 p.m.](#) Director Mark Vander Linden stated that March is National Problem Gambling Awareness month. He provided a summary of the Public Health Trust Fund (“PHTF”) and stated that the purpose of the fund is to assist social services and public health programs dedicated to addressing problems associated with compulsive gambling. He stated that an ISA was developed with the Department of Public Health to create a strategic plan. He stated the strategic plan was developed over 18 months and included a review of best practices, stakeholder interviews, and consideration of SEIGMA (Social and Economic Impacts of Gambling in Massachusetts) research data.

3:11 p.m. Commissioner Macdonald arrived.

[3:13 p.m.](#) Victor Ortiz, Director of Problem Gambling Services with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, provided an historical overview of the field of problem gambling which included appearance of the term compulsive gambling in the DSM-3 in 1980, to a landmark study analyzing gambling from a public health

perspective in 2002. He thanked the Commission for their partnership and stated the strategic plan will also help inform his annual work plan.

- [3:16 p.m.](#) Director Vander Linden noted the following members of the PHTF Executive Committee: Chairman Stephen Crosby from the Massachusetts Gaming Commission, Associate Commissioner Lindsey Tucker from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Executive Director Michael Sweeney from the Massachusetts State Lottery, Executive Director Rebekah Gewirtz from the Massachusetts Public Health Association, and Undersecretary Jennifer Queally from the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security.
- [3:17 p.m.](#) Emily Bhargava, with the Education Development Center, stated the purpose of the strategic plan is to articulate strategies and activities that will best utilize the funds from the PHTF. She provided an overview of the strategic plan which included the plan structure (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administrations' Strategic Prevention Framework), assessment, continuum of care, priority areas (prevention, services, recovery and evaluation) and phasing of activities (infrastructure, capacity building and expansion of services).
- [3:24 p.m.](#) Mr. Ortiz presented on the strategic plan timeline which included the following: review of the plan by the Secretary of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services until April 6th, redistribution of the plan to the PHTF Executive Committee members to review any changes on April 6th, and final vote to approve the plan at the PHTF Executive Committee meeting on April 11th.
- [3:30 p.m.](#) Commissioner Zuniga noted that the strategic plan went through a number of versions to incorporate new data and input. He stated that he attended some meetings and there has been a lot of thought and good deliberation in this plan.
- [3:34 p.m.](#) Commissioner Stebbins congratulated the team for their work on the plan. He noted that veterans may be a population at risk for problem gambling and asked the team to look at that group. He also noted the need to align the strategic plan with a local plan. Mr. Ortiz stated that veterans are a priority and he noted his recent meeting with the coordinator of veteran's services at the Bureau of Substance Abuse Services. Ms. Bhargava stated that there will be efforts to coordinate screening and referrals for veterans.

Approval of Minutes

See transcript pages 32-34

- [3:39 p.m.](#) *Commissioner Macdonald moved for the approval of the March 15, 2016 Commission Meeting minutes subject to any corrections, typographical errors, or other nonmaterial matters. Motion seconded by Commissioner Cameron. Motion passed unanimously.*

Commissioner Macdonald moved for the approval of the March 17, 2016 Commission Meeting minutes subject to any corrections, typographical errors, or other nonmaterial matters. Motion seconded by Commissioner Cameron. Motion abstained by Commissioner Zuniga as he was not present for the meeting. Motion passed 3 to 0 with 1 abstention.

Racing Division

See transcript pages 34-36

[3:41 p.m.](#) Dr. Alexandra Lightbown, Director of Racing, reported on a request from Steve O'Toole, the Director of Racing for Plainridge Park Casino, for approval of key operating officials and racing officials. She noted that the individuals have been licensed with the Commission in the past and they are currently undergoing a background check. She recommended the Commission approve the individuals on the list with the condition that there is a satisfactory completion of their licensing and background checks by the State Police.

[3:42 p.m.](#) *Commissioner Cameron moved that the Commission accept the recommendation and approve the racing officials for Plainridge Park pending completion of their background check. Motion seconded by Commissioner Zuniga. Motion passed unanimously.*

Administration

See transcript pages 36-50

[3:43 p.m.](#) Executive Director Edward Bedrosian, Jr., provided an update on the licensing management system. He stated that the licensing management system is a software program that will help us accept, process and approve online license applications for employees working at casinos. He stated that they are in the middle of contract negotiations and they hope to have a contract signed by the end of the week. He stated that once a contract is signed he will come back before the Commission, with a few directors, to provide a more substantive update. Commissioner Zuniga stated that he was involved in the proof of concept and he was encouraged by the process he observed.

[3:47 p.m.](#) Executive Director Bedrosian reported that Penn National contacted the Commission about their potential use of social gaming and the press raised the issue about propriety of social gaming. He stated that based upon these two events it seems appropriate that the Commission receive information about social gaming, including regulator jurisdiction and problem gaming. He proposed the following for the Commission's consideration: invite our licensees to present on their views, identify industry experts to present, identify consumer protection issues, and ask Director Vander Linden to look into implications of social gaming on problem gambling. He noted that this matter may be appropriate to pursue in May as the Commission has a robust April schedule.

Commissioners Cameron and Stebbins both agreed to hear from our licensees and industry experts. Commissioner Zuniga stated that it may be easier to start with our licensees. Chairman Crosby stated that everyone would benefit from getting a broad education on what is social gaming - what it means, what are its economic models, and long-term strategies; and then have our licensees come in and talk about their plan for social gaming. Executive Director Bedrosian stated that he will have staff draft a presentation and will talk to the Chair about scheduling. Commissioner Macdonald stated that one aspect of social gaming that falls within our area of concern is its overlay with problem gambling issues. He noted that Penn National objected to the Globe article that suggested social gaming games were set up to deceptively lure people into active gaming. He stated that if people

are being misled we should be concerned as it ties into the problem gambling mandate.

Other Business Not Reasonably Anticipated

See transcript page 50

4:00 p.m. *Having no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Cameron and passed unanimously.*

List of Documents and Other Items Used

1. Massachusetts Gaming Commission, Notice of Meeting and Agenda dated March 29, 2016
2. Massachusetts Gaming Commission, Draft Meeting Minutes dated March 15, 2016
3. Massachusetts Gaming Commission, Draft Meeting Minutes dated March 17, 2016
4. Strategic Plan, Services to Mitigate the Harms Associated with Gambling in Massachusetts, Draft dated March 25, 2016, presented by the Massachusetts Technical Assistance Partnership for Prevention (MassTAPP) of Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC)
5. Massachusetts Gaming Commission, Memorandum dated March 28, 2016 regarding Plainridge Key Operating and Racing Officials
6. Letter from Steve O'Toole, Director of Racing at Plainridge Park Casino, to the Massachusetts Gaming Commission dated March 25, 2016 regarding key operating personnel and racing officials for the 2016 racing season.

/s/ Catherine Blue
Catherine Blue, Assistant Secretary