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## Massachusetts Gaming Commission Meeting Minutes

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**Date/Time:** January 12, 2022, 10:00 a.m.  
**Place:** Massachusetts Gaming Commission  
VIA CONFERENCE CALL NUMBER: 1-646-741-5293  
PARTICIPANT CODE: 112 436 0891

The Commission conducted this public meeting remotely utilizing collaboration technology. Use of this technology was intended to ensure an adequate, alternative means of public access to the Commission's deliberations for any interested member of the public.

### **Commissioners Present:**

Chair Cathy Judd-Stein  
Commissioner Gayle Cameron  
Commissioner Brad Hill  
Commissioner Eileen O'Brien

### 1. [Call to Order](#) (0:07)

Chair Judd-Stein called to order the 367<sup>th</sup> public meeting of the Massachusetts Gaming Commission. Roll call attendance was conducted, and all four commissioners were present for the meeting.

### 2. [Administrative Update](#) (0:45)

Executive Director Karen Wells updated the Commission on the national MLK day of service initiative and Chief Administrative Officer to the Chair/Special Projects Manager Crystal Howard provided details on a virtual day of service for Commission staff.

#### a [On-Site Casino Updates](#) (5:20)

Assistant Director of Investigations & Enforcement Bureau/Gaming Agents Division Chief Bruce Band reported that \$3,740,916.57 was intercepted for the Department of Revenue during 2021 for unpaid child support payments and taxes, which was a record year for collection. Assistant Director Band further reported on various events at Encore, MGM Springfield, and PPC. Additionally, he noted that poker will return to Encore on February 21st.

IEB Director Loretta Lillios provided an update on masking, vaccination, and testing policies at the licensee facilities. She noted that the licensees have added new signage for recommendations regarding masking and continue to report positive cases among employees. She further noted that the City of Springfield currently has a citywide indoor mask mandate that will be reevaluated on March 1<sup>st</sup>; Encore and MGM continue to require unvaccinated employees to get negative PCR Covid tests on a weekly basis at the employee's expense; and PPC continues to require proof of vaccination and masking from unvaccinated employees.

### 3. [Community Affairs Division](#) (15:14)

#### a. Encore Boston Harbor Development Update

Chief of Community Affairs Joe Delaney provided an update on Encore Boston Harbor's proposed development across the street from the facility. He reported that Encore has paused the permitting process for this development so they can reevaluate whether the development as proposed is the best use for the site. Encore has indicated that they will notify the Commission when their review is complete and they have a final proposal. There were follow-up questions and comments from the Commission.

### 4. [Racing Division](#) (20:26)

#### a. Quarterly Local Aid Payments

Financial Analyst Chad Borque presented the quarterly local aid payments for Q4, which is payable to each city and town where racing is conducted. The payments are as follows: Boston \$159,073.69; Plainville 46,894.49; Raynham 22,326.04; Revere 79,535.64; total of 307,829.86.

Commissioner Cameron moved that the Commission approve the amounts and authorize payment of the 2021 4<sup>th</sup> quarter local aid payments outlined in the memorandum in the Commissioners packet and discussed here today to the City of Boston, Town of Plainville, Town of Raynham, and the City of Revere. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hill.

*Roll call vote:*

*Commissioner Cameron: Aye.*

*Commissioner O'Brien: Aye.*

*Commissioner Hill: Aye.*

*Chair Judd-Stein: Aye.*

*The motion passed unanimously.*

### 5. Covid-19 Policy

#### a. [Office Reopening Update](#) (23:56)

Executive Director Karen Wells presented an update on the internal MGC office reopening. Executive Director Wells and Chief Information Officer Katrina Jagroop-Gomes sought feedback from the Commission on what type of experience and technology they would like for

the public meeting setup and live stream equipment. There was discussion among the Commission on this question.

Executive Director Wells raised the issue of travel requests from staff members for various professional events. During the pandemic, the Commission had not been authorizing work-related travel. Executive Director Wells sought feedback from the Commission regarding whether they would like to authorize staff to travel for professional development purposes. There was extensive discussion among the Commission on this topic, weighing the need for staff training and the need for safety. The Commission left it within Executive Director Wells' discretion to authorize work-related travel moving forward.

Executive Director Wells provided an update on the Commission's December vote to temporarily close the Boston office and to give the gaming agents team discretion on on-site staffing decisions. Human Resources Business Partner Natasha Martin provided a briefing on the Commission's policies with respect to Covid positive tests and Covid exposure as well as the latest guidance from the CDC. There was discussion as to whether to align with the CDC guidelines in their entirety or to maintain the existing Commission guidelines, which are slightly more conservative. Executive Director Wells noted that today's decision would be a short-term solution and would be revisited in conjunction with the reopening of the Boston office. There was consensus to continue operating under the Commission's current protocols with an updated quarantine requirement for Covid exposure, with a note that the Commission has used CDC and state guidance throughout the pandemic in its review.

Executive Director Wells raised the issue of the Commission's previous vote to close the Boston office. The working group recommends that staff continue to work remotely unless required and that the Commission revisit the issue at its meeting on February 10<sup>th</sup>. There was discussion among the Commission on this recommendation.

Commissioner O'Brien moved that the Commission approve extending the previously imposed rules concerning the Commission's suspension of hybrid work at the offices through February 10<sup>th</sup> subject to the previously approved parameters. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cameron.

*Roll call vote:*

*Commissioner Cameron: Aye.*

*Commissioner O'Brien: Aye.*

*Commissioner Hill: Aye.*

*Chair Judd-Stein: Aye.*

*The motion passed unanimously.*

b. [Gaming Agent Schedule](#) (1:13:30)

IEB Director Lillios and Assistant Director Band provided an update on the gaming agent schedule. Director Lillios noted that gaming agents have been on-site and the exercise of discretion has been applied to weekend shifts when there are the highest number of staff on-site.

6. [Hiring Authority Policy](#) (1:19:19)

Executive Director Wells requested that this item be moved to the next meeting.

7. [Procurement Process Review](#) (1:19:52)

Executive Director Wells provided an update on the agency's procurement process review, which has included a review of best practices, diversity spend, template language, and a proposed training for senior staff and Commissioners.

8. [Legal Division](#) (1:26:11)

a. Table Game Rules – Draft Amendments to Pai Gow Poker

Associate General Counsel Carrie Torrisi presented draft amendments to the table game rules for Pai Gow Poker, specifically the reorganization of sections related to fortune pai gow poker wagers. There was discussion concerning the changes including what precipitated the amendments, what appears on the table layout, and whether any changes needed to be made on-site at the facilities with respect to this game.

Commissioner Hill moved to approve the amendments to the rules of Pai Gow Poker as reflected in the Commissioners' packet and discussed here today and that the updated version be posted on the commission's website. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cameron.

*Roll call vote:*

*Commissioner Cameron: Aye.*

*Commissioner O'Brien: Aye.*

*Commissioner Hill: Aye.*

*Chair Judd-Stein: Aye.*

*The motion passed unanimously.*

9. [Other Business](#) (1:53:32) - none

Commissioner Cameron moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner O'Brien.

*Roll call vote:*

*Commissioner Cameron: Aye.*

*Commissioner O'Brien: Aye.*

*Commissioner Hill: Aye.*

*Chair Judd-Stein: Aye.*

*The motion passed unanimously.*

The meeting was adjourned.

## **List of Documents and Other Items Used**

1. Notice of Meeting and Agenda dated January 7, 2022
2. [Commissioners' Packet](#) from the January 12, 2022, meeting (posted on massgaming.com)