



Massachusetts Gaming Commission Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: November 19, 2020 – 10:00 a.m.

Place: Massachusetts Gaming Commission
VIA CONFERENCE CALL NUMBER: 1-646-741-5292
MEETING ID: 111 147 0284

Present: Chair Cathy Judd-Stein
Commissioner Gayle Cameron
Commissioner Enrique Zuniga
Commissioner Bruce Stebbins
Commissioner Eileen O'Brien

Given the unprecedented circumstances, Governor Charles Baker issued an order to provide limited relief from certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law to protect the health and safety of the public and individuals interested in attending public meetings during the global Coronavirus pandemic. In keeping with the guidance provided, the Commission conducted this public meeting utilizing remote collaboration technology.

Call to Order

10:00 a.m. Chair Cathy Judd-Stein called to order public meeting #327 of the Massachusetts Gaming Commission (Commission). She thanked the Commission staff for their vigilance and described the current state of affairs concerning COVID-19.

The Chair confirmed a quorum for the meeting with a Roll Call. The following Commissioners were present:

*Commissioner Cameron
Commissioner O'Brien
Commissioner Zuniga
Commissioner Stebbins
Chair Judd-Stein*

Approval of Meeting Minutes (2:07)

Commissioner Stebbins moved to approve the minutes from the Commission meeting of August 27, 2020, subject to correction for typographical errors and other nonmaterial matters. Commissioner Zuniga seconded the motion.

Commissioner Cameron noted that an edit might need to be made regarding the Racehorse Development Fund split.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Cameron: Aye.

Commissioner O'Brien: Aye.

Commissioner Zuniga: Aye.

Commissioner Stebbins: Aye.

Chair Judd-Stein: Aye.

The motion passed unanimously with the potential amendment.

Administrative Update (4:52)

On-Site Casino Updates

IEB Interim Director Loretta Lillios and Assistant IEB Director and Gaming Agents Chief Bruce Band reported on the COVID-19 health and safety measures being employed at the casinos to comply with the recently updated order from the Governor to mitigate the risk of transmission of COVID-19, specifically the 9:30 p.m. closing time. It was reported that licensees have developed communications programs through public service announcements, social media, signage, floor sweeps, and verbal announcements from dealers and other staff. Mr. Band stated that licensees are doing an excellent job at compliance and closing early. He noted that things went much smoother than anticipated.

Community Affairs Division (12:04)

Encore Boston Harbor Quarterly Report

Senior Vice President and General Counsel Jacqui Krum presented Encore's third-quarter report. The Commission viewed a PowerPoint presentation led by Ms. Krum. She described the third quarter gaming and revenue taxes, lottery sales, employment, and operating spend (in the context of diversity requirements, and local spending). She also highlighted a new MBE vendor- Quintana Supply. She also reviewed Encore's compliance regarding minors prevented from gaming. Next, she provided the Commission with a marketing and entertainment update and describing the Hero Program. Ms. Krum also reviewed Encore's special events with the Commission. Notably, Encore has created a new event, "micro weddings," that Ms. Krum described for the Commission.

Ms. Krum clarified that there were 2600 active employees during the third quarter. However, there are another 1000 that are impacted by the pandemic. Ms. Krum also described Encore's plan to bring back employees who are furloughed. She said that Encore keeps communication lines open with these employees but

keeps them aware that they cannot guarantee their positions back at this point. Encore is trying not to furlough employees if possible; however, every department has been impacted. She stated that all employees' performance during this has been outstanding and that they are proud of their employees.

Workforce, Supplier and Diversity Development (27:35)

Plainridge Park Casino (PPC) Operations Goods and Services

Ms. Wells introduced North Groundsell as the new general manager at PPC, replacing Lance George. Ms. Wells described Mr. Groundsell's credentials preceding his onboarding with PPC and welcomed him. Mr. Groundsell made remarks and thanked the Commission for the warm welcome.

Workforce, Supplier, and Diversity Development Director Jill Griffin described the revised Operational Goods and Services procurement plan to the Commission on November 13, 2020 by PPC. Approval of the plan is a requirement by the MGC for PPC's license renewal.

PPC Vice President of Finance Dale Fortney reviewed PPC's Diverse-Spend goals with the Commission. She described relationships they established and maintained with diverse vendors. She then reviewed updates made to the plan with the Commission. Notably, a new WBE vendor called Boston Purify helps clean businesses in response to COVID-19.

Ms. Griffin described an accelerated payment program that is set to launch to benefit small businesses.

Ms. Griffin recommended that the Commission approve the updated Operational Goods and Services procurement Plan.

Commissioner Stebbins moved that the Commission approve the Diversity Plan for the procurement of goods and services at Plainridge Park Casino as discussed at the meeting. Commissioner Cameron seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Cameron: Aye.

Commissioner O'Brien: Aye.

Commissioner Stebbins: Aye.

Commissioner Zuniga: Aye.

Chair Judd-Stein: Aye.

The motion passed unanimously.

Plainridge Park Casino Tourism Plan (42:24)

Workforce, Supplier, and Diversity Development Director Jill Griffin described the updated Regional Tourism Marketing and Hospitality Plan submitted by PPC. Approval of the plan is a requirement by the MGC for PPC’s license renewal.

PPC submitted a draft updated Hospitality Plan on September 20, 2020, and a revised plan on November 13, 2020, following feedback from MGC staff and meetings with Keiko Orall, Director of MA Office of Travel and Tourism, and Martha Sheridan, President, and CEO of the Greater Boston Convention and Visitors Bureau. In the plan, PPC pledges to work collaboratively with various entities within Massachusetts' travel and tourism sector, including the Greater Boston area, Bristol County, Plymouth County, Cape Cod, Metro West, and others. Michelle Collins, Vice President of Marketing, described PPC's efforts concerning travel and tourism, and their focus on keeping business within Massachusetts.

PPC was commended for their leadership during this time, encouraging people to buy and spend local. Commissioner Stebbins gave his endorsement of this plan for PPC's new license period.

Ms. Griffin recommended that the Commission approve the PPC Tourism Plan.

Commissioner Stebbins moved that the Commission approve the Tourism Plan submitted by Plainridge Park Casino, as discussed at the meeting. Commissioner O'Brien seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Cameron: Aye.

Commissioner O'Brien: Aye.

Commissioner Stebbins: Aye.

Commissioner Zuniga: Aye.

Chair Judd-Stein: Aye.

The motion passed unanimously.

Community Affairs Division

Community Mitigation Fund (CMF) Guidelines (53:27)

Community Affairs Division Chief Joseph Delaney and Program Manager Mary Thurlow presented an updated draft of the 2021 CMF guidelines for review and approval by the Commission. He noted that the initial draft had been released for public comment to which the Metropolitan Area Planning Council responded. Many of the MAPC recommendations were incorporated into the draft.

Mr. Delaney described three workshops planned for the grantee communities that have not used their reserves. Also, a session for Workforce grant applicants and one for other grant category applicants will be held in January.

Commissioner Cameron moved that the Commission approve the final version of the 2021 Community Mitigation Fund Guidelines as provided in the Commissioners' Packet, subject to any grammatical or immaterial changes. Commissioner Stebbins seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Cameron: Aye.

Commissioner O'Brien: Aye.

Commissioner Stebbins: Aye.

Commissioner Zuniga: Aye.

Chair Judd-Stein: Aye.

The motion passed unanimously.

MGC Administration

Follow-Up on Equity and Inclusion Working Group (1:00:42)

Ms. Wells and Ms. Griffin presented the five-item action plan that the Equity and Inclusion Working Group developed.

Ms. Griffin described culture initiatives, such as diversity training via LinkedIn Learning and online workplace harassment training. It was noted that Robert Lewis Jr of BASE will be a guest speaker at the scheduled Commission staff town hall on December 4. There was discussion about this presentation.

Ms. Griffin noted that Human Resources will be issuing an internal newsletter containing diversity information and other initiatives as well as a planned series of programs to include a "culture club working group."

Ms. Wells described the regulatory review that will be conducted every three years, stating that there will be items folded into the process that deals with Equity and Inclusion.

Next, Ms. Wells discussed a third action item, an agency-wide initiative, involving an ongoing evaluation as to how the MGC does business. Feedback from the entire agency and the Commissioners was invited. There was discussion about the customer service efforts of the entire agency, and a note that this work needs to be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

There was discussion about making use of Director Griffin's skills to maximize the agency's efforts and focusing on communications and reporting.

Ms. Wells then reviewed the MGC's hiring and retention initiative. She stated that she added Ms. Griffin to the group to gather some additional resources concerning diversity. She has been immersed in the hiring process to increase diversity in the MGC's applicant pool.

Ms. Griffin noted that job descriptions are now going to be written so that a broader range of people will see themselves as eligible and decide to apply.

Ms. Wells then reviewed the fifth item with the Commission, which relates to Procurement Procedures. The Commission will be asking Ms. Griffin to analyze diversity spend. To that end, she recently met with the Commonwealth's supplier diversity office.

The Commission reviewed the document in the Commissioner's Packet entitled, "Massachusetts Gaming Commission Equity and Inclusion Working Group Statement of Purpose."

Commissioner Updates

Annual Report Draft Review (1:37:52)

Commissioner Zuniga discussed the draft MGC annual report for 2020 and advised that it was produced as a collaboration with directors in each department. It was noted that FY 2020 was a very different year in terms of disbursements of casino revenues. Consequently, the Race Horse Development Fund (RHDF) allocations were almost half of what they were in 2019. He stated that MGC's diversity has gone up from 17% to 21%. He then noted that there is a section about significant milestones that he would like to develop further.

Commissioner Cameron commended the team for the extensive work on this report. She then shared her remarks and recommendations for edits on this report for Commissioner Zuniga. He acknowledged her suggestions and addressed her concerns regarding the RHDF item.

Commissioner O'Brien noted that the report should stay specific to 2020 fiscal year activity. There was discussion about the Commission's legislative initiatives, and around rewriting the introductory phrase to the report.

Commissioner O'Brien noted that she would like a reference in item number one on page three to the amount of work conducted in the production of the guidelines. She will provide the language for this to Commissioner Zuniga. Further formatting edits were discussed.

Commissioner Stebbins noted that he would like the PPC renewal to be highlighted in the report. It is an anticipated milestone for 2021 and a great team effort involving many folks in a very public process. He stated that he can provide Commissioner Zuniga with language for this as well.

The Commissioners will each submit their suggested edits to Commissioner Zuniga. There was agreement to review an updated version of the report at its December 3rd Commission meeting.

Commissioner Updates (2:25:09)

Commissioner Stebbins stated that he met with Research and Responsible Gaming Director Mark Vander Linden, Program Manager Teresa Fiore, and others to discuss Game Sense. There was discussion about the operational cooperation of the licensees and others as well as the Game Sense Awards.

[Commissioner O'Brien had to excuse herself from the meeting.]

The Chair announced that Governor Baker appointed a new Gaming Policy Advisory Committee (GPAC) Chair as Meg Mainzer-Cohen and discussed her credentials and the importance of the committee.

Commissioner Zuniga noted that he attended the virtual symposium for the National Council on Problem Gambling. He noted a session regarding the targeting marketing of customers via social media and other algorithms, and how this raises questions concerning responsible gaming.

With no further business, Commissioner Stebbins moved to adjourn.

Commissioner Zuniga seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Cameron: Aye.

Commissioner Zuniga: Aye.

Commissioner Stebbins: Aye.

Chair Judd-Stein: Aye.

The motion passed 4-0 unanimously.

List of Documents and Other Items Used

1. Notice of Meeting and Agenda dated November 17, 2020
2. Draft Commission Meeting Minutes of August 27, 2020
3. Encore Boston Harbor PowerPoint Presentation – Q3 Quarterly Report
4. Memorandum: PPC Hospitality and Supplier Diversity Plan dated November 19, 2020
5. Addendum 1 AGA Minority Purchasing Guidelines
6. Plainridge Diversity Supplier Plan
7. Tourism Plan License Condition #6
8. CMF Draft Guidelines dated November 13, 2020
9. CMF Draft Guidelines Small Business Needs Assessment
10. Equity and Inclusion Statement of Purpose
11. MGC Annual Report 2020Draft