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## Massachusetts Gaming Commission Meeting Minutes

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**Date/Time:** February 24, 2025, 10:00 a.m.  
**Place:** Massachusetts Gaming Commission

VIA CONFERENCE CALL NUMBER: 1-646-741-5292  
PARTICIPANT CODE: 111 087 4120

The Commission conducted this public meeting remotely utilizing collaboration technology. The 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 Jordan Maynard  
Commissioner Eileen O'Brien  
Commissioner Bradford Hill  
Commissioner Nakisha Skinner  
Commissioner Paul Brodeur

#### 1. [Call to Order](#) (00:00)

Chair Maynard called to order the 547<sup>th</sup> Public Meeting of the Massachusetts Gaming Commission ("Commission") at 10:00 a.m. Roll call attendance was conducted, and all five Commissioners were present for the meeting.

Chair Maynard informed attendees that he would be leaving today's meeting early and confirmed with Commissioner Skinner in advance that she would Chair the remainder of the meeting in his absence.

#### 2. [Meeting Minutes](#) (01:30)

Commissioner Skinner moved that the Commission approve the minutes for the June 12, 2023 and April 29, 2024 meetings that are included in the Commissioners' Packet, subject to any necessary corrections for typographical errors or any other non-material matters. Commissioner O'Brien seconded the motion.

*Roll call vote:*  
*Commissioner O'Brien:*      *Aye.*

*Commissioner Hill: Aye.*  
*Commissioner Skinner: Aye.*  
*Commissioner Brodeur: Abstain.*  
*Chair Maynard: Aye.*  
*The motion passed, 4-0 with one abstention.*

Commissioner Skinner further moved to approve the minutes for the January 16, 2025 and January 23, 2025 meetings that are included in the Commissioners' Packet, subject to any necessary corrections for typographical errors or any other non-material matters. Commissioner Hill seconded the motion.

*Roll call vote:*  
*Commissioner O'Brien: Aye.*  
*Commissioner Hill: Aye.*  
*Commissioner Skinner: Aye.*  
*Commissioner Brodeur: Aye.*  
*Chair Maynard: Aye.*  
*The motion passed unanimously, 5-0.*

### 3. [Administrative Update](#) (03:24)

Executive Director Dean Serpa provided a reminder that March is Problem Gambling Awareness Month and then had Director Mark Vander Linden, Division of Research and Responsible Gaming, provide programming updates.

Director Vander Linden's presentation focused on March as National Problem Gambling Awareness Month, highlighting the theme of "seeking understanding" to raise awareness and empathy for those affected by problem gambling. The campaign seeks to break down barriers for treatment and provide support for individuals and families impacted by gambling related harms. He defined problem gambling and gambling disorder, citing statistics on the prevalence of these issues in the U.S. and Massachusetts.

He discussed some key activities for the month which include a coffee campaign to promote conversations about the signs of problem gambling, a problem gambling screening day in partnership with the Cambridge Health Alliance, partnerships with sports books and community events, distribution of a new card with resources for sports bettors, and updates to the GameSense.com website.

Chair Maynard expressed looking forward to the events in March and thanked the operators and licensees for their help. Executive Director Serpa noted that the information was helpful and expressed appreciation for Director Vander Linden's leadership.

### 4. [Finance](#) (14:50)

#### a. Fiscal Year 2025 Mid-Year Budget Update

Derek Lennon, Chief Financial and Accounting Officer, presented the Fiscal Year 2025 Mid-Year Budget update. He stated the Commission previously approved a budget for gaming, racing, community mitigation, sports wagering, and research and responsible gaming. The first quarterly update authorized an increase for the Gaming Control Fund for additional Gaming Enforcement Unit (GEU) resources for background checks and also increased the Sports Wagering Control Fund for assistance from Gaming Labs International and RSM US LLP (“RSM”), as well as the Public Health Trust Fund for bet blocking procurement. He explained that the assessment is revised every year based on gaming positions as of January 1<sup>st</sup>.

CFAO Lennon’s update included recommendations to establish three new positions: a new accountant in the Finance Division, a technical compliance coordinator in the Sports Wagering Division, and an executive assistant in the Commissioner Department.

Commissioner O’Brien asked about an adjustment to the hourly seasonal workers and CFAO Lennon responded that it would be worked through with Alex because the resources were available within the budget.

Commissioner Skinner expressed support for the proposed staffing and suggested that regular comprehensive staffing needs assessments may be useful to plan more proactively for staffing needs. Executive Director Serpa stated that he agreed and said he would begin that process along with CFAO Lennon.

Chair Maynard voiced support and expressed understanding that these types of staffing needs do arise.

CFAO Lennon also proposed reallocating some Fiscal Year 2025 budget funds from the sports wagering line item for RSM and the vendor review to the Sports Wagering Division for a contractor or consultant to investigate future trends in the sports wagering space.

Chair Maynard noted this is marked for a vote today and inquired whether there is a motion.

Commissioner Skinner moved that the Commission approve the requests for changes in the Gaming Control Fund and the Sports Wagering Control Fund, as included in the Commissioners’ packet and discussed here today. Commissioner Hill seconded.

*Roll call vote:*

*Commissioner O’Brien: Aye.*

*Commissioner Hill: Aye.*

*Commissioner Skinner: Aye.*

*Commissioner Brodeur: Aye.*

*Chair Maynard: Aye.*

*The motion passed unanimously, 5-0.*

CFAO Lennon noted one additional update regarding contracts that are going to spend over \$250,000 in the fiscal year. *The list of such contracts for Fiscal Year 2025 are contained in the Commissioners' Packet on page 42.* The information provided shows the initial duration of the contract, a brief description of what the contract is, who the vendor is, the contract's start and end dates, whether there are options to renew the contract, the total contract value, and what the Commission plans on spending.

5. [Legal](#) (28:25)

a. 205 CMR 247.03: Petition for a Sporting Event or Wager Category

Associate General Counsel Ying Wang presented two proposed versions of amendments to 205 CMR 247.03 regarding petitioning to add sporting events or wager categories to the sports wagering catalog. She explained the proposed amendments were intended to give the Commissioners an opportunity to discuss the process of adding or removing events from the catalog. She indicated that the first version for review was a high-level version of the proposed amendment that allows the Commissioners to have more discretion in adding and removing events. She stated that the second version for review was more specific and delineated steps for the Commissioners to follow in petitioning for a new sporting event or wager category, similar to what sports wagering operators are required to do pursuant to the current regulations. Counsel Wang noted that these are only two options, and the Commission could ask the Legal Division to draft a hybrid version.

Commissioner O'Brien referenced conversations regarding the Super Bowl coin toss and stated a preference for the version that would require the Commission to follow the same process as operators. She raised the question of who would provide the information for the petition and suggested that the Sports Wagering Division would have to do so. Chief Carrie Torrissi, Sports Wagering Division, confirmed that the Sports Wagering Division would likely be included in the process.

Commissioner Hill asked about the difference between removing a sport from the catalog versus adding one in, referencing when the Commission removed Russian and Belarussian events from the catalog without issue. Counsel Wang clarified that the Commission's authority to revoke or suspend events or categories from the catalog is included in the regulation, but the Commission's ability to add events or categories was not explicitly stated. Commissioner Hill then expressed a preference for the first version.

Commissioner Brodeur stated that he felt that the Commission currently has the authority to add or remove items from the catalog and questioned the need to do anything to amend the regulation.

Commissioner Skinner agreed that the Commission has the ability to authorize sporting events for the catalog based on its inherent authority; however, she stated that the Commission should hold itself to the same standard as operators in terms of the integrity of the process. She noted some of the information that is required as part of the petitioning process, including the review of house rules related to the proposed sporting event or wager category. She suggested reviewing

this process with the Sports Wagering Division to assess the burden this may place on them. She expressed concerns about the lack of a clearly defined standard of review if the Commission goes with the first, broader option and expressed a strong preference for a middle of the road or hybrid version between the two proposed versions.

Commissioner O'Brien agreed with Commissioner Skinner, stating that in her opinion, the second option provides a clear process for Commissioners to follow. She stated that process matters and believes that Chief Torrisi clarified her concern regarding if it would be burdensome for the Sports Wagering Division to be involved in this process.

Chair Maynard stated a disinclination for the Commission to complete a form or submit a written petition. He suggested revisiting the form provided to operators to submit their request for a new sporting event or wager category in order to make it less cumbersome and further stated that he would be comfortable leaving the regulation as is and not making an amendment. He stated that the entire catalog was created "sua sponte" by the Commission.

Commissioner O'Brien stated there is nothing to indicate that the current petitioning process is overly cumbersome and that the form provided to operators ensures continuity. She stated that she does not think the proposed amendments limit the Commission's authority but adds process for continuity and decision-making purposes.

Chair Maynard reiterated that he does not agree with requiring any Commissioners to submit a written petition or complete a form to be reviewed by the Commission.

Commissioner Skinner clarified her opinion that requiring some process would ensure the integrity of the process at the Commission level, and that events were not added to the catalog "sua sponte" upon the launch of sports wagering without operator input.

Commissioner Brodeur stated that the amount of process that the second version proposed would require does not serve a useful purpose. Commissioner O'Brien stated that if everyone has the same expectation for minimum standards relative to the addition and removal of sporting events and wager categories in the catalog, the second proposed version would actually provide efficiency in reviewing such proposals.

Commissioner Hill moved that the Commission approve the Small Business Impact Statement and draft of 205 CMR 247.03 included in the Commissioners' packet on pages 44 through 46 and discussed here today, and further that staff be authorized to take the steps necessary to file the required documentation with the Secretary of the Commonwealth to begin the regulation promulgation process. He clarified for the public that he was referring to the proposed amendments in the first option. Commissioner Brodeur seconded the motion.

*Roll call vote:*

*Commissioner O'Brien:       Nay.*

*Commissioner Hill:           Aye.*

*Commissioner Skinner:       Nay.*

*Commissioner Brodeur:       Aye.*

*Chair Maynard:* *Aye.*  
*The motion passed 3-2.*

Counsel Grossman clarified that this is the first step in the promulgation process and that this regulation will be brought back before the Commission for final promulgation.

6. Community Affairs Division

a. [Encore Boston Harbor Quarterly Report and ILEV Update](#) (58:43)

Juliana Catanzariti, Executive Director of Legal at Encore Boston Harbor, presented Encore Boston Harbor's quarterly report for Q4 which included the following topics: gaming revenue and taxes, lottery sales, workforce composition, diversity operating spend and local spend, wellness and benefits, promotions and marketing, and highlights of various employee initiatives and events. Tom Coffey, Executive Director of Security and Investigations at Encore Boston Harbor, joined the presentation to discuss compliance and minors prevented from gaming.

Commissioner Brodeur inquired about Encore Boston Harbor's program with Everett Schools. Attorney Catanzariti confirmed that their community relations team works with the school district to choose the schools they work directly with.

Commissioner Skinner congratulated Encore Boston Harbor for their Forbes 5-star award.

Chair Maynard stated that the Commission anticipated that it would meet in executive session in accordance with G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(7) to comply with G.L. c.23K, §21(a)(7) for the specific purpose of reviewing the proposed multi-year capital expenditure plan [described in 205 CMR 139.09], and any corresponding materials, submitted relative to Encore Boston Harbor, as discussion of this matter in public would frustrate the purpose of the statute and associated legal authorities where the capital expenditure plan at issue is covered by a nondisclosure agreement between the Massachusetts Gaming Commission and Encore Boston Harbor. He noted that the public session of the Commission meeting would reconvene at the conclusion of the executive session.

Commissioner Hill moved that the Commission enter executive session for the reasons stated by the Chair. Commissioner Brodeur seconded the motion.

*Roll call vote:*  
*Commissioner O'Brien:* *Aye.*  
*Commissioner Hill:* *Aye.*  
*Commissioner Skinner:* *Aye.*  
*Commissioner Brodeur:* *Aye.*  
*Chair Maynard:* *Aye.*

*The motion passed unanimously, 5-0.*

*Transcriber's note: The Commission entered executive session and reconvened the public session of the Commission meeting at [1:20:44](#).*

b. [Plainridge Park Casino Quarterly Report and ILEV Update](#) (1:20:45)

Heidi Yates-Akbaba, Vice President of Finance for Plainridge Park Casino (“PPC”), presented PPC’s quarterly report for Q4 which included the following topics: gaming revenue and taxes, lottery sales, workforce composition, spend by state and local spend, vendor diversity, and diverse spend. North Grounsell, General Manager of PPC, continued the presentation and discussed compliance. Kathy Lucas, Vice President of Human Resources, presented information about employee composition, highlighted employee initiatives and events, and discussed local community activities and events.

Chair Maynard affirmed the Commission’s commitment to DEI and thanked the PPC team.

Chair Maynard stated that the Commission anticipated that it would meet in executive session in accordance with G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(7) to comply with G.L. c.23K, §21(a)(7) for the specific purpose of reviewing the proposed multi-year capital expenditure plan [described in 205 CMR 139.09], and any corresponding materials, submitted relative to Plainridge Park Casino, as discussion of this matter in public would frustrate the purpose of the statute and associated legal authorities where the capital expenditure plan at issue is covered by a nondisclosure agreement between the Massachusetts Gaming Commission and Plainridge Park Casino. He noted that the public session of the Commission meeting would reconvene at the conclusion of the executive session.

Commissioner Brodeur moved that the Commission enter executive session for the reasons stated by the Chair. Commissioner Skinner seconded the motion.

*Roll call vote:*

*Commissioner O'Brien: Aye.*

*Commissioner Hill: Aye.*

*Commissioner Skinner: Aye.*

*Commissioner Brodeur: Aye.*

*Chair Maynard: Aye.*

*The motion passed unanimously, 5-0.*

*Transcriber's note: The Commission entered executive session. After conclusion of the executive session and a five-minute break, the public session reconvened at [1:50:52](#). Roll call was taken, and all Commissioners were confirmed present.*

7. [Discussion regarding collective bargaining of the SEIU Local 888 Agreement](#) (1:51:50)

a. Executive Session



Executive Director Serpa stated that the next topic for discussion was regarding union negotiations and that discussion should take place in executive session for the reasons stated in the agenda.

Chair Maynard read the following language into the record: “The Commission anticipates that it will meet in executive session in accordance with G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining of the SEIU Local 888 Agreement, as discussion at an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Commission.”

Commissioner Brodeur moved that the Commission enter executive session for the reasons stated by the Chair. Commissioner O’Brien seconded the motion.

*Roll call vote:*

*Commissioner O’Brien: Aye.*

*Commissioner Hill: Aye.*

*Commissioner Skinner: Aye.*

*Commissioner Brodeur: Aye.*

*Chair Maynard: Aye.*

*The motion passed unanimously, 5-0. An executive session was entered.*

*Transcriber’s note: The Commission entered executive session and reconvened the public session of the Commission meeting at [2:32:25](#).*

8. [Investigations and Enforcement Bureau](#) (02:33:32)

a. Temporary Category 3 Sports Wagering Operator Request for Leave to Renew

Karalyn O’Brien, Chief of the Licensing Division, presented the Temporary Category 3 Sports Wagering Operators’ requests for leave to renew their temporary licenses. She stated that all licensees submitted timely renewal requests accompanied by the \$10,000 application fee as required by 205 CMR 219. The applications have been deemed complete.

Commissioner Hill moved that the Commission approve the Temporary Sports Wagering Operator License Renewal Requests pursuant to 205 CMR 219 for the following operators as included in the Commissioners’ packet and discussed here today:

- i. Bally’s Interactive, LLC (BallyBet)
- ii. Betfair Interactive, LLC (FanDuel)
- iii. BetMGM, LLC (BetMGM)
- iv. Crown MA Gaming, LLC (DraftKings)
- v. FBG Enterprises Opco, LLC (Fanatics)
- vi. Penn Sports Interactive, LLC (ESPNBet)

Commissioner Brodeur seconded the motion.



*Roll call vote:*

*Commissioner O'Brien: Aye.*

*Commissioner Hill: Aye.*

*Commissioner Skinner: Aye.*

*Commissioner Brodeur: Aye.*

*Chair Maynard: Aye.*

*The motion passed unanimously, 5-0.*

Chair Maynard informed attendees that he would be leaving today's meeting and requested that Commissioner Skinner chair the remainder of the meeting in his absence.

b. [Briefing on noncompliance matter related to Temporary Category 3 Sports Wagering Licensee BetMGM, LLC and discussion regarding next steps](#) (2:36:46)

Diandra Franks, IEB Enforcement Counsel, presented the first noncompliance matter for review involving Temporary Category 3 Sports Wagering Operator BetMGM, LLC and implicating 205 CMR 247.01(2)(i) and the sports wagering catalog. Counsel Franks explained that BetMGM offered wagering on a prohibited Russian athlete, UFC fighter Petr Yan, for a fight scheduled on November 23, 2024, and the noncompliance lasted from November 17, 2024 to November 18, 2024 during which time 35 wagers were made for a stake of approximately \$850.00.

Commissioner Hill stated he would like to send this back to the IEB. Commissioners Brodeur, O'Brien, and Skinner expressed agreement.

c. [Briefing on noncompliance matter related to Temporary Category 3 Sports Wagering Licensee BetMGM, LLC and discussion regarding next steps](#) (2:38:36)

Counsel Franks presented the second noncompliance matter for review involving Temporary Category 3 Sports Wagering Operator BetMGM LLC and implicating G.L. c. 23N, § 3 and 205 CMR 247.01(2)(a)(1) and the sports wagering catalog. Counsel Franks summarized that BetMGM offered wagering on a prohibited play prop market. BetMGM offered wagering on a UNLV college football player in a game on October 19, 2024 at which time one wager was placed for a stake of \$10.00.

IEB Chief Enforcement Counsel Kathleen Kramer added that in the past, the Commission has found it helpful to know how the Commission has chosen to proceed on similar matters. She noted that while the Commission determined to hold an adjudicatory hearing on an initial matter involving a prohibited college prop bet, other similar matters have been returned to the IEB with the direction to wait for guidance based upon the hearing in the first matter, including any civil administrative penalty that's assessed.

Commissioner Skinner expressed a preference to send this matter back to the IEB, especially given the lower stake involved.

Commissioner O'Brien said she would like to send this matter back to the IEB with the same caveat which would give context to the IEB to come up with a civil administrative penalty.

9. [Research and Responsible Gaming](#) (2:42:16)

a. Recommendations from FY24 Research Agenda

Director Vander Linden presented a summary of key findings and recommendations stemming from research deliverables submitted during Fiscal Year 2024. He discussed a number of topics including strategic plan focus areas, Greo's synthesis of key findings and recommendations, responsible gaming program evaluation, the social impact of gambling, the economic impact of casinos, and public safety.

Commissioner Skinner asked if the summary provided would also be filed with the Legislature and inquired about actionable steps that the Commission could take. Director Vander Linden confirmed that the Commission releases an annual report that includes a research summary, and which is provided to the Legislature but that he would also seek guidance on sharing the report directly with the Legislature.

Commissioner Brodeur said there are other mandated reports that are sent to the Legislature and suggested sending the research summary to the same designated people. Director Vander Linden confirmed that two studies related to sports wagering will be delivered to the legislature.

Commissioner Skinner inquired of the other Commissioners and confirmed that there was a consensus to share this document with the Legislature in the way discussed here today.

10. [Meeting Minutes](#) (3:01:40)

a. Executive Session

*Transcriber's note: The Commission's vote to enter executive session occurred after Agenda Items #11 and 12, at which time the Commission returned to this Agenda Item at the above-noted time.*

Commissioner Skinner read the following language into the record: "The Commission anticipates that it will meet in executive session to review minutes from previous executive sessions as their discussion at an open meeting may frustrate the intended purpose for which the executive session was convened, pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(4): August 17, 2023; G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(3): November 7, 2024 and January 9, 2025; G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(3), (4), (6), and (7), c. 4, § 7(26)(f) and (n), and c. 23N, § 6(i): January 9, 2025; and G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(7) and c. 4, § 7(26)(n): January 23, 2025."

Commissioner Brodeur moved to enter executive session for the reasons stated by Commissioner Skinner. Commissioner Hill seconded the motion.

*Roll call vote:*

*Commissioner O'Brien: Aye.*

*Commissioner Hill: Aye.*

Commissioner Brodeur      Aye.  
Commissioner Skinner:      Aye.  
The motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

Commissioner Skinner reminded participants that the Commission would not reconvene the public meeting after the executive session.

11. [Commissioner Updates](#) (03:01:14)

*Transcriber's note: Discussion under Agenda Items #11 and 12 occurred prior to Agenda Item #10.*

After inquiry from Commissioner Skinner, no Commissioner updates were noted prior to entering the executive session.

12. [Other Business](#) (03:01:22)

No other business was raised by the Commissioners prior to entering the executive session.

*Transcriber's note: The Commission entered executive session upon their vote and did not reconvene the public meeting.*

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

1. [Revised Notice of Meeting and Agenda](#) dated February 20, 2025
2. [Commissioners' Packet](#) from the February 24, 2025 meeting (posted on massgaming.com)