



Gaming Policy Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: July 11, 2019 @ 10:00 a.m.
Place: State House Room 222, Boston, Massachusetts
Present: Karen Sawyer Conard, Chair Victor Ortiz
Cathy Judd-Stein Louise A. Zawodny
Dean Tran Rep. Ann-Margaret Ferrante
Rep. Angelo L. D'Emilia Paul Picknelly
Jill McCarthy-Payne Helen Caulton Harris
Brian Lang

10:00 a.m. Karen Sawyer Conard, Chair, spoke to the members and mentioned that a quorum had not yet been achieved. It was stated that although a quorum had not yet been achieved, the Committee could hear presentations until a quorum is achieved.

Chair Sawyer Conard thanked Louise Zawodny, Representative for Encore Boston Harbor, for her contribution to the GPAC, and stated that Ms. Zawodny would no longer be part of the GPAC.

Chair Sawyer Conard then welcomed new members. She introduced Senator Dean Tran, who is a resident of Fitchburg and represents the Worcester and Middlesex District. She then introduced Commissioner Helen Caulton-Harris, who was appointed by the Governor and is the Director of the City of Springfield's Department of Health & Human Services. Lastly, she introduced the Massachusetts Gaming Commission's (MGC) new Chair, Cathy Judd-Stein, who recently served as deputy chief legal counsel for the Office of the Governor, and as the general counsel of the state treasury in several legal, policy and management roles at the state lottery. She also served as an instructor of "Ethics and Public Policy for UMass Boston's John W. McCormack Graduate School of Policy and Global Studies.

Ms. Judd-Stein stated that she is excited to be here at her first GPAC meeting. She also stated that she is looking forward to having members serve a greater role in advising the Commission on many of the complex issues that are before the Gaming Commission. She noted that Gaming Commission members agree that hearing different viewpoints regarding these issues is very important. It is her hope that the GPAC will play an integral part in providing guidance to the MGC.

Next, the Chair Sawyer Conard stated that the main items on the agenda for today's meeting are first, a presentation on Encore Boston Harbor's opening. Second, there will be a discussion on the status of the Region C gaming region and horse racing. Last, the committee will hear about the proposed FY 2020 Gaming Research Agenda and a Gaming Research

update by Mark Vander Linden, the Commission's Director of Research and Responsible Gaming.

The Chair acknowledged that members have some time constraints this morning and that she would work to make sure that the meeting concludes no later than 11:30.

Approval of Minutes

The Chair noted that she has been advised that the Committee would not be able to approve the minutes from the meetings on March 27, 2018, and June 5, 2018. Those minutes will be posted as a draft, due to lack of quorum at this time to approve those minutes.

Encore Boston Harbor Opening

Jacqui Krum reported on the activities on opening day for Encore Boston Harbor. She noted that the company spent \$68M on the clean up associated with this parcel on the Mystic River, stating that the crews pulled out 840 tons of contaminated soil. She also thanked the Gaming Commission in all of their efforts to ensure that Encore Boston Harbor was able to prepare for the opening. She described the traffic mitigation efforts, stating that they spent over \$1M on transportation advertising. She also thanked the women and men of the trades who built the building. She reported on diversity statistics where the commitments were met. She also thanked Encore's 5,000 employees, who started by June 23rd, 2019. She described the training that they went through. She also asked for patience as casino operations ramp up in the next few months.

John Ziemba, MGC Ombudsman, gave credit to Wynn Resorts for spending \$1M on the transportation campaign to promote transit options and to keep opening traffic impacts to a minimum.

Status of Region C Gaming Region/Horse Racing

Ed Bedrosian, MGC Executive Director, discussed the status of Region C and the request for reconsideration of the denial of the license application in Region C. With him was Catherine Blue, MGC General Counsel, and Dr. Alex Lightbown, Director of the MGC's Racing Division, who would comment on horse racing.

With regard to Region C, Mr. Bedrosian first offered his condolences on behalf of the MGC regarding the passing of the Brockton Mayor Bill Carpenter, who passed on July 2, 2019. He stated that Mr. Carpenter is being honored today by lying in state in Brockton City Hall.

Mr. Bedrosian then outlined the framework for the MGC's consideration of the request to open Region C. He summarized that in 2016 the MGC evaluated Mass Gaming and Entertainment (MGE)'s application for a Category 1 license, culminating in a vote of 4-1 to deny the application. The MGC followed an established protocol in reviewing MGE's application.

He explained that in 2018, the MGC received a letter from attorneys representing MGE, requesting that the MGC reconsider MGE's original license application without reopening the RFA 2 application process.

He stated that now in 2019, many of the factors that figured into the MGC's decision to open Region C have changed. He noted the staff's recommendation that the Commission engage the appropriate resources for a review and report to the MGC on these factors as they stand now.

Mr. Bedrosian stated that first the Commission would resolve the legal issue on the Brockton applicant's motion for reconsideration and whether that is appropriate in front of the Commission or not. Then the Commission could move on to reconsider the public comments from before, would potentially solicit updated public comments and would learn about the present status of the Mashpee Wampanoag land in trust litigation and associated Congressional legislative efforts.

Next, Ms. Blue provided an update on the legislation that allows horse racing and simulcasting, stating that it is set to expire on July 31, 2019. If it is not renewed, live racing and simulcasting will stop. She added that there are racing bills drafted that require input from the stakeholders and further review by the MGC and that it is very important to obtain the Legislature's extension so the MGC can consider options.

10:34 a.m. The Committee now has a quorum, as Senator Tran has arrived at the meeting.

Research Agenda for 2020

Mark Vander Linden, Director of Research and Responsible Gaming, reviewed the MGC's proposed FY20 gaming research agenda with the Committee. He described the type of analysis that would be conducted and described the other projects that complement and build upon this work. Specifically, he reviewed the MA Gaming Impact Cohort (MAGIC) study by the UMass Amherst research team.

Mr. Vander Linden reviewed the summary of deliverables that are on the immediate horizon and referenced a memo entitled, "Gaming Research Update" that is included in the Committee's meeting packet.

He commented that this type of research has not been done in the United States before and that the legislature is interested in it. His research agenda was approved by the Public Health Trust Fund (PHTF) executive committee. He advised the Committee that any advice that comes from GPAC should go to the PHTF committee who will meet in two weeks.

The research agenda is driven by the gaming research strategic plan. Mr. Vander Linden described studies on the social and economic impacts of gaming in Massachusetts, and stated that the second six months of research in 2020 will be focused on the procurement process of the Social and Economic Impacts of Gambling in Massachusetts (SEIGMA) project, to see who else may be interested in participating in this study from UMass.

The Chair asked about a license plate survey for MGM Springfield. She specifically asked if it will extend beyond the parking lots. Mr. Vander Linden described the challenges of gathering data to analyze patron behavior at each casino.

Representative Ferrante asked the Research Team if it looks at where and how the employees are spending their money when the team looks at the economic analysis. Mr. Vander Linden answered that they do use a Regional Economic Model (REMI) that looks at any impacts of the dollars of those workers are receiving, and what impacts are to the communities.

Ms. Harris thanked Mr. Vander Linden for his work and asked how the Springfield participants are chosen as far as the survey is concerned. Mr. Vander Linden answered that general population surveys are address based only. They are random samples based on individuals' addresses in a specific region. He then described some additional research efforts on related topics that have received grant funding this past year. He said the baseline study of the general population is complete, and the targeted follow-up is also complete for Plainville and will be in Springfield in August.

Mr. Vander Linden described three community-driven research initiatives that were recently funded regarding compulsive gambling, gambling in older adults, and gambling in Hispanic communities. The objective of this community-driven research is to more deeply understand and address the impact of the introduction of casino gambling in Massachusetts's communities.

Mr. Picknelly asked when results are expected from the Springfield survey in July, August, and September. Mr. Vander Linden stated that it will be roughly a year until the final report is received.

Next, Mr. Vander Linden highlighted a youth health survey that analyzes youth gambling. In order to better understand gambling behavior and risk, the MGC provided funding to the Public Health Institute of Western MA to extend questions on the 2019 survey. The survey was administered in Springfield Public Schools in February of 2019, and results are expected in the fall of 2019.

Massachusetts Gaming Impact Cohort (MAGIC) was also highlighted. Mr. Vander Linden provided an overview of the study to the Committee members. He stated that in the next fiscal year, the research team will conduct Wave Six of this study. He then explained the concept of waves in the study.

Lastly, Mr. Vander Linden noted research being conducted regarding public safety to the Committee members, describing it as assessing the impact of gambling on public safety in Massachusetts cities and towns.

Status of Region C Gaming Region/Horse Racing, continued

Representative Ferrante asked for clarification on the steps of the process regarding the status of Region C. Mr. Bedrosian stated that a Motion for Reconsideration is filed, which is a contemplative motion to initiate the process so that it may be deemed appropriate to move forward.

Representative D’Emilia asked if there are any other groups looking at Region C if the answer to the motion for reconsideration is still “no.” Representative D’Emilia stated that he would like Region C to have the opportunity to have other applicants considered or a final decision on the Brockton application.

Senator Tran asked if there is any part in the process would that require the Legislature to become involved if the application is denied. Mr. Bedrosian stated that on the issue of the motion to reconsider, he does not believe so. Senator Tran then asked if there is a possibility to allow the license of Region C to be available for other regions, or the possibility to redraw the boundaries with some of the regions. Mr. Bedrosian said that redrawing the boundaries would be a legislative question.

Research Agenda for 2020, continued

Mr. Vander Linden reviewed with the Committee a study on public safety impacts of the expanded gaming act. He proposed that the Commission continue working with crime analyst Christopher Bruce. He described the work that Mr. Bruce conducts and stated that this research will go through December 2020.

Commissioner Harris asked about the ability to capture data on human trafficking and the impact of this on communities since the casino opened. Mr. Vander Linden stated that he is starting to organize a group to focus a spotlight on this now.

Mr. Picknelly asked about the 18-month timeframe for the Springfield study, specifically, when the Committee would see the Public Safety report. Mr. Vander Linden answered that the baseline and three-month report is on the MGC website. The nine-month report is underway. Therefore, the nine-month report will be to the Committee by one year after the opening of MGM.

Representative Ferrante asked if sports betting could be folded into the research if it is allowed. Mr. Vander Linden replied that research will be done regardless, in order to respond to the individual s experience.

Representative Ferrante then stated that there are stereotypes of gamblers, and asked if there is any analysis on which type/group is affected, and how. Mr. Vander Linden stated that yes, he is working on gathering data that will then be analyzed. The goal is to make the research as useful to the community as possible.

The Chair then asked if anyone has any questions for the MGC.

Representative D’Emilia commented on the urgency of extending the deadline of July 31 regarding horse racing and simulcasting and noted that he would inquire personally on the status of the racing and simulcasting extension.

Representative Ferrante stated that she is looking for guidance and feedback regarding sports betting.

Paul Picknelly asked to be updated on revenues from current licensees. Mr. Ziemba stated that revenue figures are posted every month and offered greater efforts to distribute revenue information to the Committee.

Next Steps

It was noted that the MGC plans to meet again in September and start to meet with regularity so the Committee can provide useful advice to the MGC on current matters.

The Chair asked that the Conflict of Interest certifications in the packet be brought up to date and that Mary Thurlow be provided with them.

11:30 a.m. Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Chair Conard.

/s/ Shara N. Bedard
Secretary

List of Documents and Other Items Used

1. Notice of meeting and agenda
2. List of Members
3. Memo Re: Framework for Consideration of Request to Open Region C
4. Memo Re: Status of Region C
5. MGC Research Strategy for Gaming in Massachusetts, dated May 2019
6. MGL c. 23K §71
7. Memo Re: Proposed FY2020 Gaming Research Agenda
8. Memo Re: Gaming Research Update