



## Local Community Mitigation Advisory Committee Region A Meeting

**Date/Time:** September 23, 2020 at 1:30 p.m.

**Place:** VIA CONFERENCE CALL NUMBER: 1 646 741 5292;  
PARTICIPANT CODE: 111 525 2198

**Members Present:** David Bancroft, Eric Bourassa, Richard Caraviello, John DePriest, Ron Hogan, Mayra-Negron Roche, Vincent Panzini, Paul Sheehan, Justin Sterrit

**Others Attending:** Joe Delaney, Jacqui Krum, Todd Grossman, Derek Lennon, Tania Perez, Bruce Stebbins, Mary Thurlow, Karen Wells, Enrique Zuniga, MGC

### Call to Order

[1:32 p.m.](#) Chair Judd-Stein of the Massachusetts Gaming Commission (“MGC”) expressed her appreciation and gratitude for the Committee members’ service and commitment. She then turned the meeting over to the Committee Chair Caraviello to call the meeting to order. Chair Caraviello took roll call established that there was a quorum.

### Approval of Minutes

[1:36 p.m.](#) Chair Caraviello moved to approve the minutes from the last Local Community Mitigation Advisory Committee (“LCMAC”) meeting on November 19, 2019. Mr. Hogan seconded the motion. The motion to approve last meeting’s minutes passed unanimously.

### Review of Updated Ethics Course and Compliance

[1:37 p.m.](#) MGC General Counsel Grossman delivered a presentation on the state Conflict of Interest Laws to the Committee. He informed the Committee that they are required to take the online Conflict of Interest Law training every two years, and directed members to send their certificates of completion to Ms. Perez. Mr. Grossman continued to inform the Committee of state ethics laws on conflicts of interest, unwarranted privilege, appearances of conflict of interest, divided loyalties, and other aspects of the law. After welcoming questions and not receiving any, Mr. Grossman concluded his presentation by reiterating that he can be reached with any ethics issue or question.

## Discussion of 2021 Community Mitigation Fund Policy Questions

1:56 p.m. Chair Caraviello called on Mr. Delaney to present policy questions regarding 2021 Community Mitigation Fund (“CMF”). Mr. Delaney introduced himself as the new MGC lead on CMF Committees. Mr. Delaney informed the Committee that the 2020 grants had been awarded by the end of June 2020. Mr. Delaney introduced the 2021 policy questions, asking the Committee for feedback either at the current meeting or through email afterwards. The first policy question was whether to put a limit on the sizes of the grants. Mr. Delaney explained that in 2020 they did not use the entire approved amount in the CMF due to a low amount of applications, unexpected effects of Covid-19, and the invalidity of some applications due to their lack of connection to gaming facilities. The second question was whether the Commission should continue to place a limit on individual grant amounts. The third question was whether the Commission should continue to place a grant limit for each region based on their projected tax revenue. Mr. Delaney then presented his own rough calculations of 2021’s projected tax revenue from gaming facilities plus leftover funds from 2020. The fourth policy question item was whether the hospitality workforce grants should continue in full force in 2021, considering the greatly reduced need for hospitality workers during the pandemic. Mr. Panzini brought up the question of whether workforce funds should be used to train those hospitality workers displaced by the pandemic. Mr. Delaney responded that workforce layoffs were due to the pandemic, and CMF money is meant to mitigate effects of gaming facilities. Mr. Delaney acknowledged the impact of the pandemic on former gaming facility staff and plans to talk to MGC’s Director of Workforce, Supplier, and Diversity Jill Griffin about possible ways to justify funding training programs for them. Commissioner Stebbins opined that Mr. Panzini’s question raised a good point, and informed the Committee that he had spoken with Ms. Griffin and partnering workforce training program personnel about ways to help the laid-off workers. Commissioner Stebbins told the Committee that those workforce training program personnel were seeking federal funds for laid-off gaming facility workers, hopefully making this policy question an easier one to resolve. Mr. Delaney moved on to the construction project policy questions of raising their statewide and per-project cost limit and of capping the CMF-funded portion of construction projects. In 2020 the CMF Committee received a few construction project grant applications that proposed no other source of funds, and that had very little to do with gaming facility effects. Mr. Delaney reminded the Committee that there’s always the possibility of making some exceptions for applications that don’t fit criteria exactly but that the Committee finds worthwhile. Mr. DePriest commented that if a criterion for receiving CMF funds is that the project must have other sources of funding, the Committee must consider that some sources of funding are available on only a scheduled basis or have a long wait period and may not necessarily be available at the time of a project’s application submission. Mr. Delaney moved onto the seventh question of whether the CMF should be used to fund large transportation projects or economic development projects, opining that with the pandemic, it may be best not to change this guideline so drastically. Moving on to the question of whether there should be an emergency reserve in the CMF for unexpected impacts after application deadline closes. The next item was whether CMF should be used to reimburse public safety costs. The tenth question was one of using research

studies done outside the MGC in application deliberations. The next item was about setting aside money for potential tribal casinos. Up next was the question of whether CMF grant applications should require a dollar-for-dollar match. Next was whether the CMF Committee should set expenditure time limits for unused funds previously awarded. Chair Caraviello brought up the possibility of communities not realizing that they have unused funds. Mr. Delaney shared that he plans on meeting with casino host and surrounding community members later in the year partly for this purpose and to ensure grant recipients understand any conditions of their awards. Moving on to the next question, Mr. Delaney asked whether non-transportation planning grants should be awarded to communities that have used their reserves. After lightly touching upon guideline criteria that was not in question, like awarding private parties without violating anti-aid laws and joint applications, Mr. Delaney raised the questions of whether to continue assisting Hampden County's sheriff's office with their lease, rescinding old unspent awards, and whether communities should be allowed to apply to more than one CMF category for the same project. Mr. Delaney welcomed thoughts on these policy questions from the Committee, noting that any comments and questions can be shared at the next meeting as well. Mr. Hogan requested a copy of the policy questions document that could be typed in, for ease of sharing comments before the next meeting.

Ms. Negron-Roche asked Commissioner Stebbins if he had discussed the high school diploma requirement for workforce training programs with program personnel. Commissioner Stebbins answered that the focus of the training programs continues to be the G.E.D. and adult basic education. He added that they did not want to stop conducting the programs when the pandemic broke out. Ms. Negron-Roche said that her organization has seen an increase of participants in their high school equivalency program, so these types of programs are still very much in demand and well-attended. She also suggested increasing the target amount for construction grants and the administrative cost limit for workforce grants.

### **Use of the Community Mitigation Fund for Administrative Purposes**

[2:35 p.m.](#) Chair Caraviello invited more comments and questions for Mr. Delaney. Hearing none, the Chair moved on to the question of possibly using some of the CMF funds for MGC's administrative costs of running CMF Committees. Mr. Delaney and Ms. Thurlow bowed out of this conversation because its outcome could affect their salaries. Mr. Lennon presented his proposal to start using CMF funds towards administrative costs, adding that MGC does not have one specific person managing all the CMF grants, but rather several people. He also added that the administrative portion taken out of the CMF fund would probably be around 5-10%, as is standard for grant management costs. He welcomed comments and questions from the Committee. Mr. Bancroft asked who did the grant management work currently. Mr. Lennon answered that Ms. Thurlow, Mr. Delaney, the MGC budget director, himself, the diversity program manager, and Ms. Griffin each work on it a little, but that there is no single dedicated staff person. With the growth of the CMF, however, the Commission is hoping to find someone to fill that role. Mr. Hogan suggested that instead of setting an administrative portion off the bat, that they should take a bottom-up approach to it. Mr. Lennon welcomed the comment and will take it to the rest of

the Commission. Mr. Panzini opined that administrative costs are an appropriate use of part of the CMF.

### **Update on 2020 Awards**

[4:47 p.m.](#) Mr. Delaney updated the Committee on the status of the 2020 CMF award money and the amount of money rolling over to 2021's fund. He asked the Committee to consider the 2021 policy questions. Mr. Delaney welcomed questions and received none.

### **Discussion of Next Steps**

[2:46 p.m.](#) Mr. Delaney informed the Committee that he would have a presentation on how the pandemic has affected the CMF. He also asked the Committee to revise the 2021 policy questions. Ms. Thurlow informed the Committee that at the next meeting they would be taking votes for the Committee's Chair and their representative to the Subcommittee on Community Mitigation. She welcomed nominations for those roles, reminded the Committee when the next meeting is, and planned to send out an editable copy of the 2021 policy questions.

[2:49 p.m.](#) Mr. DePriest made a motion to adjourn. It was seconded and followed by a unanimous vote to adjourn.

*With no further topics for discussion, the Chair adjourned the meeting.*

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

1. MGC General Counsel Grossman's presentation on Conflict of Interest law
2. 2021 Community Mitigation Fund Policy Questions

/s/ Tania J. Perez

Secretary