



Public Health Trust Fund Executive Committee (PHTFEC) Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: November 19, 2018 – 2:00 p.m.

Place: Department of Public Health
250 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108

Present: **Executive Committee**
Lindsey Tucker, Co-Chair, Associate Commissioner, Massachusetts
Department of Public Health
Enrique Zuniga, Co-Chair, Commissioner, Massachusetts Gaming Commission
Jennifer Queally, Undersecretary, Executive Office of Public Safety
Michael Sweeney, Executive Director, Massachusetts State Lottery
Carlene Pavlos, Executive Director, Massachusetts Public Health Association

Attendees

Victor Ortiz, Director of Problem Gambling Services, Massachusetts
Department of Public Health
Teresa Fiore, Program Manager of Research and Responsible Gaming,
Massachusetts Gaming Commission
Mark Vander Linden, Director of Research and Responsible Gaming,
Massachusetts Gaming Commission
Gayle Cameron, Interim Chairperson, Massachusetts Gaming Commission

Call to Order

2:13 p.m. Co-Chair Tucker called to order the Public Health Trust Fund Executive
Committee (PHTFEC) Meeting.

Approval of Minutes

2:15 p.m. *September 24, 2018 minutes:*
*Co-Chair Tucker noted that the previous meeting minutes were mistakenly not
sent in advance and proposed postponing the vote until the following meeting to
allow time to review.*

MGC Updates

Co-Chair Zuniga introduced Gayle Cameron, MGC Interim Chairperson.

GameSense Program Objectives:

Co-Chair Zuniga discussed the potential of a logic model that Ms. Pavlos discussed at the previous meeting. He informed the committee that a summary had been provided discussing GameSense and the responsible gaming framework. Co-Chair Zuniga then noted that GameSense fits into the statute and that it is a unique opportunity to have a program related to public health and responsible gaming in the casinos. The summary highlights various principles: informed decision making for those who gamble and informed player's choice. Three responsible gaming strategies within the confines of informed decision making are included in the summary. He also informed the committee that a key strategy articulated in the summary paper is that GameSense is a point of sale intervention. Fundamentally, this is an opportunity to receive feedback, provide information and offer voluntary self-exclusion.

Ms. Pavlos thanked Co-Chair Zuniga for his summary. She noted that her previously request for a logic model was to assure there was an opportunity to have process and outcome measures. The summary that Co-Chair Zuniga provided was helpful.

Mr. Vander Linden added that while he hoped the logic model would be ready in time for this meeting, he believe the summary is sufficient. He also discussed the hours of GameSense and that they have shifted over time based off utilization and believes that it is something that they should continue to evaluate.

Ms. Queally asked what the hours are now.

Ms. Fiore informed her that they are 9am-1am currently.

PHTFEC Budget Update

Co-Chair Zuniga stated that revenue coming in from MGM from Aug 24th to Oct 31st \$58 million gross, and taxed at 25% are equivalent to \$14.6 millions. The 5% of the taxed amount that comes to the trust amounts to \$733,000. He further stated that the projections give them a reason to be optimistic about reaching the budget. For the next meeting, they are working on the budget for the next 6 months and expenditure.

Co-Chair Tucker stated that this should be a regular item on the agenda.

Co-Chair Zuniga agreed.

Co-Chair Tucker then asked if the group can consider adding the opening of Encore to the agenda.

Co-Chair Zuniga informed her that they can add that to the agenda. The \$3M that he mentioned didn't involve any projections from Encore. Encore is scheduled to open at the end of June which is the end of the fiscal year.

Gaming Research Update

a. Baseline analysis of crime, call-for-service, and collision data in the communities near MGM

Mr. Vander Linden stated that the full report was released on October 25th. It is a baseline report so there are no significant findings. There will be a follow up report in a few months. This is required from the statute, to produce a baseline study to determine crime in cities where casinos have been opened. Christopher Bruce did this study. Mr. Bruce goes to each individual police department and downloads their data particularly looking at Springfield and Ludlow. Mr. Bruce will go back those communities in the future and see what has changed in the 3 months since the casino has opened. From there, a 3 month update, 6 month update and hopefully a yearly update will be conducted. This will allow police to formulate a strategy regarding the impact of casinos in their communities. The primary audience are police departments and they hope the information can be used as a tool. He then discussed that crime analysts and police chiefs will receive qualitative reports as well. Interim Chairperson Cameron is leading this effort.

Ms. Cameron informed the group that this began with an MOU. She thanked Ms. Queally for her efforts. She stated that she appreciates that it is real time information and allows chiefs from various areas to discuss common issues, therefore allowing things to be addressed immediately if there is an impact.

Mr. Vander Linden discussed human trafficking in casinos and how the current public safety study captures human trafficking in casinos. He informed the group that Mr. Bruce noted that the information isn't captured well due to the fact that any arrests would happen after an extensive investigation and therefore captured overtime.

Ms. Cameron noted that prostitution is probably easier to track instead of trafficking. In the next police chief meeting, she noted that they can ask them to track it and include a training process so that they can make sure the data is captured. She also noted that Plainridge Casino doesn't have hotels so that changes the landscape.

Ms. Pavlos informed the group that Springfield can capture children trafficking as well due to the Children Advocacy Center located there.

Ms. Queally noted that state police has a child trafficking unit as it relates to Massachusetts, however there is very little information even nationwide.

Ms. Cameron suggested having Ms. Queally join the next meeting with the police chiefs.

Ms. Queally agreed and stated that she would bring individuals from her team to discuss potential strategy and training.

Mr. Sweeney noted that this type of crime has shifted into the cyber arena at least for initial engagement. He encouraged either study to track frequency of websites targeting Springfield and Everett area. He noted that it would be helpful to receive a list of offenses under most serious list and if they would take into account individual precincts emphasis on certain campaigns. The data would be impacted if the precincts are cracking down on particular crimes.

Ms. Cameron stated that was an excellent point and that it is considered. They have discussions with the chiefs that allows this information to be added.

Mr. Sweeney stated that he objects to the definition of statutory rape on page 66. He doesn't believe it is an appropriate definition.

Mr. Sweeney noted that on page 69, sexual assault is categorized as a violent crime but it is categorized as a non-violent crime elsewhere.

Ms. Pavlos stated that the definition suggests a framing as interpreting data that we would not like to associate with.

Ms. Cameron replied that it was an excellent point.

Co-Chair Tucker stated that the definition of prostitution should also be altered.

Ms. Pavlos stated that she is happy to provide them with edits to the definitions.

Mr. Ortiz stated that it is great to see and hear collaborative work around human trafficking and is equally important to look at the community level to see how folks are working together as being proactive around these issues. He noted that he had an opportunity to speak with community members and they raised the concern of limited funding for these efforts. He noted that as we look at things on a macro level, it is important to determine if there is an opportunity to assist in funding for work at the community level.

Casino Gambling in MA: African American Perspective, Rudy Vega

Mr. Vega discussed how the existing theories do not shed light on how features of the life context of people of color impact gambling behavior. All 5 focus groups were either at risk or problem gamblers and were mostly women. There was difficulty finding men to participate. Participants described their communities as impoverished and needing social services. When asked why they gamble, they noted that gambling was not for recreation but mostly for financial need.

Ms. Pavlos thanked him for the presentation. She then asked if different things were learned due the gender of the population.

Mr. Vega replied that the limitation of the study was pointed out by reviewers. He believes that regardless of the gender, the same theme would emerge.

Ms. Queally asked about stigma and what stigma the participants were referring to and if there are cooccurring disorders.

Mr. Vega replied that the stigma is similar to mental health.

Ms. Pavlos noted that the discussion of gambling for financial need is interesting and commented that that it appears to be a group of sophisticated thinkers.

Mr. Sweeney noted that mental health keeps coming up regardless of the study and the importance of community based intervention.

Screening for Gambling Disorder in VA Primary Care Behavioral Health: A pilot study, Shane Kraus

Mr. Kraus noted that Veterans have been found to have elevated rates of problem gamblers compared to non-Veterans. He then discussed what questions can be asked to encourage self-disclosure.

Ms. Queally asked what the sample size was.

Mr. Kraus replied that it was 260.

Ms. Queally asked if lottery was not included, would it alter the results.

Mr. Kraus stated that it wouldn't but he would be interested in how individuals endorse items. Mr. Kraus also noted that there are lot of veterans who are spending a great deal of money on gambling but did not endorse any of the BBGS items.

Co-Chair Tucker asked if they were all on fixed incomes.

Mr. Kraus stated that he looked at disability to determine if they were receiving benefits.

Mr. Vander Linden stated that there is possibly a disconnect with money spent and endorsement.

Mr. Ortiz asked if he thought that had to do with the level of gambling and disclosure.

Mr. Kraus stated that there are concerns on reporting gambling as people may not disclose.

Mr. Sweeney asked if the gambling practiced began while they were serving in the military.

Mr. Kraus replied that the data suggests that it does.

Co-Chair Tucker asked how the BBGS was picked and why.

Mr. Kraus replied that it was 3 questions, other measures are longer and setting plays a role.

Co-Chair Tucker asked if there was a difference between the veterans that go to the VA and those that do not.

Mr. Kraus replied that those who go to the VA usually have more medical or psychological problems and receive care due to their service connection. Those who do not, typically do

not go to the VA. He stated that this is one study in a very small pilot that gives an opportunity to set a plan for the Commonwealth.

Targeted Population/Community Driven Research Update and Discussion

Mr. Vander Linden provides a presentation on community driven research. He discusses data management, knowledge translation, and community driven research as being 3 specific areas in the research strategic plan.

Mr. Vander Linden went on to say that using a slightly different term, Community Based Research, it more deeply understands and addresses impact of casinos in the communities. It is responsive to community demands and needs. The limitations are willingness to participate. The focus is the host and surrounding communities: youth, seniors, parents.

It was discussed that in the procurement letters of support not only include community members but also endorse that they saw the proposal and the budget.

Ms. Judith Glynn noted that there have been some awards already given for small projects. The rationale is to get the shape of the program as early as possible and try to develop a program that is set up for success.

Ms. Queally stated that she would like to see more research findings put into practice.

Co-Chair Tucker added that she hopes that community concerns would be interjected more and that local research versus people's voice in broader research are incorporated into the overall strategy.

Mr. Vander Linden agreed.

Ms. Pavlos added that we tend to select community driven research to support as we develop the agenda; however, as we are investing it should realign research agenda as we learn more from participatory studies.

Ms. Glynn discussed SIEGMA and MAGIC research.

Co-Chair Zuniga noted that Ms. Pavlos' point is now the essence of strategic planning.

Mr. Ortiz advised the group to rethink using the term academic research that in itself implies many things, including that only academics conduct research. Academic researchers go into communities, produce papers and leave. He asked how can we redesign that process.

Ms. Pavlos replied that we could build accountability into the procurement process for ourselves.

Mr. Sweeney stated it is not appropriate to send people into neighborhoods and only put programs into the casinos. The resources bypass the actual communities and the dollars need to show the public that those funds are in those communities.

DPH Listening Sessions – update and discussion

Due to timing, Victor Ortiz gave a brief update on the DPH stakeholder listening session conducted in Springfield. DPH is utilizing the stakeholder listening sessions to maintain accountability and inform work relating to cultural competency as outlined in the PHTF strategic plan. Last year, there were 32 people in the two sessions held, one in Boston and one in Springfield. This year, one session was conducted in Springfield and DPH is planning another session in January. Victor, encouraged the group to provide names of community groups and members that should attend. The goal is to take the information gathered and put it into a report to see the pulse and priorities of the community.

Co-Chair Tucker noted that there is nice synergy between community based research and what comes out of the listening session.

Mr. Ortiz stated that people are concerned about the CORI issues. He noted that Co-Chair Zuniga attended a session to explain the actions being taken regarding CORIs and that that was helpful and effective.

Co-Chair Zuniga added that he believes they should be doing more of these sessions and that he is willing to participate. He inquired about the number of 800 engagements.

Mr. Ortiz stated that all of their work conducted has a principle and function of community engagement that has resulted in over 800 engagements to inform the work

Public Comment

Carolyn Wong, UMASS Boston thanked the presenters and discussed the synergy in Mr. Vega's report, the proposal for CDR, and Mr. Ortiz's report. She noted that the potential for synergy has to be realized and that it needs to be a launching point. She suggested involving agencies and people who helped with the research to help write the report and if possible, interpret the findings.

Chien Chi Wong, Asian Women for Health noted that language matters and she was surprised to hear the term healthy gambling used. She cautioned against the use of the term so that the public doesn't think that gambling can somehow better their health. She noted that she was interested in what the drivers are that cause veterans to gamble and suggested that listening sessions be promoted by ethnic media. She also asked how many grants will be awarded and what is the criteria and the cap. She stated that it takes time to build relationships and that community questions should be included in the RFP and help with the design, implementation and dissemination of the study. She also agreed with Ms. Queally that research can help us decide how we can allocate funds.

Mr. Kraus noted that it is important to focus on treatment and research needs to be applied.

Ms. Wong added that it is not just intervention of the individual but also the family.

Ms. Queally stated that in most SUD treatment programs there is a family component.

Mr. Sweeney noted that family members or peers do not accompany the family member to the casino and it is important that they help engage the gambler or develop exit strategies for them to use.

Co-Chair Zuniga stated that the notion of safe levels of gambling can be misconstrued with healthy levels of gambling.

Co-Chair Tucker added that if there were particular agenda items that they would like to see in future meetings to please let them know.