



Public Health Trust Fund Executive Committee (PHTFEC) Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: April 4, 2018 – 1:00 p.m.

Place: Mass Gaming Commission
101 Federal Street, Boston, MA 02110

Present: **Executive Committee**

Lindsey Tucker, Co-Chair, Associate Commissioner, Massachusetts
Department of Public Health

Stephen P. Crosby, Co-Chair, Chairman, Massachusetts Gaming Commission

Jennifer Queally, Undersecretary of Law Enforcement

Michael Sweeney, Executive Director, Massachusetts State Lottery
Commission

Attendees

Marlene Warner, Executive Director, Massachusetts Council on Compulsive
Gambling

Victor Ortiz, Director of the Office of Problem Gambling, 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

Enrique Zuniga, Commissioner, Massachusetts Gaming Commission

Edward Bedrosian, Executive Director, Massachusetts Gaming Commission

Brianne Tolson, Director of Policy and Communications

Catherine Rollins, Deputy Chief of Staff for the City of Everett

Matthew Hoffman, Executive Director Boston ASAP

Call to Order

1:06 p.m. Co-Chair Crosby called to order the Public Health Trust Fund Executive
Committee (PHTFEC) Meeting.

Approval of Minutes

Michael Sweeney moved for the approval of the PHTFEC minutes for March 7, 2018. Motion seconded by Co-Chair Crosby. Motion passed 4-0 as Rebekah Gewirtz was not present.

FY19 budget

1:08

Mark Vander Linden explained that the budget as proposed during last meeting was reformatted to combine both the proposed FY19 budgets for the Massachusetts Gaming Commission Research and Responsible Gaming and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Office of Problem Gambling Services. \$541,000 was cut from the overall budgets, bringing the combined budget total to slightly above \$8 million.

Chairman Crosby stated that the purpose of today's review was not to vote on the budget, rather it was meant to provide additional opportunities to discuss the proposed budget.

Mark Vander Linden explained that the GameSense budget was reduced by \$173,000 without compromising any of the previously stated goals. A request of the PHTFEC during the previous meeting, special population research was increased from \$50,000 to \$80,000. Since the previous meeting, the MGC further negotiated with UMass Medical School on the contract for a research consultant. He further added that in response to a recent comment made by the Gaming Policy Advisory Committee, there would be a memo accompanying final research reports outlining the action steps as informed by the report's findings.

Co-Chair Tucker noted that while the budget increase for the Special Populations studies was a direct reflection of comments made during the previous meeting, it still did not feel large enough. Mark Vander Linden responded that two of the three special population's projects are considered seed projects, so dollars for a complete study may not be necessary. For further consideration, the funding structure could remain the same and would address special populations which were identified but not awarded grant for study. Ideally a pool of ongoing funding would be ideal for special populations. She further added that special population versus statewide research feels lopsided, and that in absence of an itemized budget from UMass Amherst, it is difficult to envision the entire research budget as a whole. Mark Vander Linden responded that he had received an itemized budget from UMass; however it was not received in time to share during today's meeting.

Michael Sweeney stated that the allotted budget for special population's research falls below what he would like to see, and that he is still struggling with the meaningful impact of the proposed budget. Mark Vander Linden responded that \$100,000 for special population research would be ideal and would allow for an

additional project or an extension of an existing project. Co-Chair Crosby stated that large-scale, in depth, population study is extremely expensive. He suggested that the current special population research groups be asked what an ideal amount of funding is and what needs to be done.

Co-Chair Tucker agreed that putting out an RFI in the future or holding a session in the future with the current researchers would be beneficial. Co-Chair Crosby added that heavying up on certain populations within the sample of BGPS could be a solution for 2020.

1:31

Victor Ortiz introduced the DPH budget and expressed his gratitude for the feedback in guiding the budget. Infrastructure and capacity building component is gearing up for the implementation for the work within vulnerable communities. He stated that the communications campaign budget decreased \$500,000 which would allow for continued implementation of the campaign around men of color with a history of substance abuse as well as planning for two additional campaigns: targeting youth and parents as well as an additional at-risk population such as seniors or Asian Americans.

Co-Chair Tucker added that if there were additional money in the budget in FY19, those other campaigns could be implemented.

Co-Chair Tucker provided background on the Community Level Health project, stating that it will provide money to the local level to augment community initiatives already in place such as a community health needs assessment or health improvement plan so that local level needs are supported. \$100,000 would be available to each of the communities hosting a Level 1 Casino. Further, the Community Health Workers (CHW) project to integrate gambling education, screening, and referrals into community health centers and/or community mental health centers would build on the CHW assessments. By the end of the fiscal year, the needs assessment and trainings will be complete for two out of the three regions. As the CHWs will provide services to the community, they can also conduct VSEs. In response to a question about who CHWs serve, Victor Ortiz responded that CHWs primarily work with marginalized populations. Mark Vander Linden agreed that there is a role in a clinical space as part of the treatment process.

Co-Chair Crosby noted the synergy of these activities as well as outreach activities and suggested that GameSense Advisors would be ideal training for designated agents. Victor Ortiz responded that he has been working with Mark Vander Linden on identifying opportunities.

Marlene Warner asked how reimbursement could work and whether it was helpful to build capacity with people out in the community or to focus on treatment facilities.

Co-Chair Tucker added that a \$50,000 placeholder for the strategic plan was removed from the budget as a 5-year updated may be more appropriate than the anticipated 2 year update. The Committee agreed.

Michael Sweeney supported the idea of putting out an RFR to see how people shape the potential special populations budget and suggested that scalable tiers be incorporated into the RFR. Along the lines of special populations work, Michael Sweeney referred to a letter written by Giles Li of the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center which will appear as an attachment in the next meeting's materials.

Enrique Zuniga explained that the proposed FY19 budget allocated dollars for launching GameSense at Wynn, but that a portion of it may not need to be funded at the beginning of the year.

As the group was still seeking to reduce budget items to meet the \$8M target, Co-Chair Tucker added that the allotted \$50,000 could be used towards both tobacco and alcohol or could be moved to a future year. Michael Sweeney added that the recent activity in Massachusetts surrounding marijuana may be worth incorporating into marketing campaigns. Tucker indicated this initiative could address vaping and Juuling as well as marijuana.

Having no further questions, Co-Chair Tucker stated that the next PHTF meeting would be to vote on the budget.

Research Roles and Responsibilities

2:10

Mark Vander Linden stated that this item was meant to address previous concerns expressed by the PHTFEC. In response, he updated the Research roles and Responsibilities Memo to more accurately reflect the involvement of the PHTFEC in the gaming research agenda. Various stakeholders should be assured that there are many different groups who are dedicated to the planning and review of the research.

Co-Chair Crosby and Michael Sweeney agreed that the updated document correctly reflects the role of the PHTFEC; however it should be viewed more as an advisory memo as opposed to strict bylaws.

Co-Chair Tucker added that a translational role should be carved out to ensure that research findings are put into public and press friendly language. Mark Vander Linden responded that he could add a bullet point to the memo to discuss the roles of GRAC and its ties with other groups.

Definitions of Gambling Disorder

2:22

Mark Vander Linden explained that this item appears in the memo to address the previously expressed concern that that SEIGMA study does not capture problem gamblers as defined in the DSM-V. The concern was that the term "problem gamblers" was being used too broadly. In working with Rachel Volberg and other members of the SEIGMA team, it was determined that the SEIGMA definition of

problem gambling does capture individuals as defined in the DSM-V. Problem gambling is used as an umbrella term which includes the most severe forms of problem gambling g.

Jennifer Queally asked about the difference between DSM and PPGM. Looking at it from a criminal justice perspective, when people are defining recidivism rates so differently, it really means nothing if it can't be compared. Mark Vander Linden responded by explaining the history of the various terms. The PPGM is a newer screening instrument although it is gaining popularity. The PPGM compared with other screening instruments is advantageous for multiple reasons.

Marlene Warner added that the press care about the number, not the exact definition. Jennifer Queally responded that that the number is going to be based on how it's defined, and that it should be treated like other addictions. Mark Vander Linden responded that the 2% of problem gamblers have both significant negative consequences and impaired control, which is obviously different from having negative consequences but no signs of impaired control.

Matthew Hoffman added that from the perspective of a treatment provider, there are two question screeners which are extremely accurate in diagnosing someone with a gambling problem.

Jennifer Queally would like to ensure that when citing 2%, that the measure being used to come up with that answer is the same measure that is being used in other states. Marlene Warner responded that this is an issue afflicting the entire field and that there is not consistency anywhere. Mark Vander Linden said that he would share a report which goes into greater detail of looking at prevalence rates across jurisdictions based on different screeners.

Co-Chair Tucker stressed the importance of alignment regarding the presentation of the problem gambling statistic and ensuring the PHTFEC be aware of what the message is and comfortable with how it is presented.

Michael Sweeney shared the concern for both the public and PHTF in how decisions are made, and stated that the goal should be to provide access and help for healing in individuals. He added that he is skeptical that if there is a swing which doesn't fit the narrative, numbers are interpreted differently.

Strategic Planning Research Update

2:53 A strategic planning session will take place at UMass Amherst on May 22nd. Members of the PHTFEC are invited to join the session to help direct the research agenda.

Responsible Gaming Framework Version 2

2:58

Mark Vander Linden stated that the Responsible Gaming Framework (RGF) is meant to create an orientation to responsible gaming in Massachusetts. The first version was useful early on for the applicants of casino licensees and subsequently for the licensees once they were chosen. The updated RGF is meant to serve the same purpose as we move towards the opening of MGM and Wynn, and incorporates many changes as a result of learnings from the past few years of operating PPC.

The memo provides an overview of the changes made in the updated framework. Definition of responsible and problem gambling aligns with what is outlined in the SEIGMA study, and outlines a stepped-care approach which recognizes that not all players are alike. Notably, the updated RGF clearly endorses a precautionary approach which states that we do not wait for the evidence of effectiveness to catch up. GameSense and PlayMyWay are examples of programs which were launched using a precautionary approach. Invested more in the evaluation of these programs than in the actual programs themselves.

Co-Chair Crosby explained that the gaming industry typically believes that peer reviewed research on programs must exist as a way to limit strategies which deal with problem gambling. He believes that a precautionary approach is important and has received a lot of pushback especially from the AGA.

Enrique Zuniga added that Howard Shaffer added early on that a framework was an important way to guide research and responsible gaming. It is meant to inform rather than prescribe. Mark Vander Linden added that many casinos follow the AGA code of conduct; however, it includes minimal guidelines. This is the document which should inform the RG plan of MGM which should be prepared a month or two before they become operational.

3:17

Co-Chair Tucker asked if there was a CLAS framework to ensure that information is provided in a culturally and linguistically competent way for those who do not speak English as a first language or may have a disability. As we think about health and safety within the physical environment, would like to ensure that there is lighting and security cameras and small stairwells where people might get assaulted. This may have been a part of their licensing process.

Jennifer Queally asked about youth areas within the casino. Enrique Zuniga responded that there is not going to be youth areas but that there will be areas to sit which does not have to be done in conjunction with any other activity. Marlene Warner added that many gamblers who regularly visit Foxwoods and Mohegan arrive at Plainridge Park Casino thinking that there is a daycare.

Co-chair Tucker stated that if the host town has not passed regulation on it, she would like to incorporate vaping, juuling and e-cigarettes into the RGF so that they begin with the same set of standards. Co-chair Crosby stated that he would like to address juuling and marijuana derivative to an upcoming MGC agenda.

Michael Sweeney stated that while responsible marketing and advertising guidelines exist, they should also address digital platforms.

Co-Chair Tucker questioned whether it was appropriate to include the provision that house credit would not be offered to anyone on public assistance. Mark Vander Linden responded that he would look into exactly how house credit worked.

Co-chair Tucker inquired whether there was a way to bring engagement of the host community into the RGF more explicitly. In reading it, she felt that there was something missing between people within the casino and the broader local community. Michael Sweeney added that it may be worth coming up with a list of vulnerable populations within a certain proximity to the casino.

Public Comment

Catherine Rollins expressed her thanks for the work being done by the PHTFEC, and stated that she would like to get a stronger sense of what the process is.

Matthew Hoffman stated that he has received great feedback from clients who have interacted with the GameSense program as well as the Massachusetts Voluntary Self Exclusion program as well. He further added that in his experience, advertising is successful when pitched towards family and loved ones as it is less likely to appear to the problem gambler themselves. Finally, Matthew suggested that a residential treatment bed in Massachusetts would be helpful for problem gamblers. He stated that he comes across somebody monthly who would be in need for a residential program. Right now they are only in Minnesota and Virginia.

Brianne Tolson asked what is being done within the committee to communicate the work being done. Co-Chair Crosby responded that he was unsure if a mailing list for PHTF existed. Co-Chair Crosby responded that she would assume that if was interested then they would be present at the meeting but would consider ways to improve communication.

Other Business

4:00 *Having no further business, Jennifer Queally made a motion to adjourn. Steve seconded the motion.*

List of Documents and Other Items Used

1. Public Health Trust Fund Executive Committee, Notice of Meeting and Agenda dated April 4, 2018
2. Public Health Trust Fund Executive Committee, Meeting Minutes dated March 7, 2018
3. Proposed FY2019 Budget Memo dated April 4, 2018

4. Gaming Research Agenda Roles and Responsibilities April 4, 2018
5. Defining and measure problem gambling in Massachusetts Memo dated April 4, 2018
6. Draft Massachusetts Responsible Gaming Framework, Version 2 dated April 4, 2018