



Public Health Trust Fund Executive Committee (PHTFEC) Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: July 11, 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
Enrique Zuniga, Co-Chair, Commissioner, Massachusetts Gaming Commission
Michael Sweeney, Executive Director, Massachusetts State Lottery
Commission
Carlene Pavlos, Executive Director MA Public Health
Association
Spencer Lord, Attorney, Executive Office of Public Safety
and Security

Attendees

Steve Crosby, Chairman, Massachusetts Gaming Commission
Marlene Warner, Executive Director, Massachusetts Council on Compulsive
Gambling
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
Judith Glynn Principle, Strategic Science (telephone)
Jessica Collins, Executive Director, Public Health Institute
of Western MA
Rachel Volberg, SEIGMA Principal Investigator, UMASS
Amherst School of Public Health
Tom Land, UMASS Medical Center, MGC Research Consultant
Rebecca Bishop, Technical Assistance Provider
Jack Vondras, Senior TA Advisor
Ola Szczerepa, Project Coordinator

Call to Order

1:05 p.m. Co-Chair Tucker called to order the Public Health Trust Fund Executive Committee (PHTFEC) Meeting. Co-Chair Zuniga welcomed Carlene Pavlos and Spencer Lord, both acting as substitutes.

Approval of Minutes

1:08 p.m. Co-Chair Tucker requested approval of minutes. Teresa Fiore clarified that the vote is for 5/29 minutes.

Co-Chair Zuniga requested an edit to page 4 to clarify that the timing and direction of DFS regulation is unknown.

Carlene Pavlos stated that Rebekah Gewirtz probably did not mean “literal prevention”. Co-Chair Tucker agreed that she didn’t mean prevention as captured in the minutes did not imply preventing people from going to casinos.

Co-Chair Zuniga made a motion to approve upon incorporation of the aforementioned edits. Michael Sweeney seconded the motion and Co-Chair Tucker seconded for 3-0 approval with two abstentions.

FY19 budget

1:12pm Mark Vander Linden explained that the Gaming Research Update memo was organized by reports released since January, followed by upcoming deliverables and finally a list of all reports completed between 2013-2017. He invited all attendees to review the reports at their convenience.

Steve Crosby noted that there was a meeting held in Plainville the week prior to update the commission and public on the safety and crime impacts to date. The data showed an uptick in credit card fraud and traffic, however local law enforcement did not believe it was related to PPC. There were no changes in domestic violence, bankruptcies or problem gambling. As there was no notable increase in problem gambling as is expected upon the opening of a new casino, it was hypothesized that the area was already saturated due to Rhode Island casinos. Steve stated that this was the first time in which longitudinal data was used to assess the impacts of community gambling.

Co-Chair Tucker asked if the analysis included the areas around Plainville. Steve responded that the host and surrounding communities were used. Carlene Pavlos

asked whether host and surrounding mean contiguous. Steve clarified that the geography was not defined by statute; rather it was defined as a community which was believed to be affected by the introduction of a casino.

Mark Vander Linden introduced the upcoming studies being released and provided a brief explanation of the deliverables. Co-Chair Tucker asked that highlights of all reports be presented during the next meeting.

Rachel Volberg suggested that abstracts of papers which are sent for publication are shared in advance with the PHTFEC. Mark Vander Linden agreed and added that papers sent out for publication do not go through the MGC peer-review process, so oftentimes they are not seen until after publication. He added that “fact sheets” will go through a new review process with GRAC, who will focus on clarity and ease of understanding. Additionally, their role will be to pull out policy and practice implications from the research.

Spencer Lord asked about the data collection methodologies used for the crime studies. Steve Crosby responded that the crime analyst, Christopher Bruce, works with local police departments on coding analysis and implements standardization from record managements systems. Carlene Pavlos asked whether prostitution and gender based violence was recorded and whether or not the opportunity to use this process to improve data collection around race is being taken advantage of. Mark Vander Linden responded that he will share the baseline which he believes includes sexual violence and that further analysis is a possibility based on data collected.

Mark Vander Linden introduced Strategic Planning and explained that the goal of this engagement is to build upon the research done to date and to produce a multi-year plan which will evolve the research program to make sure that it is addressing the needs of the commonwealth. Judith Glynn provided a status of her work to date and stated that she is planning on meeting individually with members of the PHTFEC to gather their thoughts on a series of topics. She explained that when thinking about objectives, it is important to understand the potential outcomes and the strategies needed. That being said, she asked the group and any engaged stakeholder to think about the needs which they have that can be answered by the research. She commended the work carried out to date and stated that it was the most comprehensive agenda which she knows of in the world.

Co-Chair Tucker appreciates the way in which Judith discussed the research and her work and believes that special population work is one area in which this work can have substantial impact. Judith responded that it is important to reach the people who are in the most need of mitigating harm and expanding benefits, and added that it is surprising the extent to which this has not happened in many other jurisdictions.

Carlene Pavlos stated that she agrees with the way in which Judith seems to be approaching this work, and added that she will be framing her comments at future meetings from a community health perspective.

Victor Ortiz was one of a few stakeholders who was surprised not to see an uptick in problem gambling in the area surrounding Plainridge Park Casino. He wishes to explore the additional hypothesis that this is not the result of saturation but rather a result of the strong health of the region. Steve Crosby added that findings from Springfield will be especially telling as it is more isolated than Everett and will therefore have more of an impact.

Michael Sweeney noted an error in the last bullet on page 2 and stated that the Public Health Institute of Western, MA as well as the Boston Chinatown Institute should also be included. He emphasized the importance of putting dollars towards places in the community which would organically house interactions with problem gamblers.

Carlene Pavlos is concerned that crime reports are not capturing suicidality as a result of problem gambling.

Regional Planning Process

2:21pm Rebecca provided an overview of the regional planning process for region B which focused on informing prevention strategies for youth and high risk populations. Staff partnered with residents and community organizations to learn about their knowledge, beliefs and attitudes about problem gambling and coupled that with existing research. The regional process was framed through a health equity lens.

Co-Chair Zuniga asked how community stakeholders were identified. Co-Chair Tucker responded that a list was generated early in the process, some of which was shared by Victor.

Ola further clarified that two consultants from Mass TAPP assigned to the project began with lists of names and created broad categories of sectors, ending up with 10-11 categories. An intersectionality approach was used to identify men of color with a history of substance misuse. Rachel Volberg stated that problem gambling prevalence rates are higher for both men and women of color and that they tend to have a bimodal pattern of gambling.

Ola introduced the Photo Voice project and stated that Springfield youth have a lot of exposure to gambling. The study found that half had negative attitudes towards gambling, while the other half believed it was okay to sometimes gamble. Rebecca reviewed the remaining 8 recommendation informed by the studies' findings, including caregiver communications, engagement strategies for men in recovery, programmatic recommendation for youth, collaboration amongst multiple public health sectors.

Carlene Pavlos applauded the data collection efforts and the use of a health equity lens for analysis. She recommended that older adults be incorporated into the discussion as baby boomers are quickly approaching senior status. She further added that recommendations and findings be framed in more a more general sense, beyond just problem gambling, which would inform broader intervention strategies and social services.

Jessica Collins questioned whether the ambassador or Photo Voice project was tested for effectiveness and perception before it was rolled out. Now that the project is completed she would like to know whether or not participants felt that it was effective.

Tom Land expressed a desire to broaden the number of people and their attitudes towards gambling. He stated that when all of the data collected on expanded gaming becomes available, there will be new perspectives on ways in which data can be utilized.

Western MA Stakeholder Meeting

3:26pm Co-Chair Tucker introduced a meeting scheduled for the end of September with the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission. She wanted to ensure that awareness of the meeting is spread and suggested that a high level overview of the PHTFEC would be beneficial for attendees. Co-Chair Zuniga added that the community mitigation fund is an additional effort which may be of interest to the group.

Carlene Pavlos asked whether the Springfield Health Department had been engaged and suggested to do so if not. Victor Ortiz responded that they had not formally been engaged.

OPGS FY19 Budget

3:38pm Co-Chair Tucker introduced the Office of Problem Gambling Services budget by stating that the office would be hiring additional staff. She further stated that she would like to begin a project in the area of intimate partner violence as individuals at greater risk of problem gambling is both the perpetrator and survivor of intimate violence.

Carlene Pavlos suggested that the office engage the statewide coalition against domestic and sexual violence.

Public Comment

3:47pm Jessica Collins, Executive Director of the Public Health Institute of Western MA requested that more information be shared with stakeholders in western Massachusetts. She invited the MGC to present their work to date and would like a lot of the misconceptions around research findings to be addressed. Marlene Warner, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling, added that she agrees that engagement of the PHTFEC with the public is minimal.

Michael Sweeney stated that he is still confused as to why a large amount of resources are going in one direction and believes that the group needs to consider spreading dollars with defined responsibilities in order to make an assessment of the value of return.

4:00pm *Having no further business, Michael Sweeney made a motion to adjourn. Co-Chair Zuniga seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.*

List of Documents and Other Items Used

1. Public Health Trust Fund Executive Committee, Notice of Meeting and Agenda dated July 11, 2018
2. Public Health Trust Fund Executive Committee, Meeting Minutes dated May 9, 2018
3. Public Health Trust Fund Executive Committee, Meeting Minutes dated May 29, 2018
4. Gaming Research Update dated July 11, 2018
5. Regional Planning Process in Region B July 11, 2018
6. Regional Planning Process: A community-centered approach to developing prevention messaging for youth and high-risk populations
7. New frontiers for youth-centered prevention programming using photovoice
8. New frontiers for problem gambling prevention: ambassador project
9. FY 19 Budget Update dated June 29, 2018