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P R O C E E D I N G S

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Good morning. We'll call to order Public Meeting 253. Up first, approval of the minutes. Commissioner Stebbins?

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Sure, Madam Chair. The minutes from the September 27th, 2018, meeting are in your packet. I went through these already, but I noticed there was just a small error under 1201 for the Northeast Center for Tradeswomen Equity update. The talk about the Tradeswomen Tuesdays being offered by Boston and Springfield. It's really offered in Boston and Springfield, but municipalities really don't offer those, but that's the location. But other than that, I would move that we approve the minutes subject to any other immaterial errors or grammatical changes.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: I second that.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Any discussion? All in favor?

[Vote taken]

4-0. Executive Director Bedrosian, your administrative update.

>> MR. BEDROSIAN: Yes. Good morning, Commissioners.

>> Good morning.

>> MR. BEDROSIAN: I just have housekeeping agenda items. Some leftover items from the end-of-year stuff that we will get to at the next meeting. I think will be the year-end financial closeout, whether -- I think our CIFO will be able to be there, but if not, we'll get a substitute and get that done. We should get that off the books. And I know Commissioner Zuniga is also working on the annual report, so we'll keep on those two things.

For today's agenda, just a couple of adjustments. Item number 4 is off. There was a last-minute hiccup with that. So that is off. And on item number 5, one of our presenters is -- has -- is stuck in a little bit of traffic. So we're going to move Director Griffin up and we might have to take a short break just so we can get to item number 5 when our folks are here. So that is all I have. We do have one other item, though, under my -- that I will turn over to the Commission to formalize, I think, an action that they took last meeting.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: So that item that the Executive Director is referring to is the confirmation of the interim chair.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Well, I would like to move, because I started that motion actually two weeks ago and was told that that item was not on the agenda as a vote. It is now as a vote. It is perhaps a formality, but it's an affirmation of the conversation we had two weeks ago to designate you as chair of the Commission. Commissioner Cameron, on an interim basis, so I would move that the Commission designate commissioner Gayle Cameron as the Interim Chair of the Commission until such time as the Governor designates a permanent chair of the Commission, as it's his or her statutory obligation.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Second. Are you doubling down, or are you backing out?

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: No.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: A little hesitant.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Is there any discussion before we close the vote? And I suspect I should abstain from this vote. So all in favor?

[Vote taken]

3-0. Again, I just -- I thank you for your confidence. We are working on an interim basis. We all realize that. We will continue to work collaboratively, as we always have, with staff and among the four of us. You know, I'm very confident in our work. We have important work going forward, and we will get it done. So thank you all.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Moving on. Now we'll move to Workforce, Supplier and Diversity Development, Director Griffin.

>> MS. GRIFFIN: Congratulations, Interim Chair Cameron.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Thank you.

>> MS. GRIFFIN: So I'm here to present information on the Encore Boston Harbor Vendor Plan. We have put the plan up for public comment, and I just wanted to give a little background for both you and our listeners here today. Licensees are all required to submit an affirmative action program for equal opportunity for minority women and veteran business enterprises for the provision of goods and services procured by the gaming establishment. As per license condition 11, the plan shall include a robust public events and outreach component to those businesses. And also in accordance with Chapter 23K 21, the affirmative marketing program shall identify specific goals for the utilization of minority business enterprises, women business enterprises and veteran business enterprises.

Pursuant to license condition 16, Encore Boston Harbor shall submit a plan to identify local vendors as well in conjunction with a vendor advisory team identified by the Commission. So no action is expected from the Commission today. Commission staff have posted this plan, and it will be up for public comment until 3:00 P.M. on Friday, October 19th. Encore Boston Harbor representatives are currently scheduled to present the plan to the Commission for vote on Thursday, October 26th.

I also just wanted to mention that the public outreach portion of the plan is taking place. Encore has already had three vendor fairs that focus on various purchasing items. And today, going on today from 10:00 until 12:00 in Somerville at the Holiday Inn, maintenance services. And this is everything from locksmithing, pest control, painting, water treatment, window washing, carpentry, all of those vendor types are expected to go to the vendor fair today. And then next Wednesday, there's another

vendor fair focused on hotel operations, retail and transportation over in Cambridge at the Royal Sonesta. So again, on our website, we welcome public comments on the plan. Any questions?

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: I had just a quick question and a quick point. Have you -- I know it's out for public comment. Have we specifically invited members of the vendor advisory team through e-mail or what have you to go and review the plan and offer their comments?

>> MS. GRIFFIN: Yes. I sent the plan out to about 30 or so representatives from various business groups that we've worked with in the past, some that we haven't, and waiting for them to respond.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Okay. And just a note, I see that we asked for this back on June 22nd, and they need to respond within 90 days, and it looks like they came in just under the wire.

>> MS. GRIFFIN: Yes, they came in within the allotted time period required by law.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Okay.

>> MS. GRIFFIN: And they have also submitted a revision based on staff comments so that the plan that is posted has some changes to the original, and we anticipate based on feedback from public comments that they may want to, you know, take those into consideration as well.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Okay. Thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: So will we be talking about those changes and updates or highlights of that October 26th meeting that you mentioned?

>> MS. GRIFFIN: So I'll ask Encore -- let me back up. I will feed the public comments as they come into Encore. And we will ask Encore to submit a clean version and a track change version, should they want to make changes, and you'll vote on that.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Mm-hmm. Okay. But we had seen a version of this document before, right? I was just reading it recently, and it just rang a little familiar, which is, you know, positive.

>> MS. GRIFFIN: Actually, the version in your packet is the revised version. And I'll just say that they increased their goals, and they made other nonmaterial changes to, you know, but I think the positive and the most material is they increased their goals for minority and women-owned businesses.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Great.

>> MS. GRIFFIN: So --

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: So the next time they'll be in to present, and we'll be able to ask some questions at that time.

>> MS. GRIFFIN: Sure. Yes.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Great.

>> MS. GRIFFIN: David Grenada and other Encore folks will be in to present the plan and give you background and also update you on their efforts to outreach to local and diverse vendors.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Great. Anything else?

>> COMMISSIONER O'BRIEN: How far in advance -- I think it's Thursday, the 25th -- how far in advance of that meeting would we be able to see any revisions?

>> MS. GRIFFIN: I think we can -- we can work it out so that you see maybe most of the revisions, unless there's late-breaking -- that's why we posted the plan early. We're

hoping to get -- and that's why we're talking about it today, to get many of the revisions or suggestions early. But we'll make sure you get it as early as possible, Commissioner.

>> COMMISSIONER O'BRIEN: Okay.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Thank you, Director. One more item.

>> MS. GRIFFIN: And then I really just wanted to give you a general update. Last night -- well, actually, many of us were in Springfield. At 2:00 in the afternoon, we had our access and opportunity committee meeting, and MGM was at their last meeting presenting their final diversity statistics regarding both Workforce and Supplier Diversity. And it was a great meeting, almost bittersweet. Some folks actually expressing that they're going to miss this meeting, which I couldn't have imagined when we began these meetings some years ago, you know, as Commissioner Stebbins pointed out in his remarks, that these meetings started, and they weren't always -- maybe there was a little bit of -- what did you say, Commissioner?

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Contentious?

>> MS. GRIFFIN: They were a little contentious, yes. But I just wanted to say that MGM surpassed all of their goals for both Workforce and Supplier Diversity. And the other things that I took note of was in terms of their construction workforce, 71% of those workers, of those tradespeople, were from Massachusetts. And you know how close MGM is to the Connecticut line and New York. I think that was pretty significant. 55% of the tradespeople were from Western Massachusetts. 35% from Springfield. So pretty significant.

And later that evening, MGM had a construction closeout event where they celebrated and gave awards to vendors and suppliers who exceeded goals and really acknowledged the hard work. Tony Gladney, Vice President of MGM Relations International, made the trip and gave some remarks in addition to local leadership. Commissioner Stebbins represented the Commission and commended MGM on the intentionality and the hard work that really took place to accomplish these significant achievements.

And one thing I just wanted to say was that MGM closed the event with a charge to keep the intentional focus on diverse workforce, on other construction projects in the region to ensure that these workers or these tradespeople actually have work to go to. And I thought that was great.

So any comments from the Commissioners who were in attendance?

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Yeah, no, I think you captured it well. Let me just mention a couple of things. I did have -- I have had the opportunity to attend those AOC meetings sporadically, not as much as commissioner Stebbins or Chair Crosby when he was here. But looking back into the trajectory, I remember the early struggle with just the reporting format, you know, the need, for example, that this group really needed to see by vendor, by trade, for the period, cumulative all the rest of it. That was critical to the functioning of the committee.

And I think the most critical part, which was said, you know, two days ago, and I'm sure others will mention it, was really your involvement, your steering of this committee in this very good, amicable, but firm way at times to keep it moving, to keep the discussion on point because I do remember, it's not hard to imagine, sometimes the conversations would veer off into particulars that are really not relevant to that

conversation. So keeping it productive, keeping it on time, et cetera, was really a testament to your great efforts, and I just wanted to mention that up front.

Another thing I'll mention also is, as we look back on this, and I was looking at the slides and hearing some of the stories, the personal stories are really wonderful. Some of them are anecdotal, but they really represent the -- what goes on in this effort. So I think as we continue to operate now Encore only, we really ought to start compiling anecdotes and eventually a report that incorporates -- and this is some of the comments that were made a couple of days ago to report on the best practices, what made it work, the tactics that were often come, you know, from one month to the next and followed up on. Because I think the overall story can be very well summarized with anecdotes and best practices into something that is really an important -- an important legacy. So I would encourage us to start thinking about those. They are there. I saw a slide. I remember -- I remembered the event of the two parents, the two fathers with daughters, you know, each of them separate, but each father had been a union member, and they had their own daughter there. You know, anecdotes like that are really powerful. And it's some of the things that we need to be thinking about compiling and ultimately putting in a report.

>> MS. GRIFFIN: Thank you. I appreciate your remarks. I think one of the great things that happened at every AOC meeting were -- in addition to reviewing the statistics -- MGM reminded us by showing us a video of either a tradesperson or, you know, a business owner talking about how this project impacted them and where they were before the project. And that was a great reminder that these statistics represent real people and the impact that this project -- these projects have had on their lives is significant, so thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Yeah, I would just like to add, both events were very gratifying to see the results and to see everybody, you know, agreeing that the AOC had really come around to be more of a team, not necessarily, just a committee. But picking up on Commissioner Zuniga's point, Jill did not start off as our chair. The wonderful Ron Marlowe was sitting in that position until he had an incredible opportunity and had to leave. So we say that Jill kind of got catapulted into that seat and landed perfectly, and I've learned a lot just from attending those meetings with her, and to your point, seeing how they guides and directs a meeting and keeping everybody focused and on task. It was impressive. So congrats.

>> MS. GRIFFIN: I certainly remember those early meetings as maybe a personal challenge and professional challenge.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Yeah, I would like to echo that. I also got to attend, only sporadically, but I always think that community leaders are looking to see what's real and who is going through the motions. And I think that they got a chance to see, with your leadership. And I did see you grow in that role as well. And that's always nice to see. But they want to make sure that this isn't someone just mailing it in. And I think that they got to see that firsthand with the efforts of our licensee and with your leadership. So really job well done.

>> MS. GRIFFIN: Great, thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER O'BRIEN: Thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Okay. All right. Thank you very much. Next we have research and responsible gaming, Director Vander Linden and team.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Do you need any time to set up, Mark, or anything like that?

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: (Away from mic) good morning, Commissioners.

>> Good morning.

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: I am joined here with Dr. Rachel Volberg whom you're very familiar with over the past several years and the excellent work that she does. I'm also joined by Dr. Henry Renski, who I don't -- you came in and presented the baseline.

>> HENRY RENSKI: Yes.

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: But not quite as familiar of a face. So I wanted to just start off and welcome Dr. Renski and just a brief introduction so that you know kind of the degree and level of expertise that comes to the report that he will be presenting on the real estate follow-up report for Plainville and the surrounding communities. Dr. Renski is an associate professor of regional planning at UMASS. He teaches courses in quantitative methods, geographic information systems, or GIS, spatial analysis and state and local development policy. His research focuses on the understanding the technical and social forces driving regional economic competitiveness and transformation in building upon knowledge to improve the effectiveness of economic development policy.

Clearly, the right person at the table to lead this specific project. As we take a look at what are the impacts of opening up a casino on the regional real estate market. The report that we will -- that Dr. Renski and Dr. Volberg will present today focuses on the initial impacts of Plainridge Park Casino on the residential, commercial and industrial real estate markets for Plainville and the surrounding communities.

In 2016, Dr. Renski was before the Commission and presented the baseline studies that largely focused on the period of between around 2008 and 2015. So the period of time before Plainridge Park Casino opened up. We're all very interested in understanding what these true impacts are and the variety of different ways that we look at what potential impacts are of opening up casinos. It's an interest of this Commission, and it was an initial mandate or directive of the Expanded Gaming Act. With that, I will turn it over to Dr. Renski to present one of the first follow-up reports that we have examining casino impacts.

>> HENRY RENSKI: Thank you, Mark, very much. Thank you for having me. Oh. That's much better. I'm naturally loud anyway. So probably good to move this further from me. First of all, I'd like to acknowledge, you know, the contributions of my colleagues at the Donahue Institute who, you know, we basically worked together on this. And so even though while I'm here presenting, especially my colleague, Thomas Peake, who has done a lot of work and Rebecca Loveland who has also been instrumental in helping develop this report.

I'm going to go over, I think, what are the main points from the report and try my best to answer your questions about the report. And I'll try to be brief. So the general purchase of this study, as it was introduced, was that in the past, we've done baseline reports, which all really kind of took us to the point before the actual opening of -- in the case of Plainville, the expanded gaming facility, but kind of went over the history of real estate trends in each of the different study areas and then kind of stopped right before we got to the impacts.

So this is the first report from the three study areas where we actually had some

data after the -- not only the licensing but the opening. Now, the report generally follows the precedent that we set in the baseline reports and that we kind of divide things into, you know, focus on residential and then a separate section on commercial industrial. Most of our analysis is based upon the analysis of secondary data, and we try to use publicly available secondary data for most of the indicators when we can. That's not always possible. Sometimes the data is proprietary, and we don't have much of a choice. But we lean towards the public data so that, you know, other people can, you know -- we can provide the data to other people, and they can, you know, follow with what we did.

We've also done some stakeholder interviews this time, so to kind of, you know, after we've done some of our preliminary data analysis, go in and ground truth our results by actually talking to, you know, really kind of community leaders and people that understand the real estate market in Plainville and around Plainville. Our general approach, I call it kind of a before/after/comparative approach. We tried to track trends not just before the opening but the licensing of the casino to try to establish what was the trend in the real estate market before any of this happened. And then note the time of the opening, the time of the licensing, the time of the opening and then kind of see what happened after for as long as we can. And then we also tried to compare that to the surrounding communities as officially designated because, you know, there might be spillover impacts in those communities that we expect. But then to the broader region, for which we don't really -- we expect that to kind of almost act as a comparison group because the larger region is so much larger, we don't really expect the impacts in the larger region to be quite as, you know, as apparent. So it kind of somewhat follows the same real estate conditions but shouldn't see as much of an impact. So it does provide a little bit of a way for us to benchmark the effects of the casino versus what else is going on in the broader real estate market. And we used the state as well, the state trends.

And I wouldn't be an academic if I didn't have a slide of caveats. Usually the slide's at the end. This time I put it at the beginning, just in case I, you know, bore you a little bit along the way. But these are very important because we're talking about very complicated markets. It's not -- we are not doing experimentation in the laboratory sense where you can kind of hold everything else constant in a lab. But what we try to do is really our best job of, you know, identifying the effects that we can see but also with a certain degree of moderate city and caution I think is our approach. Part of the reason why the report that we're doing now is that it's our first opportunity to look at after data and, you know, some of this public data takes a couple years for them to produce it, you know. So that's one of my big caveats. It would be nice to have more data and look at more time, but we try to use the most recent data that we possibly could, given what indicators we were looking at.

Plainville, in particular, we're talking like a relatively small real estate market, especially when you get into certain types of submarkets like multiunit housing. Not a lot of that in Plainville, right? Not even a lot of single-family residential in and right around the site of Plainridge. So just be aware that some of the trends that we look at end up being a little bit volatile because this is what we call small data problems. And then another point that is very important -- so I'm going to come back to this at the end because I think it's almost worthwhile as a point of discussion is that it gets very difficult

to distinguish the Plainridge Park Casino impacts from those of other activities around the area of which there's been a lot going on in the last few years right before even the opening of Plainridge Park. If you see my little map there, just within, like, a six-mile distance of Plainridge Park which I'm sure you're all aware, we have the Wrentham village outlets, Gillette stadium, within six miles to the north, it's basically the next exit, right?

Then you've got the Xfinity center, what we used to call Great Woods just down the road from that. All of these things combined, you know, make it very difficult to truly separate out, you know, one particular amenity like Plainridge Park from what's going on in the broader region. So, you know, again, it's a caveat, but it's the reality of, you know, development in that area.

So what are some of the main findings? Well, you know, to kind of get to the punch line, we don't really find a lot of dramatic difference going on in and around Plainville and the different real estate markets after the opening of the casino. And this kind of goes across almost all of the different indicators. So we're not -- so to kind of start with home sales, right. So we look at single-family, then we also look at multiunit sales. And we look at both the number and the value of the sales. And this graphic here is really showing the number. And the darkest blue line, the one that's the most volatile, that's Plainville. That's the host community. And then the slightly less dark line, that's the surrounding communities. And then we benchmarked that to the region and the state. And so what we're basically seeing here is that, yes, there was an increase in home sales that happened after the license was awarded, and it's petered out a little bit since but increasing. But this is consistent with trends in the area before the casino opened and fairly closely matches trends in the broader area. So, you know, did the casino have an influence? It may have. But it wasn't such a dramatic influence that it's really beyond what we might just expect looking at historical trends in Plainville and other areas around there.

Oh, condominium sales is also separate out single family from condominium. There's not a lot of multiunit to look at separately. Condo sales, very similar. Sales have been growing but sales have been growing statewide as well, and especially in that region of the state.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Dr. Renski.

>> HENRY RENSKI: Yes.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Can I just pause for a minute on the first one or two slides?

>> HENRY RENSKI: Sure.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: And this is a point you made, but I want to make sure I understand it. The y-axis represents change, right?

>> HENRY RENSKI: Sort of. It's basically, if you divide every year by the starting year, so it's not quite -- I'm being a statistician here -- it's not quite percentage change, but it's a way to measure kind of the year -- year-to-year change that allows you to compare areas that are fundamentally different sizes.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Okay, that's where I was going to.

>> HENRY RENSKI: Yeah.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Because the small data is always on top. As you go down -- you flow, Plainridge first, then region, then state. Even though your point is

that the trends are similar, are we simply observing the small data/big data caveat that you referenced earlier?

>> HENRY RENSKI: Yeah, that's certainly a problem. When you have a small baseline, any change that you have over that that is relative to the base --

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Yep.

>> HENRY RENSKI: It's not that it's erroneous because it's not erroneous, but having a little bit of growth over a small base makes it look like it's really fast growth.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Yes.

>> HENRY RENSKI: And, you know, that's not necessarily why the Plainville line is always above the base. You know, it could have been that the base for Plainville was a down year, you know. But at the same time, it's more of the trend kind of that you want to keep in mind, not necessarily who is above what. Now, there's some other measures, though, like sales price, right? Rice is already naturally indexed that kind of controls for the size of the different area. And that will be like the next series of slides. So on price, it is much more comparable in the levels.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Oh, okay.

>> HENRY RENSKI: Yeah. When I get to that, I'll point it out. But that's an excellent point. Honestly, I think I just talked about that exact same thing last week in my quantitative methods class for planners.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: We're probably at that level, then?

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: I think we missed that. The students might have missed it.

>> HENRY RENSKI: That's right. They're doing homework right now. That's what I -- I want to assume. Okay. Condominium sales. I think, you know, what we're seeing is, again, you know, the general trend in the study area and the state, and Plainridge -- Plainville, sorry, and the surrounding communities is one of an upward trend, but it's not -- what you're not seeing in that is this big spike of activity that keeps going up after either the licensing or after the opening. And that's really what we're looking for, and we're not seeing it, right? Or if you think that maybe it had negative impact in some cases, like you would want to see, like, a very noticeable, you know, downward trend associated that you don't see in the comparison areas. We're not seeing either of those things. I'm not really seeing either of those things when I look at the prices. So this is an example of what I was talking about, right? This is kind of the median price of home sales during the historical period, right? Adjusted for inflation. So these are comparable, right? So when I see that right now Plainville, you know, in the most recent period that we had data for, the median single-family home price was slightly less than the surrounding communities. But pretty close. But what I'm really looking for is the trend. So I see a little bit of an upward bump in the surrounding communities, a slight increase in Plainridge but not enough to actually be very conclusive that, you know, it was really the influence of Plainridge Park, like independently of other things going on in the region.

Condo sales, I actually see a little bit more of a bump. And so we looked at this -- and I do a statistical model in the report, you know, for these sales value indicators, and controlling for a number of other things. And in the statistical model which I don't talk about in this report, I do try to control for, you know, differences in the characteristics of the housing stock, you know, the before and after trends, a number of

other factors. And I find a very modest and what we kind of consider borderline statistical significance in condos and increase after the opening. But it's very small. And it's so close to the border of what we think of conventional significance that I don't think of it as being an extremely strong indicator, I think is the way that I would honestly require it. But there could have been a bump. And this is in the surrounding communities, not in Plainville itself. And then so we looked at some of the other reports that our colleagues have been doing. And it might be that, you know, there is a fairly small, but we're talking about a small market number of employees that moved to the region. It wasn't a huge bump because most of the people are commuting in from other places or already live there. So there could have been a slight increase in demand in the condominium market. We think of employees maybe moving to Plainridge, but again, it's not the kind of thing where we can have a lot of confidence in it. But there was a bump. And that was just in condos. Yeah.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: And this is sales, not necessarily new construction, right?

>> HENRY RENSKI: Right, not new construction and not rentals, which I haven't gotten to yet.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Okay.

>> HENRY RENSKI: But this is in the sales price of condos. And there was, you know, a fairly substantial -- actually, I think that was a rental development that went in along that street.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: But there are very few condos, Doctor. Did you make that point when you opened?

>> HENRY RENSKI: Yeah, there's enough to do statistical analysis of them.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Okay.

>> HENRY RENSKI: But not -- you know, it's not -- there are condos in the area, right? But it's not a huge condo market either. So what that does is creates more volatility.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Yes.

>> HENRY RENSKI: And makes it harder to distinguish whether or not it's a true effect from a statistics perspective, yeah. But not so small that I wouldn't even run the tests. If it was so small, I wouldn't even have done it.

So looking at rents, and I have some particular caveats of rents because the rental data, as we explained in the baseline report that we got is proprietary. And might miss out on -- and it's from online, people online reporting rents, which is known to be somewhat biased, in favor of larger rental units as opposed to, you know, I'm renting out -- I'm an individual renting out my house, right? Those people often don't go through the online rental websites. And so the data that we have is basically straight from web, and it's going to be biased in favor of the larger rental markets but larger rental developments, sorry. But even so, we think that it still provides a good indicator of what's going on in the overall market, even though it might not be the perfect indicator of everything going on in the market. So even though it's not perfect, we actually think it has some value.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: And is that bias reflect in the actual rent?

>> HENRY RENSKI: Yeah, the prices tend to be higher.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Tend to be higher?

>> HENRY RENSKI: Yeah, yeah.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Okay.

>> HENRY RENSKI: But, again, what we're mainly looking for is the change over time because that bias would have existed, at least for a certain span of history, in that data. I can talk about this a little bit more later on if you want. I don't want to take up too much of your time going into that kind of nuanced technical stuff unless you really want me to.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Okay.

>> HENRY RENSKI: But so what we're seeing here, again, is, you know, we have rising rents, but they really coincide with the area trends. So hard to pin on Plainridge, but certainly not -- what we're not seeing is a decline in rental prices. That's for certain. Building permits. Building permits is another indicator that tends to be very, very volatile, you know, in a town like Plainville or its neighboring communities, you might have one big development that goes up for permitting, and that just spikes the data. And so it's hard to -- it's hard to really kind of separate this out. And you can actually see that in the historical data for Plainridge. But we aren't seeing a lot going on as far as, like, this kind of sustained increase in permitting activity in Plainville or in its neighboring communities or at least not to the extent that it's without precedent in the larger area.

The same thing really goes with the value of the permits that people are proposing. There's a slight bump in the surrounding communities, but we also see a slight bump in the larger region. When I say larger region, it's really the, you know -- I'm sorry, the names of the counties are slipping my mind at this point. Do you remember? Yeah, Norfolk and Bristol, thank you, Rachel. That's what our benchmark larger region is.

So now turning to kind of the commercial market -- and, you know, there are -- there is new kind of commercial -- and I believe a slightly mixed-use development going in in and around the park, I think diagonally, like across the park, right? But, again, our focus is whether or not, you know, this kind of development going on in the region is really due to the park itself, which is a point I'm going to come up with a little bit later. So this first indicator is commercial rentable building area. And so here you see this big spike after the licensing. And as far as we could tell, a lot of that is actually from the construction of -- the expansion of the Plainridge itself. So the expansion leads to a one-time spike in the amount of commercial building area that's rentable, that's on the market. And, you know, it's been slightly increasing ever since, but really that spike, you know, we went back and looked, and that was actually due to some construction related to the park. It might not be all. There might be some other, but certainly the park was included in that.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: But what kind of space? Is this kind of warehouse for materials, for example, or what --

>> HENRY RENSKI: Well, this would be commercial.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Oh, commercial.

>> HENRY RENSKI: Right. So that would include -- I assume that the gaming floor is considered in a commercial building.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Oh, okay. Thank you.

>> HENRY RENSKI: You know, and warehousing would probably be considered

under industrial, but I would have to ask my colleague, Thomas, because he's the one that really did the deep dive into the commercial data. But I can write that down.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: No, I -- thank you. I think you answered the question.

>> HENRY RENSKI: Yeah. I believe that that's commercial.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: But this would be from tax receipts, say, from town tax receipts, in other words?

>> HENRY RENSKI: This data is actually one of the proprietary sources, again, that I believe is based upon real estate listings.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Okay.

>> HENRY RENSKI: And that's from the -- that's Costar data. They have a number of different barometers. It's not the online rental data even though that's the source. They have a number of different products that they offer, and they track what they say is kind of real estate, commercial and industrial real estate inventory, and you can pin that down at pretty small levels.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Okay.

>> HENRY RENSKI: So industrial -- we did look at industrial rentable area in the report, but I have to tell you that there's so little industrial in and around Plainville, I would take it with a grain of salt, just any indicator about industrial. So we do report it because we think it's important, and that's actually where I think, you know, manufacturing. And warehousing is one that I'm not quite sure of because it really depends on how they define it, so I'll have to ask my colleague about that. But we don't really see -- you know, there is some slight growth in rentable building in industrial but, again, those are large properties. One goes off the market, and it can make the whole thing jump. Or one goes on the market, and it can make the whole thing jump.

Vacancy rates are interesting. Plainville historically has had really low commercial vacancy rates. And we do see -- but because it's a relatively small market, it does tend to be volatile. Here we're comparing Plainville with surrounding communities and the state as a whole. You know, vacancy rates in the state as a whole have been going down as the economy has improved. Plainville is always much lower than the state. It did make a jump up in the period after the opening of Plainville, but rather than -- but it seems to have gone down since. So rather than an indicator of kind of the real estate market worsening, it's probably more of an indication of some of the new development that's been going on in that area leading to a temporary increase in commercial vacancies, but then as new people move into the commercial space as they start leasing that space, then it goes down. So really what we need is a little bit more data to, you know, over time to see whether or not that's really kind of a trend versus a spike. And like I said, there is new commercial development going in, you know, right at that same interchange -- interchange around where Plainville is. And so that could have put a lot of new activity on the market. But from what I hear, it's actually been leasing pretty fast.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Okay.

>> HENRY RENSKI: That's one of the things that we got out of our interviews with stakeholders. I have a little bit of that later on. The lease rates, you know, still so far little evidence of a sustained rise or drop in commercial lease rates. This one I'm splitting out commercial into office commercial versus nonoffice commercial. But not

really seeing a lot. There is kind of a drop again in the nonoffice commercial space that happens after the opening of Plainridge. But, again, that could be due to new space coming on the market. And then creating a little bit of a temporary excess of supply over demand. But we expect that, you know, if there is kind of sustained increase in demand, that those prices will eventually kind of go back to what the original trend was. But, you know, we need a little bit more data to really say that with authority.

So to kind of get to the conclusions, as exciting as they are, you know, we haven't really seen much evidence that the Plainridge Park Casino, at least thus far, has had a huge impact on the residential real estate market. So but it's not to say that it hasn't had an impact, but right now we feel most confident in describing it as kind of a limited direct impact. Now, you know, we have some, you know, from our stakeholder interviews, we have some quotes that seem to kind of support what we're finding in the secondary data. You know, generally speaking, this one kind of stands out. I don't think the casino is big enough to have had an impact on the real estate market. There wasn't a large enough influx of employees to drive up the prices or make residences scarce. And I think the whole market has been trending up, dot, dot, dot difficult to attribute to Plainridge. And that testimony is what we're seeing in the data, at least thus far.

Now, I say thus far very deliberately because, you know, the way that these developments work is that, you know, while we're working for, like, these spikes, really the larger idea is to follow trends over time. And, you know, if, you know, real estate markets don't usually change hugely dramatically overnight, you know, areas become more attractive over time as, you know, as maybe new commercial activity moves into an area, and there was a lot from the testimony that talked about the influence of the casinos on the fiscal condition of Plainville, in particular, and how they were able to kind of keep, you know, keep tax rates where they were while really investing in the community, and some of these valued what we call residential amenities that, you know, families and other people that move to an area, that's what they like, right? But those are long-term impacts. Those take a long time before you really start seeing the influence of that on a real estate market, especially a residential real estate market. So, you know, we continue to track things. But what we can say in this report is that we didn't see, like, this big spike either up or down after the initial opening. And, you know, for some of these indicators, it's only been a year, two years of data so, you know. We'll have to see. We'll keep watching.

Commercial, yes, there has been new commercial development in the area. That's very, very true. Right in and around that interchange. But it's hard to attribute purely to the expansion of Plainridge Park. You know, there's the development that's kind of diagonally I think across the street from the park that's -- you know, I believe there's a couple new hotels that are coming online in that area. A lot of new commercial activity, new retail, restaurants. And I believe there might even be some new housing in some of those developments. But I get that from the testimonies, not from my own investigation. So, yeah, we can say that there's new activity going on in the area for sure. But again, it's hard to say that it's caused by Plainridge Park Casino in isolation of a lot of other things going on in the area. The quotation that seemed to kind of match what we're seeing here is the one that we've had an influx of new businesses, but I have to be careful to call it causality. So this is not my words. This

is the words of the person that we're speaking to because they felt that we are ripe for new business and growth because we're one of the least expensive communities in the area and we had land to develop. So it was natural that they were looking and that it's the only cloverleaf on 495 that hadn't been developed extensively yet. So there was kind of a feeling that while the casino might have accelerated activity in the area, it was kind of prime to happen. And I think that that's probably a fair description of what we've seen so far. Sorry.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: You mentioned a hotel or two.

>> HENRY RENSKI: Yeah.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: I can see where it would be hard to attribute other commercial businesses. But with a hotel, is that more of a reason to think, or you just don't have any data to support that?

>> HENRY RENSKI: I don't -- and this is going to get me to my final point -- I think that it probably is influenced by it. However, there's a lot of stuff going on in that area. Like I said, within six-mile span, any of those could be the types of development that would attract new -- you know, overnight lodging activity into the area. And certainly the park contributes to that, right? But whether or not the -- whether or not somebody would be wanting to put in a hotel in absence of the park or not put in a hotel in the absence of the park, that's harder to say, right? So there's a difference between something contributing, and it seems to me -- and that's kind of what we're going to talk about here -- the Plainridge Park Casino is really -- what's really going on in this area, right, is that it's evolving into being a regional entertainment complex, a regional live entertainment complex. And the park is complimentary to those other activities going on in the area, right? It's complimentary to Patriot Place. It's complimentary to the Xfinity Center. It's complimentary to the malls in the area and the outlet centers. These things -- you know, in isolation of one another, you know, they might not -- they might not make a huge difference in and of themselves, but together, they become a magnet, at least if not for attracting more people to the area, but at least for kind of making them stick around longer and maybe spending a little bit more money and maybe staying overnight in the hotel. So I'm being very careful, you know, and I think that the quote that matches what I'm seeing going on is that, you know, the casino is situated between Wrentham and Patriot Place. It provides a nice loop for people looking for something to do in terms of what do we do after the mall? Or what do we do after the Patriots game? These things are complimentary, right? And it's the agglomeration of attractions which really starts attracting more people, you know, unless you have a monumental single development, right? That it's really the confluence of these things together. Like the whole ends up being more of the sum of the parts in a lot of ways. And so I know you wanted to say something.

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: Well, and maybe you were getting at this, but it's common for a casino to develop that has an accompanying hotel, and that's not the case with Plainridge Park Casino. And so in the absence of hotel that would be on site, would you see additional lodging develop in and around the area? The causality, yeah, I hear the point that that's really difficult to determine. But perhaps there was an opportunity or a need, a demand for that type of amenity that wasn't on site at PPC.

>> HENRY RENSKI: I don't know if there's anything that you wanted to add from the interviews that might kind of --

>> RACHEL VOLBERG: Yeah. I think this quote from the chairman of the Board of Health is an important one. He really made the point. I do want to emphasize, though, that the quotes that we have from our stakeholder interviews, those were obtained without those people ever seeing the data. So those were conversations that we had with, you know, people who were knowledgeable about real estate conditions and about conditions, in general, in their town of Plainville. But they hadn't seen these data. So it was really interesting to sort of see that triangulation that sort of, you know, what the data were telling us being complemented by what the key informants were telling us.

And the other just point that I wanted to make is that although this -- this report is focused on Plainville and surrounding communities. But as with a lot of our reports that have been coming out recently, this is also sort of a template for what we're planning to do for Springfield and surrounding communities and then for Everett and surrounding communities. And so I think it would be helpful to us if you have any feedback about, you know, other things or additional things that you think would be valuable to include in that template going forward.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Well, I think the one thing that you did include were the stakeholder comments. And I think that's a critical piece because it's not only the numbers. What are people feeling and thinking? That's really important.

>> HENRY RENSKI: And that's -- we already have the -- we have the approved protocol to do that in Springfield, which is the next community that we're looking at. So we felt that it added a lot of value. And the interviews cover a lot more than just the real estate market. So it's something that's really contributing to the broader initiative. Yeah.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Well, in terms of format, I have a couple of other points later, but in terms of format and scope, I think it's great. I think -- I read with interest the whole report. In a prior life, I was involved in real estate myself. And I think you hit all the important notes, you know, the submarkets, the region and the state as a controlling factor. It's very interesting to see. I actually remember early on the testimony, when we were doing the host community and surrounding community hearings, besides the usual concerns about traffic and problem gambling, the question, when it came to the real estate market, was almost at odds, depending on who was talking about it. Somebody would say prices are going to come down because I'm going to move as soon as the casino comes in because I don't like it. And others would say -- a lot of people would come in because there's going to be more economic activity or jobs or what have you.

You know, in my mind, I always thought, well, aren't those two offsetting in some way? If they happen, they would -- what we would see would be almost like a similar activity. And I'm not seeing that that's the case here. I'd like your notion of comparing it and looking at the trends, which is important. But I think it's great to corroborate what I thought early on.

>> HENRY RENSKI: Yeah. You know, there's -- you know, when we're using aggregate data you know, which we have, even at the town level, you know, it's possible that at a smaller scale, you could have neighborhoods that are negatively impacted and neighborhoods that are positively impacted. And they could end up balancing out. Now, you know, one of the things that -- it might be difficult to do with

Plainville because it is a small market, but that we do have the capacity to do if I feel like the data's good enough. And I did some of this in the baseline report. I do a little bit of this in this report, is utilize some of the spatial data that we have available to us to try to, you know, look at smaller scales. Because if you had negative impacts, you would expect them to kind of be, especially in the residential market. You would expect those to be of the places that are very close, right? And that if there was broader positive impacts, those might be more communitywide because they're probably having more to do with, you know, people being attracted to the larger region seen as having, you know, the towns investing in favored amenities or investing in schools, investing in -- it's other things. So you might be able to get a little bit of leverage over that. But again, you kind of need a lot of activity going on to really tease that out. But, you know, that is hypothetically possible that you could have -- but what we're looking is communitywide on net, yeah.

And just as another point on that is that, you know, these impacts often end up being very localized and kind of depend on a lot of other things. Right? So I did a study in North Carolina a long time ago now. And there was -- you know, of what we'll just say is the kind of commercial activity that a lot of people would think was just ubiquitously bad. But this particular activity tended to happen in areas that were nowhere close to residential areas.

So even if they did hypothetically have a bad impact, you weren't actually seeing it in the data because nobody lived around them anyway, right? So you have to keep in mind -- and so here what we're talking about is Plainridge is very close to the intersection, okay? And I haven't worked on any traffic reports, but I can tell you that if most of the traffic is such of a nature that it's coming, you know, basically on and off the main highways and not really circulating in any of the residential neighborhoods, that's going to mute a negative impact of traffic, at least, you know, on the property values in those neighborhoods. Now, again, I haven't done anything with traffic, but I'm just telling you what I know from past experience.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: I think that that point is well taken other than I have been involved with some of the traffic studies. And it's interesting because the local police chiefs think some of the traffic is dispersed because of Waze, because of traffic apps that push people away from the traffic, say, on 495 and out into some of the communities. So that was an interesting piece that I don't think had to be considered before around these projects.

And your point about local positives, you know, we all toured, not too long ago, the brand-new town hall and public safety building which are amazing. And talking to public officials who were around that day and for the groundbreaking for me, they were really pleased at some of the negatives they thought might happen hadn't necessarily happened, but yet the monies to build these two new facilities were available. So those were some of the comments from both elected and appointed folks out in the area there.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: A couple of questions, Doctor, and thanks for this presentation. Is there anything to attribute or anything in the data that shows what's a unique situation in that there was essentially gaming already there? There was an existing horse track, obviously not the level of activity. But is there anything that may not have adjusted the numbers that much just based on the fact that here was an

existing facility, and as we looked down the line to additional research, we're going to be talking about brand-new facilities? Is there anything that showed PPC was there or a version of it or horse racing was there and nothing really changed once the facility got expanded? Is there anything to take into account for that, or does it show up anywhere?

>> HENRY RENSKI: Well, what you're saying is absolutely right. So it's a very different situation if you have -- it was a pretty substantial expansion, but we can still consider it kind of an incremental expansion versus of a relatively modest facility, right, in the gaming world, right, compared to MGM, for example, you know, in Springfield. And so it will be a very different situation. So it would be very hard to look at what's going on in and around Plainridge or in and around Plainville, sorry, and say this is what we expect to happen elsewhere because they're very different markets. I mean, just very different markets. And the size of the development matters and the context in which it happens matters. All of these things are very different. So what you said there is absolutely correct. And it's a different situation when you have, you know, an incremental expansion than, you know, an entirely new facility being put in. That's true. So, you know, part of the -- part of the economic context of the area, the baseline, right, already includes Plainridge, right? The historical baseline includes Plainridge. So, you know, and you can't take that out of the economy, right? So really what we're trying to measure is whether or not just this expansion piece has shifted the line.

And we haven't seen a huge shift in the line. But there's so much going on in the region, and the economy as a whole, the real estate market, you know, it's a pretty swift market, right? So -- but we don't see that kind of real you can't mistake it type of solid impact. And so because, you know, trying to err on the side of being cautious, you know. But, you know, on the other hand, one thing that I can say fairly honestly is that there's no net negative impact in the region because the trend is still going up, right?

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: And that's important, too.

>> HENRY RENSKI: It's important, too, because a lot of people have those negative expectations. But like I said, you know, don't -- you know, we'll have to -- we'll understand Springfield when we understand Springfield, you know, and understanding Plainville, you know, it's a different situation, yeah.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: You know, I do want to pick up on that larger point about the region in conjunction with Patriot Place or the Wrentham Outlets or the concert place. I'm reminded of the economic development white paper that you led the effort in terms of writing, Commissioner. And one of the proposals from that region was to try to advise to the legislature about the importance about thinking of this as a regional destination. Perhaps it thought about transportation loop, for example. I remember that was one of the town manager and the town of Foxboro were trying to collaborate on. Because themselves, they're saying this could be a situation that together we could leverage towards, again, get somebody to stay longer or come do two things as opposed to one and has that positive economic impact.

So it's also in the minds of at least some local people, and they're also thinking about it in terms of asking for additional investment, you know, not in this case, solely from the licensee, but from other sources.

>> HENRY RENSKI: Yeah. You know, and while it's -- I can't say that I'm, you

know -- well, I guess I'm okay. But, you know, tourism is just one of many areas that I've done work in, and there's other people that I think are much more kind of experts on tourism, tourism-based economic development I think is what I would want to say. But one thing that I think is pretty well established in the literature is that, you know, it's really kind of this chaining of activities that draws -- so what you really want with a casino, really to get positive economic impacts is what you really want is people from further away. Because the closer the people are the more likely it is that they probably would have spent money in the region anyway. So what you really want to do is draw. And that draw is really contingent upon having a variety of different complimentary activities together. This really comes out among the people that do heritage-based tourism, you know, it's rare just to have one particular activity be such a draw that it pulls in people from further away. But if you can chain activities together, it not only pulls in more people, but it pulls in more people that tend to be from further away, and they tend to stick around longer and spend more. So but, you know, but it's a very dynamic -- it's not like this happens in isolation, because you're also competing against other types of draws. But that's the general notion. Yeah.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Is it fair to say -- in a couple of your slides you say that it's tough to really nail down how much of PPC is having an impact. Is it fair to say that the evidence is also there that PPC isn't necessarily having a harm on some of the data and the statistics you pulled up?

>> HENRY RENSKI: That's how I interpret it, but it's hard for me to pull that out strictly from the data. So because you could have a situation where the market might be better than it actually is. And we wouldn't know that counterfactual. So I'm kind of -- but when I look at this data and I look at the historical trends and then I compare it to the other regions, things are kind of where I would expect them to be, both up and down, even if it wasn't for the expansion, right? So I don't think that -- it's certainly not having net harm, right? My interpretation of it is is that if it is having harm, it's very isolated, but, you know, it doesn't -- looking at all the evidence as a whole and bringing together all these different pieces and combining that with our stakeholder interviews, we have no reason to think that it's been harmful to the market, right? I hope that answers your question.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: No, it does.

>> HENRY RENSKI: I'm not trying to be evasive. I'm just trying to -- I'm trying to be scholarly about impact versus contribution. And impact is something that you can very definitively pin on a specific source, whereas a contribution is I think what's going on more here, like I said, to measure impact, you have to be able to separate out the individual pieces. And here you can't truly separate out the individual pieces from the whole because there's so much else going on. That will be a challenge with any of the developments, to be quite honest, yeah.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: What I think is interesting -- and Rachel, you touched on this -- is thinking about we're going to need someone with a different approach with Springfield. You know, already since their opening, there are stories of potential new hotel development. So, you know, something that comes to mind is when you think of that category of stakeholder interviews you want to do is reaching out and talking to those developers. I mean, they've got to present a case to whatever financial institution they are using to get a loan for their development. I'm sure they'd

be happy to tell you the development is being driven by any number of different reasons. Springfield, I think, is also unique, obviously not only the urban setting but the size of the community, and you can start pulling data by zip codes, and there are multiple zip codes in Springfield as opposed to just one in Plainville. But, yeah, I think having a conversation about that going forward, you know, talking with our community mitigation folks as well, to think of what the scope of that study will be because it will be different.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Well, there will be more data, and I look forward to that for sure. But I think the format and the variables that you've studied and the submarkets to the extent that you can are very helpful.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: I agree. Thank you very much. Informative.

>> HENRY RENSKI: Well, thank you all for having me. Thank you all for having me.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Thank you, Doctor.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Thank you, Doctor.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: We're on to Commissioners updates. Oh, I'm sorry, Mark. You're not finished.

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: I am not done. The last item I have is -- it's gaming research update. So for the past couple years, I have been working closely with the public Health Trust Fund Executive Economy. And as a standard report, I provided just a general research update. What's been released in the last couple months, what's kind of on the horizon, and what has been done, what's under our belt and what's already been published. And that was particularly helpful especially since that was a group that only met periodically, basically quarterly. And so it was a good way to keep track of kind of where the research activities are.

And it dawned on me that this would probably be a great sort of memo or report that I could produce for the Commission as well, just to provide a quick snapshot of where things stand. You know, you have -- if we take -- and so it's broken down by -- in the last quarter, it provides a very brief summary of reports and studies that have been released. It then moves into a list of activities or reports that are on the near horizon and provides an update about what that will provide for us as well as a rough time line of when you should be seeing it. I also provide a list of deliverables for this fiscal year. Perhaps we don't have a specific date when that will be provided or where it will be, and some of the details are missing, but I think it's worth listing that for you.

And then finally, I have research deliverables that have been released from 2014 through July of 2018 broken out by social, economic, public safety, evaluation, and then a list of publications. Where has the work that has been funded by the MGC been published in different academic journals. I hope you find this helpful. I'm definitely open to changing it up or adding or making it more brief than what it currently is. But, you know, it's a great activity for me to kind of roll this all up into one and to actually see where things stand and what we're focusing on in the near future.

If I could just -- I wanted to get your thoughts on this, and then there is one specific piece that was released in the last couple months. It's the Sigma Magic fact sheets that were delivered to the Commission on September 24th. And Rachel and I wanted to have a discussion about those fact sheets with you. So before we do that, if you have any thoughts about this memo specifically.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Well, I do, and I'm a little biased because I'm a lot more closer than perhaps a couple of my fellow Commissioners on this. I think this is great. We've talked a little bit about the notion also at the Public Health Trust Fund Executive Committee that we have so much research going on that at times our own research sort of drowns a little bit. The prior findings or what have you. And it's important to always summarize what we've done, the most relevant, and of course the most up to date. And I think this memo does it really quite well, you know, with all those objectives in mind. I also think -- and I know you're going to talk about this -- the fact sheets is something that we've been discussing quite a bit at the Gaming Research Advisory Committee as well, and I think they are also fantastic. I like that they can be visual. They get to the point. And they can be freestanding for any one of the topics.

I think there's a lot of information in these two documents that go directly into our annual report when it comes to all of the work that we have been doing on research and responsible gaming, which has been something in my mind as of late because we're at that time of the year when we have -- are putting that together.

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: And I appreciate any help that these reports can provide and helping me with my section of that annual report.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: You know, this was such a good reminder of how much work we're actually doing, which is really kind of amazing when you see it all pointed out this way. I was wondering if, in going through this exercise of kind of correlating everything, were there some things you looked at and said, hmm, seems like we're focusing more here than here. There's little changes I think might be necessary or might be worth talking as a group about?

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: You know, I mean, in terms of the balance of the types of research that we're doing, breaking it down between looking at economic -- economic studies versus social studies versus evaluation, I am pleased with that. I think probably more important than this is this process that we're going to develop a strategic plan for the overall research agenda where we are working with Judith Glen of Strategic Science, and she's spoken with each one of you. She's met with most of the Public Health Trust Fund Executive Committee and then other key stakeholders. That, to me, has been a really important process to just kind of take a step back, ask ourselves how do we maximize the research agenda, both in terms of what its impact is and make it as efficient as we possibly can.

A couple things where I think that's kind of coming to the surface through that process and I think that maybe you see -- you could see it reflected in here if you take a close look. One is shifting some of the focus of our research agenda to community-driven research. We have some very large research projects. Very good research projects, incredibly high-quality researchers sitting with me at the table. But I think that getting down deep into the weeds with some of the research that we're doing, partnering with local communities to assess impacts of opening casinos. I think that that will probably end up being a direction that we go.

Another piece -- and I think the fact sheets are a perfect example of this is, yeah, we have a lot of research out there, but it's only as good as how frequently or how it's being used. And so exploring ways in which we can make this useful to a variety of different people, and whether it's useful for us, for our annual report, useful for legislators, useful for local community leaders to get a better understanding of what

some of the impacts are, we need to translate -- it's a process called knowledge translation -- but we need to really try to take our research to that next level and boil it down and deliver it in ways that make sense. So the fact sheets are a great example of that. The Mass at a glance interactive portal that Rachel and her team have been working on is an example of that. But there's probably more. And I think that looking at this memo and the breadth of research that's been done, we can certainly do more to make sure that it's being used and it's useful.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Critical step.

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: Yeah, definitely.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Using it effectively.

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: And commissioner, I know from our conversations, that that's what really resonated for you as well, is let's make it useful.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Yeah, absolutely. I mean, the researchers will always include their methods, their methodology, the disclosures, et cetera. But what's most useful to bodies like us or the Public Health Trust Fund or really the public are the insights, the takeaways, the what next or what now. Now that we learned this, what follows? And that's, I know, part of the efforts in doing this knowledge translation which includes other research types that are not doing the research to try to articulate and communicate, you know, those insights. It's an ongoing effort.

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: Yeah.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: One of the reasons we got the buy-in from police chiefs -- and now this is two different jurisdictions -- is that realtime information which can be extremely useful to them and their communities.

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: When I spoke -- we went through a knowledge translation process with the game sense evaluation. So the compendium of four evaluations, so it's pretty dense. It was led by Dr. Michael Wall from the university in Toronto. And he boiled it down, the what now, so what, take any research project, so what and now what? Now what to do with it? And I think that was succinct and true to me.

If I could -- if we could just focus briefly on the fact sheets that Rachel and her team have developed. A couple points on this. They spent a lot of time kind of taking specific reports that have been produced over the past few years and doing exactly that. The so what. So taking it and making sure that it's boiled down into no more than one page. We took these -- once we had drafts of these reports, we discussed them during the gaming research advisory committee and received -- there was additional feedback that was provided that was integrated with Rachel. And that's what you have before you now. These are just examples. I really think that -- I really like these. I would love to see us continue down this path of these fact sheets that would come out on a fairly regular basis. So it gives us the so what. But the now what, I would love to get your thoughts on how you could see us using these, who they should be delivered to, possibly mechanisms that we should use to share those.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Any time you can capsule with nice graphics, it's easy to read and really makes the point quickly about what is happening. So I love the fact sheets. And I have to think about how to use them more effectively.

>> RACHEL VOLBERG: We actually had, a few days ago when we were preparing for Henry's presentation, we had a meeting with Mark and Elaine. And I was actually

quite surprised, Elaine was so enthusiastic about things that could be done with the fact sheets. And it seems to me that it would be really valuable to be able to continue to consult with her about, you know, maybe some kind of, you know, focused effort on getting awareness of the fact sheets out. There's basically there's ten fact sheets at this point. The first two were produced two years ago and provide an overview of the Expanded Gaming Act itself and then of our two -- of our social and economic impact study. The new fact sheets, there's eight of them, seven of them focus on the social and economic impact components that we've been doing over the years. And the last one is actually the first sort of synopsis of the main results from our cohort study. So it's a really nice little package to sort of say, hey, this is what we've been doing for the last five years into ten pages, which is not a scholarly way to go, but it's a really important way to share information with people. But I think it would be helpful to us as a research team to sort of, you know, sit down with Elaine and think about, you know, where do we think these fact sheets might be the most valuable and who would be interested in the kind of information that we have to offer.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Yeah. I'm thinking other regulators. I've, you know, been to a number of different gaming conferences. And it is something other regulators are interested in, the work that we're doing, the research.

>> RACHEL VOLBERG: Right.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: And this is a great way to explain it, use it in a presentation, be able to hand it out so it's easily understood, the work we're doing. So I can see that as one area that will help rather than me sitting there talking about the work and, you know, trying to explain these are just so easily understood and really make the point.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: I actually also -- I get excited about the so what part. I'm thinking of the GPAC and the legislature as audiences as well because, after all, a lot of this is meant to go back to them and ultimately provide recommendations, if any, for legislative action, for example. But just the update of what we're doing is important. My excitement comes when we get insights like there's a particular finding, and I'm thinking there's high public participation that came from the baseline study. And then elsewhere, we see that there is little awareness of educational campaigns. So when you put those together, you know, then the focus should be, the call to action is there should be an emphasis into educational resources and connecting, you know, people and what have you because not only that, that's happening prior to the introduction of casinos, and we're also going to see what happens further.

Hence, in other words, the call for mitigation, the what we have as resource in the Public Health Trust Fund or even in other areas like Mitigation, Community Mitigation, or the community themselves. The triangulation of data that leaves the policymakers with the insight of this is there for what we need to be thinking about or do more of or start doing, whatever the case may be.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: Yeah, you know, and picking up on a point Mark made about some of the research kind of getting more locally focused and locally driven, you know, two great places for these fact sheets are with community-based organizations, again, I'm using Springfield as an example, but Springfield consists of a number of neighborhood organizations. Some close proximity to a casino, some kind of outliers. But a lot of these community groups were involved in the referendum on

one side or the other, have a specific interest in what the impact is in the community, and to give them kind of just quick information and fresh snapshots as to what gaming is meaning in Massachusetts already, I would look to target those groups. You know, I'm reminded of the patron survey that you're doing. The whole tourism and hospitality community aren't these facilities would probably love to see what's driving people to the region or what other things they're thinking of doing while they're in the region. So, I mean, that's just another great entity or group of entities that would benefit from seeing that type of research.

>> MR. VANDER LINDEN: Yeah. Great.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Anything else?

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: If we think of anything else, we'll let you know along the way.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: I feel that Rachel probably spent more time in her car than actually sitting.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Oh, she absolutely did.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: We were around as long as you.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Thank you both. Again, very informative.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: Thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: So I think now we're on to Commissioner updates.

Anything?

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: I think Jill covered it. It was a great event out at MGM, and I was glad commissioner O'Brien, commissioner Zuniga, we missed you.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: I'm sorry I could not make that event.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: It was very gratifying to see the results.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Right.

>> COMMISSIONER STEBBINS: And the positive vibe from tradespeople, contractors, and kudos to the team at MGM for the work they did.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: Great. Anything else? Do we have a motion?

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: I move to adjourn.

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: So moved. Thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: All in favor?

>> COMMISSIONER CAMERON: All in favor.

[Vote taken]

>> COMMISSIONER ZUNIGA: We're adjourned.
(The meeting concluded at 11:35 a.m.)