



Gaming Policy Advisory Committee

Minutes of Public Meeting #1: Tuesday, July 16, 2013 @ 10:15 a.m.
PRIM Board Room, 84 State Street, Suite 250, Boston, MA

In attendance were:

Steve Crosby
Robert Hubbard
Rep. Ann-Margaret Ferrante
Rep. Angelo L. D'Emilia
Brian Lang
William Messner
David Stein
Barbara Anthony
Rachel Volberg

Those attending via teleconference

Sen. Jennifer Flanagan
Sen. Richard Ross
Hilary Jacobs

Robert Hubbard opened the meeting with a brief introduction on what he and Chairman Crosby hope to learn from this committee.

Chairman Crosby explained to those present that there are statutory members and other participants who are interested and informed persons who may have valuable feedback for the Committee. The committee is still in the formative stages as it is missing the representatives of gaming licensees and host community representatives.

At the prompting of Chair Hubbard, the members then introduced themselves.

Chairman Crosby then introduced members from the MA Gaming Commission who were also in attendance.

Chairman Crosby then noted that the gaming licensing process legislation in Massachusetts is widely recognized for its distinctive local control, and community mitigation.

Chairman Crosby described two major responsibilities of the Commission: (1) integrity of process and (2) robust competition. The evaluation criteria are (1) Revenue; (2) Building Site and Design; (3) Economic Development; (4) Mitigation including Community Mitigation; and (5) Overview of project or “WOW” factor.



Massachusetts Gaming Commission

Karen Wells, Director of Investigations and Enforcement Bureau then spoke briefly on the updates of background checks. Two Applicants have completed their suitability and there are nine more to go. There are approximately 100 people currently working on the investigations. She is getting assistance from Spectrum Gaming Group and Commission consultant Michael & Carroll. Penn National recently changed from a Category 1 (casino) to a Category 2 (slots) Applicant.

Ombudsman Ziembra then gave a report on the Applicants and their current status.

Chair Hubbard asked Mr. Ziembra to distribute a status on all the Applicants to the Committee members after the meeting. Chair Hubbard then introduced Rachel A. Volberg, Principal Investigator on the Commission's Social and Economic Impacts of Gambling in Massachusetts (SEIGMA) study.

Ms. Volberg explained that the purpose of the presentation was to focus member attention regarding its role on research and advising the commission. Under Section 71 of the Gaming Act the first report on research is due to the legislature on November 22, 2013. A baseline study is currently underway. As noted on Slide 4 of Ms. Volberg's presentation (attached), there are three parts of the survey underway which are on the left side of the chart; the three on the right hand side of the chart will come later in the project. The third group i.e. Gaming Employee Surveys is an additional group to advise the Commission.

Mr. Crosby requested Ms. Volberg to explain the baseline survey with regard to characteristics prior to the institution of gaming in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Crosby discussed that the baseline assessment is a critical variable in the survey but is only one piece. The evaluation is funded without using taxpayer money.

Ms. Volberg continued on with the PowerPoint, and stressed the importance of making data available to stakeholders/Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Crosby comments that this legislation is uniquely thoughtful regarding the research study; gives multiple policy makers research based data tools.

Mr. Messner asked whether the negative economic impacts of gaming are covered in this study.

Ms. Volberg described how empirical data will be focused on identifying all likely impacts which tracked over time allow one to look at impacts more closely.

Mr. Lynch asked if there was anything in the legislation to make adjustments to the legislation in the future?

Mr. Crosby responded by explaining that fine tuning in terms of intervention, etc. to improve but any changes have to go through legislature.

Mr. Hubbard commented that how mitigation is spent impacted by research identification.

Rep. Ferrante had some questions on whether tourism, live agriculture, business revenues regarding horse farming; and incentives for Massachusetts bred horses are part of the research.

Ms. Volberg responded positively that the study will need more discussion of that.

Ms. Anthony had a question regarding whether the research covered the impact architectural designs have on consumer behavior within casino? Does research exist that looks at design vs. behavior?

Ms. Volberg responded that not much research on this topic is available in Massachusetts. There is more in Europe. This review could fall within the statutory research activities of Section 71.

Noting the time, Chair Robert Hubbard referenced the last page of slide presentation. The proposal was made to set the next meeting date for November 5th or late October. As November 5th is an election date it was determined another date would have to be used.

Mr. Lang asked how long the next meeting is anticipated to go, and asked for a clarification of the role of this committee and whether the scope is greater than focusing on just the impact study.

Mr. Hubbard indicated that it would be several hours and yes, the scope is broader than solely the impact study.

Mr. Crosby requested that members push to make meetings as there is a quorum requirement.

Mr. Hubbard then discussed the roles and responsibilities of the Advisory Committee and noted that there are three subcommittees: community mitigation, addiction services and public safety according to statute.

Chairman Crosby indicated that he would like to get these subcommittees populated as soon as possible and would appreciate suggestions.

Mr. Hubbard indicated that a determination needs to be made as to the relationship between the Gaming Policy Advisory committees and the subcommittees, and how they will interact.

Mr. Hubbard then asked if there were any questions.

David Stein had a question on the role of the Commission and Licensees in the agreements between towns and host communities.

Chairman Crosby explained that those relationship are local, the Commission does not involve itself.

Mr. Hubbard had a question regarding how mitigation funds would be spent.

Mr. Crosby indicated that the mitigation agreements and funds, were for supplementing anything not anticipated.

Mr. Hubbard then closed the meeting.

(date)

Robert Hubbard, Chair

