



GAMING POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE Minutes

Date/Time: December 19, 2016 – 10:00 p.m.

Place: State House Room 222, Boston, Massachusetts

Members Present:

Dennis A. DiZoglio	Stephen P. Crosby
Senator Jennifer Flanagan	Brian Lang
Rep. Angelo L. D'Emilia	Paul Picknelly
Rep. Ann-Margaret Ferrante	Jill McCarthy Payne
Victor Ortiz	Louise A. Zawodny
Bill Walczak (Invitee)	

Member Absent: Senator Richard Ross

Call to Order

Dennis DiZoglio, the Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:05. The Chair discussed the difficulty of scheduling meetings due to the quorum issues and let members know that the Commission has been working with the Governor's office and Legislature to enable members to get a waiver to participate on these committees. He then asked the new members to introduce themselves. The new members are Jill McCarthy Payne, Victor Ortiz, Louise Zawodny and Paul Picknelly. Each new member gave a briefing on their credentials. He then thanked former members William Messner from Holyoke Community College, Thomas Land from the Department of Public Health, and Ruth Ellen Fitch for their service on the Committee. Chair DiZoglio then announced his intent to retire from the Committee and his regret that more meetings were not possible, as he would have liked to have further shape the role of the GPAC.

Commissioner Crosby then commented that the advisory board is meant to have meaningful role. He highlighted that the main problem at the start of the Commission was that issues were so fast moving that it was difficult to get in front of them. His hope now is that there is an opportunity to see issues as they arise that the GPAC can address and make the Committee worthy of the time spent by its members. He went on to thank Chair DiZoglio for his willingness to serve. He further noted that even outside of the formal meetings Chair DiZoglio's knowledge and expertise of municipal work were extremely helpful in working with the regional planning authorities and on local mitigation issues. Chairman Crosby then presented Chair DiZoglio with a plaque in honor of his work and certificate of appreciation.

Commissioner Crosby then introduced the new Executive Director of the MGC, Ed Bedrosian and he described his responsibilities including overseeing 3 billion dollars in construction projects and the commitments made by the licensees. He then introduced Joseph Delaney, the MGC's Construction Oversight Manager. Joe's construction oversight includes the Commission's oversight of the largest single phase private development in Massachusetts. Commissioner Crosby noted Mr. Delaney's credentials.

Chair DiZoglio then asked if there were any questions or comments regarding the minutes from the June 16, 2015 meeting. Representative Ferrante moved to approve the minutes.

Mr. Lang raised issues that needed follow-up from the June 16, 2015 meeting and requested that information be provided on the Plainridge Park employees. He also asked about a strategy for CORI requirements which would prevent people who should benefit from the casino from getting employment.

Chairman Crosby mentioned that the current Director for Workplace Development was not able to attend this meeting. However, Plainridge had exceeded all diversity requirements and met or exceeded goals. The host community agreement required 90% of the workforce to come from the surrounding communities. However, that was an aspirational goal that is being worked on. The gaming laws mandate that all employees are kept to the same standard with regard to CORI standards from hotel workers and up. The Commissioners and others disagree with how it reads due to the word "may". There is confusion in the statute which will be a matter for public discussion at the end of January 2017. The Commission will be requesting comments.

Mr. Lang that asked if it was solely a legal interpretation of the statute. Commissioner Crosby then explained that if the Commission determines ambiguity, it has the authority to make a determination as to the legislative intent. The Commission is working with the MGC Investigations Enforcement Bureau ("IEB") to determine if it is creating any barriers to those needing jobs. There has been talk about legislative changes.

Senator Flanagan mentioned that there is some real hesitation to opening up M.G.L. c. 23K again. Commissioner Crosby mentioned that there is a mixed opinion of Commission members and staff as to the legislative intent.

Mr. Lang then mentioned that he would like to know the income and benefits from Plainridge, the compensation package. Commissioner Crosby noted that the Commission will get compensation package to members subject to reports being delivered to Commission members.

Chair DiZoglio asked for a second on the motion to accept the minutes. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Joseph Delaney, MGC's Construction Oversight Manager then presented on the MGM Project and described the amenities. He noted that the buildings will be LEED Gold and further described what the pictures in the PowerPoint depicted. Commissioner Crosby spoke about the importance of saving of historical properties and facades to this Springfield development.

Paul Picknelly mentioned how, MGM Springfield being in an urban environment, the development has a number of exterior entrances which invite non-gaming individuals to the site. He noted that he is ecstatic about that.

Mr. Delaney then discussed that the roadwork for the MGM Springfield development is out to bid now. He mentioned the planned day care is off-site across Union Street. Mr. Walczak asked about the daycare and whether it is for the MGM employees in addition to the general public. Mr. Delaney confirmed that it was definitely for MGM employees and the public as well.

Mr. Delaney then presented about the Wynn Boston Harbor development. He described the different areas of development and noted that Wynn sends up a drone every few weeks to take pictures. He mentioned there were 2000 soil borings and that due to the soil contamination the soil is categorized prior to being put on the railroad cars for shipping to waste sites. All water removed from the slurry walls is put through a purification plant prior to being released into the Mystic River. He then had members look at pages 13 and 14 of the PowerPoint for the progress descriptions and milestones. Mr. Delaney then asked if anyone had any questions.

Chair DiZoglio then introduced Mark Vander Linden to speak on the Gaming Research Agenda and reminded members that this was a great opportunity for comments as the GPAC is charged with voting on the research agenda.

Mr. Vander Linden then explained that the Secretary of Health and Human Services with the advice of the Commission may establish the budget and protocols for the Public Health Trust Fund established to implement the objectives of the research agenda. The current research agenda is well underway as the fiscal year is half over. The best way to proceed as the agenda is underway is to obtain feedback from the GPAC. At the meeting on January 10, 2017, comments received will be provided to the Public Health Trust.

Chairman Crosby discussed the comprehensive research mandate. Additionally Chairman Crosby mentioned that the study will establish baselines for all variables such as crime, and everything positively or negatively. He noted that he gives the Legislature credit for mandating these studies.

Mr. Vander Linden noted that there are no federal funds available for research which puts these studies at a disadvantage; the Federal government left the studies up to the states to look at the issues.

He noted that UMass Amherst is working to understand impacts through the SEIGMA studies. Key information is being gathered to maximize their benefits of these studies. The main deliverable was a 10,000 person baseline study;

Commissioner Crosby noted that 2 % of adults are problem gamblers the statistics have shown 8.4 % people are at-risk.

Mr. Vander Linden discussed public safety issues in the region. In determining these statistics, calls for service and what are the specific impacts as a result. As part of this, MGC research took a look at the existing record keeping systems at the various police agencies and also did first person interviews to see what increases occurred.

Commissioner Crosby mentioned that in this first year of Plainville being open there has been no measurable impact in crime.

Mr. Vander Linden: The only change was an increase in credit card fraud in the host and surrounding communities that could not be explained; it's something that is being looked at and very close attention is being paid to this by the local police.

Representative Ferrante: Will reports and research show the number of new gamblers?

Mr. Vander Linden mentioned taking a look at a patron survey and license plate surveillance to find out where and how much out of state traffic the casino is getting. The second cornerstone is the cohort study done by the same UMass team. Nothing like it has been done in the United States.

Mr. Walczak noted the GameSense program.

Mr. Vander Linden mentioned the work with Massachusetts Compulsive Gaming Council and what is available through them. It promotes responsible gaming. The release of the first report showed they have logged over 10,000 people taking advantage of the information. It is staffed 16 hours a day. It has been interesting to see how Gamesense is influencing gaming behavior.

Commissioner Crosby mentioned the two factors in this process: Gamesense agents are available to meet with individuals; and PlayMyWay budgeting for gambling tool. Both are considered best practices. Through the Cambridge Health Alliance the final program is being evaluated. There is also a voluntary self-exclusion program in which individuals can sign up to be excluded and any winnings they cannot keep.

Mr. Vander Linden then mentioned that there are a number of deliverables between now and June. A substantial number of deliverables are expected in the 1st quarter of 2017. There are 2 new items to be studied. One is data transfer storage from key research projects as mandated by Section 97. The second is a study of behavior among certain populations or minority populations concerning at-risk populations.

Representative Ferrante asked whether seniors were considered an at-risk population. Mr. Vander Linden responded that the seniors specifically didn't rise as a high risk group.

Mr. Walczak mentioned that he is now at Bunker Hill Community College and is concerned about the proximity of students to the Everett casino, especially those students that are immigrants and low income. He wondered if there was a way to gauge the impact on students, especially those in high risk profile group.

Mr. Vander Linden thanked him for his comment and mentioned that he would bring it back to Public Health Trust Fund.

Paul Picknelly asked why Foxborough was not included in the crime study. Mr. Vander Linden mentioned that Foxborough was invited to participate in the study but never responded.

Mr. Lang questioned whether participation was mandatory. Mr. Vander Linden replied that it was not mandatory, but that he could see tremendous advantages to communities taking part.

Commissioner Crosby mentioned that Commissioner Cameron has knowledge about how the police view these matters at a police level. There was a meeting with the police chiefs in the area, but they could not determine the 90% increase from the prior year in the credit card thefts.

Ms. Zawodny mentioned that there are several steps and safeguards available to help people with gambling issues. Paul Picknelly asked what the budget was for these efforts. Mr. Vander Linden responded that it is currently \$2.82 million for all activities. For the start of the 10,000 person survey, it was more but averaging \$3M per year.

Commissioner Crosby then read the Motion to adopt the projects proposed for the research agenda for 2017.

Such motioned was seconded and voted unanimously approved at 11:25 a.m.

Chair DiZoglio mentioned the next steps for the GPAC such a resuming meeting on a quarterly basis and that it is hoped that additional members will be able to participate in the GPAC. He noted that the Commission will continue to update the members going forward and that if any members had any comments to please contact the Commission.

Chair DiZoglio closed the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

/s/ Mary S. Thurlow
Mary S. Thurlow, Secretary

List of Documents and Other Items Used

1. Notice of meeting and agenda
2. Membership of Gaming Policy Advisory Committees
3. Minutes from the June 16, 2015 meeting
4. Presentation by Joseph Delaney entitled: "MGM Springfield and Wynn Boston Harbor Construction Update"
5. FY 2017 Gaming Research Agenda Memorandum by Mark Vander Linden
6. Draft Motion for consideration by the GPAC 12/19/2016
7. SEIGMA Fact Sheet Number 01 June 2016
8. SEIGMA Fact sheet Number 02 June 2016
9. Executive Summary of Assessing the Impact of Gambling on Massachusetts Cities & Towns - Analysis of changes in police data after the first year of operation at Plainridge Park Casino by Christopher W. Bruce 12 December 2016