



GAMING ADVISORY COUNCIL
MINUTES

October 27, 2022
Billings, MT

This is a summary of the Council meeting. The meeting in its entirety is recorded in a digital audio file format and maintained at the Gambling Control Division office at 615 S. 27th St., Suite A, Billings, Montana. Exhibits (if any) are on file in the office of the Gambling Control Division.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT

Scott Aspenlieder	Garret McFarland
Steve Morris (Teams Link)	Mike Kenneally (Teams Link)
Rep. Gregory Frazer (Teams Link)	Gregory Frazier (Teams Link)

DIVISION STAFF PRESENT

Rusty Gackle (Deputy Chief of Staff)	Jason Johnson (Administrator)
Steffanie McGowan (Administrative Officer)	Matt Eckdahl (Technical Services Supervisor)

SUMMARY OF COUNCIL ACTION

- ◆ **The Council has an open seat for a Representative from Local Government**
- ♣ **The Council voted unanimously to approve the minutes from the March 11th, 2022 meeting.**
- ♥ **The Council scheduled the next meeting for a TBD date and location after the Legislative Session. The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.**

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Administrator Johnson called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

The minutes from the March 11, 2022 meeting were approved unanimously.

GAMBLING CONTROL DIVISION UPDATE

Operations Bureau Update

Deputy Chief of Staff, Rusty Gackle, mentioned there has been positive feedback with moving the Divisions Tax & License Department to Billings. Allowing for more interaction with the industry as well as expanding the hiring pool for tax and license positions.

Administrator, Jason Johnson, mentioned the addition of a new position in the Tax & License department, reporting about 65 cases per employee.

Compliance Section Update

Administrator Johnson let the council know that the Divisions case work is increasing. From FY20 to FY21 there was a 19.8% increase in cases and FY21 to FY22 there is a 25.8% increase in cases. Mr. Johnson mentioned that the Tax & License Supervisor, Stacy Rogstad, reported 16 new combined liquor/gambling cases last month. The increases are being seen primarily in the Kalispell, Missoula, Bozeman, Billings areas. The Division will be replacing a compliance investigator position in Kalispell that will become vacant in Nov. This position will be opened up to both law enforcement and non-law enforcement.

Technical Services Section Update

Mr. Eckdahl explained to the Council that since March his department has completed 38 hardware and software submissions including 20 new versions of VGM software. Since March the Division has inspected around 2,200 VGM's which puts them at over 3,000 for this year so far. The Division is on pace to inspect around 3,700 VGM's this year which represents about 23% of all active machines. The Division has recently added capabilities to inspect Tier One systems to our paperless inspection app, which is currently being tested in the field. Lastly, there are over 6,400 VGM's reporting meters thru approved Tier One systems across 338 locations statewide. This is an increase of 46 locations and 870 machines since the last meeting.

Statistics

Ms. McGowan provided an overview of statistics for First quarter FY23. The Division collected approximately \$19.6 million in VGM tax, this number is a 2% decrease from Fourth quarter FY22 and a 1% decrease from First quarter this time last year. During the First quarter the Division received 106 gambling, liquor and combined liquor/gambling applications and reported there are approximately 1,290 active gambling operators in Montana. 16,341 VGM permits were issued as well as 176 Live Bingo & Keno permits, 6 Casino Night permits, 61 Calcutta permits, 148 Card Table permits, 226 Card Dealer Licenses, 9 Large-Stakes tournaments and 22 small-stakes tournaments.

OTHER UPDATES

Alcohol Beverage Control Division (ABCD) Update

Administrator of Department of Revenue, Becky Schlauch, provided updates regarding ABCD activities.

Montana Board of Horse Racing

The Montana Board of Horse Racing was unable to attend.

Montana Council on Problem Gambling Update

Mr. Brad Longcake provided updates regarding the Montana Council on Problem Gambling.

Montana Lottery Update

Mr. Scott Sales was present and provided updates regarding Lottery activities.

Montana Indian Gaming Association

The Montana Indian Gaming Association was invited but unable to attend.

OLD BUSINESS

Vacant Council Position

Mr. Gackle mentioned the council has a vacant position from a Local Government Representative.

NEW BUSINESS

Topics for Biennium

The Division will be a resource to the industry.

Public Comment

Ms. Ronda Wiggers with the Montana Coin Machine Operators provided public comment regarding a bet limit increase to \$3.00.

Final Business

The Council elected to have the next meeting on a TBD date and location after completion of the Legislative Session. The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.