



GAMING ADVISORY COUNCIL

MINUTES

February 9th, 2023

Helena, 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 (Teams Link)

Lee Randall (Teams Link)

Travis Woltermann

Mike Kenneally

DIVISION STAFF PRESENT

Jason Johnson (Administrator)

Steffanie McGowan (Administrative Officer)

Matt Eckdahl (Technical Services Supervisor)

Melina Bucy (Compliance Supervisor)

SUMMARY OF COUNCIL ACTION

- ♦ **The Council welcomed new members Travis Woltermann and Lee Randall**
- ♠ **The Council will vote in a new chairman via email ballot**
- ♣ **The Council voted unanimously to approve the minutes from the October 27th, 2022 meeting.**
- ♥ **The Council scheduled the next meeting for May 18th at 1:00 in Billing, MT. Location TBD. 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 October 27, 2022 meeting were approved unanimously.

GAMBLING CONTROL DIVISION UPDATE

Operations Bureau Update

Administrator, Jason Johnson, mentioned that the Biennium Report has been completed. Mr. Johnson also mentioned that we are fully staffed within the division at this time.

The Gambling Control Division is currently reviewing the application process to check for any areas of improvement and effectiveness. Mr. Johnson welcomes any feedback from the industry regarding the Division's processes.

Mr. Johnson would like to create a Town Hall event and invite the industry to help educate licensees, while also providing any training necessary.

Technical Services Section Update

Mr. Eckdahl explained to the Council that in calendar year 2022 his team completed 66 hardware and software submissions, including 52 versions of VGM software and 2 new VGM models. The Division has implemented updates to the custom inspection app helping to minimize the impact we have on the play of the machines. Mr. Eckdahl's team inspected around 4,700 VGM's, 30% of all approved machines in the state. The Division saw a 25% increase in VGM's and locations using tier 1 systems. There is now 6,700 VGM's reporting using the approved Tier 1 system across 350 locations in the state, 42% of permitted VGM's and 28% of establishments. The division created a real time permit validation check for Tier 1 vendors, helping reduce the risk of incorrect VGM ID's being entered into the system.

Statistics

Ms. McGowan provided an overview of statistics for Second quarter FY23. The Division collected approximately \$19.4 million in VGM tax, this number is a 1% decrease from First quarter FY23 and a 1% increase from Second quarter this time last year. During the Second quarter the Division received 100 gambling, liquor and combined liquor/gambling applications and reported there are approximately 1,319 active gambling operators in Montana. 529 VGM permits were issued as well as 180 Live Bingo & Keno permits, 14 Casino Night permits, 17 Calcutta permits, 156 Card Table permits, 254 Card Dealer Licenses, 36 Large-Stakes tournaments and 1 small-stakes tournaments.

OTHER UPDATES

Alcohol Beverage Control Division (ABCD) Update

Becky Schlauch, Administrator of the Department of Revenue, provided legislative updates regarding ABCD. She mentioned they have been focusing heavily on their education and outreach program for licensees. ABCD is hoping to break ground in August, 2023 on their new warehouse.

Montana Board of Horse Racing

John Hayes provided updates regarding The Montana Board of Horse Racing as well as mentioning summer

horse racing dates have been set.

Montana Council on Problem Gambling Update

Mr. Brad Longcake provided updates regarding the Montana Council on Problem Gambling. He also mentioned March is Problem Gambling Awareness Month.

Montana Lottery Update

Mr. Scott Sales was present and provided updates regarding Lottery activities, mentioning FY22 was a record year.

Montana Indian Gaming Association

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

Association Representatives

Ms. Shauna Helfert, provided updates regarding The Montana Gaming Industry. Mentioning HB0297 Revise video gambling machine taxes to allow a deduction for negative income has been passed thru the house and LC1662 will be introduced within the week.

John Iverson provided updates regarding the Montana Tavern Association.

Ronda Wiggers provided updates regarding the MT Coin Operators Association, she mentioned she is working with a sponsor to bring forth a gambling bet limit increase Bill.

Final Business

The Council elected to have the next meeting on a May 18th, 2023 in Billings, MT. The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.