

Western Massachusetts Casino Task Force Meeting

MINUTES – OCTOBER 28, 2009 MONSON TOWN OFFICE BUILDING

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: 7:05 P.M.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Edward Harrison, with the following Task Force members present:

1. Attendance:
- | | | | | |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Belchertown | <input type="checkbox"/> | Michael Reardon | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Jerry Grasso |
| Brimfield | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Diane Panaccione | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Carol DelNegro |
| Brookfield | <input type="checkbox"/> | Rudy Heller | | |
| Hampden | <input type="checkbox"/> | John D. Flynn | <input type="checkbox"/> | Richard R. Green |
| Holland | <input type="checkbox"/> | Lynn Arnold | <input type="checkbox"/> | Raymond P. Korny |
| Ludlow | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Monson | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Edward S. Harrison | <input type="checkbox"/> | Kathleen C. Norbut |
| Palmer | <input type="checkbox"/> | Paul Burns | <input type="checkbox"/> | George Backus |
| Sturbridge | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| Wales | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Michael Valanzola | | |
| Ware | <input type="checkbox"/> | William Braman | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Warren | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Bob Souza | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Peter Krawczyk 7:50 p.m. |
| Wilbraham | <input type="checkbox"/> | John Pearsall | <input type="checkbox"/> | Robert Weitz |

2. Pioneer Valley Planning Commission:

- Timothy W. Brennan
- James M. Mazik

SECTION I: MINUTES

	<u>Motion</u>	<u>2nd</u>	<u>For</u>	<u>Opp.</u>	<u>Abs.</u>
September 23, 2009 meeting	D. Panaccione	J. Grasso	5	0	1

Mr. Edward Harrison called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m., and the Task Force approved the September 23, 2009 meeting minutes. Mr. Harrison then referred to a handout he had distributed to the Task Force which was the last page of the amended letter that will be sent to all Massachusetts legislators with the exception of the members of the Joint Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies and the cabinet members of the Patrick Administration. Mr. Harrison explained that he had added a section to this letter which listed the concerns that received only a few votes each at the September 23rd meeting. Mr. Jim Mazik then reminded the group that they had previously agreed that the above-mentioned letter should be emailed to the legislators which would be a cost savings. Mr. Mazik also stated that the longer letter crafted by the Task Force will be hand delivered to the Joint Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies and will be mailed to cabinet members and the Western Massachusetts legislators. Mr. Mazik further explained that both letters will be posted on the Western Massachusetts Casino Task Force’s web site. Mr. Harrison asked the group if there were comfortable with having the short-form letter emailed to all Massachusetts legislators, and the group approved this action.

In reviewing the maps included in the long-form letter mailing, it was noted that the map indicating the anticipated impact area from the proposed Palmer site did not reflect the changes approved at the August 26th Task Force meeting. Mr. Mazik and Mr. Harrison then agreed to work on a plan to update this mailing with a corrected Palmer map.

Mr. Harrison stated that the public hearing on expanded gambling will be held on the October 29th and further explained that he would be the only Task Force member attending this hearing. He further explained that the letter to the Joint Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies no doubt will be entered into the public record.

Ms. Harrison moved to the next agenda item which was discussion of the press release regarding the Task Force's work. Mr. Harrison objected to the use of the text, "position on gambling legislation" in the press release, and the group requested that the word "position" be changed to "concerns." The Task Force approved the press release as amended, and Mr. Harrison then asked the group to consider when it should be issued. Mr. Mazik suggested that it be released on Monday, November 2nd which would be the following Monday after the public hearing. Mr. Tim Brennan said that if it is the intent of the Task Force to connect the press release to the public hearing, the text should not sound so "after the fact" since the media publishes press releases based on timeliness. Mr. Brennan then suggested that the headline should be, "Western Massachusetts Casino Task Force Presents Concerns on Gambling Legislation to the Legislature" so that it is in real time. Mr. Brennan also stated that this concept should be followed through with an opening sentence that reads, "The Western Massachusetts Casino Task Force has developed and presented a list of concerns that should be considered as gambling legislation works its way through the state house." Mr. Harrison asked Task Force Members if they agreed with Mr. Brennan's suggested edits to the press release, and the group approved these changes.

Mr. Harrison then discussed the scheduling of the next Task Force meeting since he wanted to invite legislators to attend one of the group's meetings. The Task Force agreed that the best time for the next meeting would be Wednesday, December 2nd, and Mr. Harrison noted that this date would give Task Force members the opportunity to contact legislators individually before the legislature goes back into session if they are unable to attend.

Mr. Brennan observed that it can be difficult to gather legislators at night in groups, and he suggested trying to arrange a meeting with them on a Friday morning because they tend to be in their district at this time. Mr. Harrison explained that a Friday morning meeting for the Task Force would not be practical, so the group agreed to stick with inviting legislators to the December 2nd meeting. Mr. Mazik asked which legislators should be invited, and the Task Force agreed that legislators to the abutting communities should be asked to attend. Mr. Harrison then suggested that the group identify specifically which legislators should be asked, and the following invitee list was formed:

- Senator Stephen Brewer
- Senator Gale Candaras
- Senator Stan Rosenberg
- Representative Anne Gobi
- Representative Todd Smola
- Representative Brian Ashe

- Representative Thomas Petrolati
- Representative Stephen Kulik

The Task Force agreed that these legislators should be invited via phone as well as email, and Mr. Mazik volunteered to handle this assignment. There being no further business to conduct Mr. Harrison adjourned the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

MOTION: J. Grasso **SECOND:** B. Souza **VOTE:** 7 **OPPOSED:** 0