

Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
Advisory Committee on Problem Gambling (ACPG) Legislative Workgroup

Draft Meeting Minutes
April 2nd, 2019

Meeting Location

Held via teleconference

Members Present

Tony Cabot, Chair
Alan Feldman
Carol O'Hare
Denise Quirk
Ted Hartwell

Members Absent

Judge Cheryl Moss
Debra Robinson
Constance Jones

Others Present

Kayla Jacobs, Kim Garcia, and Thomas Milazzo, DHHS Office of Community Partnerships and Grants (OCPG)

Mike Alonzo, Lobbyist for Nevada Council on Problem Gambling and Board Member of Reno Problem Gambling Center

- I. Call to Order**
Chair, Tony Cabot called the meeting to order at 11:01 AM and took roll call. No additional announcements.
- II. Public Comment # 1**
Mr. Cabot asked for any public comments, there was no response.
- III. Approve March 12, 2019 Meeting Minutes**
 - Carol O'Hare motioned to approve the meeting minutes from March 12th, 2019.
 - Ted Hartwell seconded the motion and it was carried through unopposed.
- IV. Discuss and Possible Recommendations for Legislative Strategies**
Mr. Cabot stated he would pass this topic to Mike Alonzo and asked him to speak on any updates he may have.
 - Mr. Alonzo responded that nothing has happened since they last spoke, and as most of us know there was a hearing in February before the finance subcommittee but there have not been any other hearings since that time. Mr. Alonzo added he has spoken to both Chairs of the money committee and they just asked him to follow up with them in few weeks after they have had a chance to look at closing budgets. Mr. Alonzo continued that Chair Carlton wants to have a conversation with the Governor's Office about the budget item because she would like to have something permanent in place for Problem Gambling. Mr. Alonzo stated he would follow up with them in a few weeks and he will have more information when they start closing budgets.

Mr. Cabot asked Mr. Alonzo if he knew when that would be.

- Mr. Alonzo responded that it will probably be another month because they have to get the economic forum numbers and going through policy bills but he would follow up and let us know.

Mr. Cabot asked about the policy bill that will accompany this request.

- Mr. Alonzo responded that it has not been introduced yet, but it will be part of the budget so it is exempt from the deadline.
- Ms. O'Hare stated regarding Chair Carlton's thoughts on wanting something more permanent, wasn't there a discussion at one point about putting a minimum of funding instead of a percentage.

Mr. Cabot stated that there was at one point and maybe Mr. Alonzo can elaborate on the fixed amount.

- Mr. Alonzo responded that what he believes she means is a program that would get funded like other programs and it would be part of the budgeting process every two years. Mr. Alonzo added it wouldn't be a set percentage like how it is now, it would be a general fund obligation that then would be part of the budgeting process every two years.
- Mr. Feldman responded stating he has enormous respect for Chair Carlton, but does not agree. Mr. Feldman continued that he doesn't believe it makes sense to have to go back every session to try to get an allocation because they would fight the same fight over and over. Mr. Feldman added he appreciates that the budget goes for two years however much of the work they need to be doing will last three four or five years. Mr. Feldman stated they must be in a position that they know they have stable funding. Mr. Feldman concluded he has had this discussion with Chair Carlton in the past and understands she has been fundamentally opposed as a matter of policy to put in a percentage of something that just continually feeds an issue.
- Mr. Alonzo stated he agrees and believes it is more about control as well. Mr. Alonzo continued if they hadn't seen the change of the number of slot machines going down, we wouldn't be looking for a change if the numbers hadn't gone down. Mr. Alonzo concluded that he believes they would probably be safer being tied to the percentage fee, obviously knowing the risk that it could change.

Mr. Cabot responded that he believes the problem they had when they did it with slot machines is that they took a portion of the overall revenues and tied it to that. Mr. Cabot stated the overall gaming revenues have not fluctuated as much as the slot machines and the overall gaming revenues are probably more predictive. Mr. Cabot concluded he believes they should try to stay on the course they are on if they can.

- Mr. Alonzo responded unless something drastic happens to us that he believes Chair Carlton thinks this will work.
- Mr. Feldman asked Mr. Alonzo if they should be in touch directly with the Governor's Office on this matter.
- Mr. Alonzo stated he thinks it is a good idea just to keep it on his radar just in case someone brings it up it is already on his mind.

Mr. Cabot asked Mr. Alonzo if it would be reasonable to think that they won't have any further hearings on this matter.

- Mr. Alonzo responded that what he is told by both Chairs is that there should be another hearing, even if it is only one minute. Mr. Alonzo concluded he will be in touch with them to be sure if there is another hearing that they can be prepared for it.

Mr. Cabot asked the committee if there were any further questions for Mr. Alonzo, there was no response. Mr. Alonzo left the meeting.

Mr. Cabot asked if there was any further discussion on this topic.

- Ms. O'Hare stated she concurs with what they were discussing, and as a person from the council world she has watched states where the question of the funding came up every two years and it is an insane way to run a program. Ms. O'Hare continued when months have to be spent every two years at the legislature defending it can be very difficult.

Mr. Cabot thanked Ms. O'Hare for her comment and announced they would move on to the next item topic.

V. Discuss Department Legislative Updates

Mr. Cabot asked Thomas Milazzo for an update on what has gone on since last meeting.

- Mr. Milazzo stated that problem gambling is still being discussed and believes they are aiming for a May 7th budget closing date. Mr. Milazzo concluded that it hasn't been scheduled yet.
- Mr. Feldman asked if there were any questions about it at all.
- Mr. Milazzo responded that it has been very quiet and other than the budget closing he doesn't believe they will receive any more conversation on the topic.

Mr. Cabot asked will the May 7th date the date for budget hearings or the date they intend to wrap everything up.

- Mr. Milazzo responded it would be the closing to wrap up the budget piece.

Mr. Cabot asked when they would be notified if there was going to be a hearing.

- Mr. Milazzo stated he can let them know as soon as he knows, and its not scheduled yet.

Mr. Cabot thanked Mr. Milazzo and asked if there were any further questions or discussion on this topic, there was no response.

VI. Discuss Status of Funding

Mr. Cabot asked if there was any discussion on this topic, there was no response.

VII. Approval of the Next Meeting, Future Meeting Agenda

Mr. Cabot suggested they keep the same Agenda for next meeting and the committee agreed.

Mr. Cabot motioned to have the next meeting April 23rd at 11:00 AM. Ms. O'Hare seconded the motion and it was carried through unopposed.

VIII. Public Comment #2

Mr. Cabot asked if there was any public comment, there was no response.

IX. Additional Announcements and Adjournment.

Mr. Cabot asked if there were any additional announcements, there was no response.

- Ms. O'Hare motioned to adjourn the meeting.
- Mr. Feldman seconded the motion and it was carried through unopposed.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:24 AM.