

**NORTHAMPTON COUNTY
GAMBLING IMPACT STUDY COMMITTEE**

**Meeting Minutes
Monday, July 9, 2007**

The scheduled meeting of Northampton County Gambling Impact Study Committee was held at 6:35 p.m., July 9, 2007.

ROLL CALL

The following committee members were present:

Ross P. Marcus – Human Services
Robert P. Balum – Hellertown
Robert A. Pfenning – Bethlehem
Vic Mazziotti – Fiscal Affairs

John Stoffa – County Executive
John Conklin – County Administrator
Constance K. Nelson – Assistant D.A.
Ann Terres

The following media representatives were present:

Sara Cassi – The Express-Times

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR (for the Public on Agenda items)

No items discussed.

OLD BUSINESS

- A. August 13, 2007 meeting – Speaker from PA Gaming Control Board, Mr. Harbach, Director of Media Relations
- B. Trying to get David Sanko, from Bucks County, to speak at the October meeting since the municipality officers will be present.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. June 13, 2007 Letter from State Ethics Commission emailed to the group.
 - a. Frank Flisser will respond for County Council.
 - b. Public officials can only get the same benefits as the general public.
- B. 2009 County Budget – Gambling Impact
 - a. Gambling impact should have minimal impact on County budget for 2008.

- b. 2009 budget will be more impacted. An estimate was based on 3000 machines for the full year. Gaming task force used \$238 per machine per day for the Tropicana.
 - c. County will get 30% of 1.2%, about a million dollars a year.
 - d. Expenditures and additional staffing will be needed eventually to accommodate issues relating to gambling, (public awareness, addictions, emergency services, etc.).
- C. Discussion of criteria for grants to County Municipalities.
- a. Grants are administered by the County's Economic Development or Redevelopment Authority. Checking into whether or not the Economic department can administer the grants or if an Authority is needed.
 - b. Discussion regarding the use of the grants. The current assumption is the grant money must be used for something relating to the impact of the casinos on the municipality.
 - c. The Boroughs do not have the tax base of the larger Townships to handle the impact they may face.
 - d. Traffic, crime, emergency service use, etc. can be bench marked to help determine what is most impacted and where the grants would be best used.
 - e. Grants need to be monitored for accountability.
 - f. Suggestion to make someone who was/is addicted to gambling a part of the committee to give insight to the group.
- D. Timing of grants to county municipalities.
- a. There will be a couple months time delay between when the grant applications are received and when the money is awarded.
 - b. Suggestion to wait until after the last check of the year is received to award the grants so the County knows exactly how much money is available.
 - c. Council wants to see the grants as individual object codes with a dollar amount. It will be a part of the Budget process for the following year.
 - d. The municipalities will know in December, once the budget is approved, what the award will be. Money will be distributed the first of the year.
 - e. Questions will be forwarded to Doug ahead of time.
- E. Update on Bethlehem
- a. Delay due to firing of the construction manager.
 - b. Plans have not gone before the Planning Commission yet.
 - c. No information on Task Force.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR (for public comment of the impact of gambling)

No members of the public present.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn

ADOPTED THIS DATE:

Chairperson