

RESILIENT LOUISIANA COMMISSION – GAMING TASK FORCE**Minutes of June 9, 2020**

The meeting of the Resilient Louisiana Commission – Gaming Task Force was convened on Tuesday, June 9, 2020, 10:00, via Zoom video teleconference. Present at the meeting were: Chairman Mike Noel, Barron Fuller, Barry Regula, Charlie Gardiner, Michael Legendre, Ned White, Rosanne Thompson, Vincent Schwartz, Wade Duty and ex-officio members, Trudy Smith, Natalie Thurman, Christopher Hebert, and Major Chuck McNeal. Arthur Lawson was noted to be present after roll call. Absent from the meeting were Vice-Chairman Dan Real, David Sickey, Earl Barbry II, Stan Guidroz, Dr. Thomas Laviest and Trey Tantillo.

Chairman Noel called the meeting to order and presented the Gaming Task Force’s Certification for Lack of a Quorum. A motion was made by Wade Duty to approve the minutes of the June 2, 2020, meeting of the Gaming Task Force. That motion was seconded by Vincent Schwartz and, there being no objection, the minutes were adopted.

Chairman Noel requested a brief update from gaming representatives regarding the reopening efforts during Phase Two. Casino Gaming representatives reported that the reopening is still going well and complimented the excellent support from the Louisiana State Police. Customer capacity has not exceeded the threshold yet, but there is concern of when that may occur. There have been no issues with maintaining protocols. Reintroduction of poker in Lake Charles went smoothly. There were no unexpected challenges, patron response has remained steady and there were no problems to report. Ned White reported light patronage at restaurants and bars with three video gaming devices, possibly due to the current healthcare crisis or being unaware locations have begun to reopen. Charitable Gaming representatives stated that they are doing well and are seeing an influx in video bingo patronage, while the live-call bingo has not yet seen an upturn in customers. Four to five more locations have reopened in Phase Two with about six more set to reopen within the next week. Social distancing was a struggle when capacity was set at 25%, so it is still an issue at 50% capacity.

Chairman Noel asked Major McNeal to discuss any issues regarding the modifications to the Plexiglas partitions from last week’s meeting. No problems had been reported. The Division will have authority to approve the Plexiglas barriers to individual circumstances if necessary.

The next item on the agenda was the final action on the Video Gaming recommendations. A motion was made by Ned White to forward the recommendations of the Video Gaming industry to the Resilient Louisiana Commission. That motion was seconded by Rosanne Thompson and, there being no objection, was unanimously approved.

Michael Legendre presented and discussed the Charitable Gaming recommendations. The presentation covered four suggestions that would benefit the industry in the future, some of which would require legislative approval:

- 1. Authorize license charitable gaming organizations to offer Internet Gaming (iGaming) –** *Allow players to play on phones, iPads, etc. within certain distances of bingo halls. This would help eliminate the concept of **only** offering live bingo games where players are confined within a bingo hall.*

2. **Authorized Electronic Video Pull Tabs in the same manner** - *Similar to casino, I-Gaming has become a staple of the industry and an expectation of customers. Offer Electronic Video Pull Tabs as standalone devices (similar to slots and Electronic Video Bingo machines)*

3. **Statewide Electronic Progressive Bingo games** - *Relax local limitations*
 - *more than six games per hour*
 - *higher jackpots*
 - *Offer more establishments than just traditional halls*

4. **Electronic Video Bingo devices** – *Currently, the law limits the number of devices and that number is approximately 1,200 devices. When new machines are brought in, they replace older machines. Currently limited to 35 machines per location. Would like to increase to \$2 bets – ticket in/ticket out.*

Chairman Noel asked Mr. Legendre how the age demographic is affected as far as iGaming is concerned for Charitable Gaming. Mr. Legendre said that, surprisingly, younger players are getting involved with live bingos. The average age is approximately fifty years old. It is unknown if it is for entertainment purposes or for betting, but it has been reported to him that patrons are walking in on their iPhones, playing live bingo and buying paper bingo at the same time. It has become apparent that iGaming has begun to have an effect on live bingo.

After discussion, a motion was made by Ned White to forward the recommendations of the Charitable Gaming industry to the Resilient Louisiana Commission. That motion was seconded by Barry Regula and, there being no objection, was unanimously approved.

Chairman Noel discussed the changes and questions that needed to be integrated into the report to the RLC in regards to equity. The report is due on Friday, June 12, 2020, with the presentation to the RLC on Wednesday, June 17, 2020.

There being no further business, it was moved by Wade Duty to adjourn the meeting. That motion was seconded by Vincent Schwartz and unanimously approved by the Gaming Task Force.