

MARG Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 17, 2019

Location: Ocean Downs Casino

Present: Jason Bittinger, Laura Burns-Heffner, James Butler, Jasmine Countess, John Derby, Mary Drexler, Charles Dwaileebe, Deborah Haskins, Matthew Heiskell, Kia Johnson, Tanya Julius, Ray Krebs, Senator Kathy Klausmeier, Jim Logue, Charles Luckie, Anjali Phukan, Patrick Martin, Gordon Medenica, John Mooney, Jim Nielsen, Mary Viggiani, Kate Tracy and Teresa Yates

Meeting Called to Order:

Jasmine Countess called the meeting to order at 11:54 a.m.

General Introductions:

The MARG members introduced themselves.

Member Updates:

a. Maryland Lottery and Gaming Control Agency (Jasmine Countess)

VEP applicant numbers / removal numbers / violations

As of March 31st, 2,090 people were enrolled in the Voluntary Exclusion Program (VEP). There were 26 violations and nine people removed from the VEP program.

There were 345 people enrolled in the Lottery exclusion program.

Dr. Haskins inquired about violator outcomes. Jasmine stated that this is determined by the court, but some prosecutors have been recommending counseling/treatment.

World Lottery Association Certification – Level IV

The Lottery achieved Level III certification in Responsible Gambling and now plans to pursue Level IV. Only eight states have achieved Level IV certification.

The Lottery is working on several initiatives to achieve Level IV certification. For example, players are now asked about their recall of responsible gaming messaging. The employee training webinars will also be adjusted to determine strengths and areas for training improvement. Refresher trainings are planned for each year. Lottery staff and retailers have access to training.

The Lottery is also considering Gamgard, a program developed by Dr. Richard Wood to evaluate games. Continuity of play and illusion of player control are some of the factors examined.

Maryland Lottery and Gaming Control Agency

Larry Hogan, Governor • Gordon Medenica, Director



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1800 Washington Blvd., Suite 330
Baltimore, Maryland 21230

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Laura Burns-Heffner stated that retailer sites with scratch-off and Powerball games may be a trigger to players. Gordon Medenica mentioned that Gamgard is more about evaluating ticket design.

b. Behavioral Health Administration (Department of Health & Mental Hygiene [DHMH]):

Dr. Bazron moved to the behavioral health administration in DC. The Maryland BHA currently does not have a director.

c. Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling: Mary Drexler

Recap of Problem Gambling Awareness Month

Mary Drexler stated that they conducted back-of-house training at four casinos. They were able to train 1,100 employees. They also developed a problem gambling guide and 12,000 materials were distributed.

Mary thanked the Lottery for the referrals to the Center; phone calls have been increasing.

400 of 500 people have enrolled for the Center of Excellence's 7th Annual Conference on Problem Gambling on June 14, 2019. The conference is free to anyone who wants to attend and people are encouraged to enroll now.

Teresa Yates said that their 4-year research study includes 1,300 gamblers and non-gamblers.

Update on Center Staffing: New Hires

Heather Eshleman is working to expand outreach.

Update on Success of Peer Support Services

Mary developed training and policy for peer support services. The peer's support has been a great success and beneficial for those not in treatment. No cost treatment is also available.

Sports Betting Legislative Bills

James Butler stated that Senate Bill 0808, sponsored by Senator Patterson, did not pass.

d. Department of Public Safety and Correctional Service (DPSCS): Delores Rowlette –DPSCS

Delores Rowlette stated that they are looking for people to place for support with gambling and substance abuse.

Gambling support programs may need expansion because inmates have gambling issues before they are incarcerated. Senator Klausmeier emphasized the importance of studying problem gambling in prison populations.

e. Maryland Judiciary: Gray Barton

Gray Barton attended the conference of the problem solving courts.

Mary Drexler and staff created a one-page flyer for judges and lawyers to review for referral of problem gamblers to treatment and other helpful services.

f. Maryland Council on Problem Gambling: Deborah Haskins

Update on Faith and Spiritual Communities Initiative

The Council awarded interfaith certifications in March.

There will be training in the fall at United Methodist Church. In addition, they are offering training for the Park Heights and Anne Arundel County regions. Prince George's advocates, clergy, and key stakeholders are also being trained.

Clergy/Lay 24-hour training is offered in Anne Arundel County.

Senator Klausmeier stated that she appreciated what the Council is doing about opioids/heroin.

The Council will be doing more training in the fall in Southern Maryland, in casino jurisdictions, and in the northwest zip codes.

More trainings will also be done in Anne Arundel County, Prince George's County, Western Maryland, and Southern Maryland.

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g. Maryland State Senate: Senator Kathy Klausmeier

Senator Klausmeier stated that it feels good to attend the MARG meetings because the group gets things done. She appreciates everyone and said to let her know if she can help. She said Gordon is always willing to help.

She indicated an interest in attending the 7th Annual Conference on Problem Gambling.

h. Maryland House of Delegates: Unable to attend

i. Maryland Coalition of Families:

The Coalition has seen an increase in referrals.

j. Gaming facilities (Updates):

i. Hollywood Casino - Matt Heiskell

There were no underage incidents at the casino in March. Matt also mentioned that the Green Turtle Restaurant has been there for two years. Great Wolf Lodge is expected to open in 2022. The casino will be on guard against underage gaming.

ii. Ocean Downs - John Derby

There were no underage gaming incidents at Ocean Downs in the month of March. 100% of employees participated in compliance training. 32 new employees were hired in March. Employees complete Title 31, Problem Gambling, and TIPs training if needed.

iii. Live! Casino & Hotel - Charles Dwaileebe

Charles stated that in February and March for Problem Gambling Awareness Month they worked with Mary and the staff at the Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling for training. 400 employees also had revamped Title 31 training. Phase II of event center construction is under way.

iv. Rocky Gap Casino - Jason Bittinger

Training continues as normal. Vanilla Ice and Coolio will perform concerts in July. In addition, Skid Row will be performing in August.

v. Horseshoe Casino Baltimore – Tanya Julius

Horseshoe employees are completing problem gambling training this month and will continue training in May.

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- vi. MGM National Harbor - Kia Johnson
MGM staff plans to hire a new Director of Compliance. The Vice President of Security will review voluntary exclusion training with staff. Tyler Perry recently performed five sold-out shows.

Open Discussion

Gordon thanked everyone for the work that they do.

Sports betting legislation did not pass last year.

Mary stated that safe guards for internet and mobile betting will be needed in the future.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting may be held in August.

The meeting ended at 1:05 p.m.