

New Hampshire Council on Responsible Gambling

Commissioners' Meeting Minutes

New Hampshire Lottery
14 Integra Drive
Concord, NH 0301

September 16, 2020 at 12:00 PM

Present: Commissioners Ed Talbot, Dot Duda, Debi LaPlante, Maura McCann, Heather Gray;
also present: Amanda Laskey

The meeting was called to order at 12:05 PM.

The first order of business was to accept the minutes from the June 24th meeting. Maura McCann informed the Council that the minutes for the last meeting were not finished at this time and would be brought before the council at the next meeting along with the minutes for September 5th for approval.

Ed Talbot, in his role as Executive Director of the New Hampshire Council on Problem Gambling (NHCPG), presented an updated NHCPG expense report. The balance of funds available to run the NHCPG as of June 24, 2020 was \$9,080.50. Following the expenses of office rent, salary, phone bill of \$6,605.09 and including membership dues to New Hampshire Providers' Association in the amount of \$108 left the balance as of September 16, 2020 at \$2,475.41.

Mr. Talbot then addressed facility expenses/rent in relation to the NHCPG budget. He has spoken with the office manager at New Futures about the office lease. The rent is paid through October 1; New Futures has given the NHCPG a three-month grace period or no rent required through December 31, 2020. Prior to January 2021, the NHCPG will need to review its needs and make a decision whether to sign an agreement with New Futures.

Ms. McCann proposed that the NHCPG relocate to the New Hampshire Lottery Headquarters at little to no cost. Mr. Talbot and his group would be absorbed into the Lottery, which is the practice of other lottery jurisdictions. Further discussion was tabled for a later date to determine the needs of the NHCPG and how best to separate the work of this Council from the NHCPG.

Discussion turned to news that funds available to this Council have been dramatically reduced in the wake of the COVID pandemic. Debi LaPlante asked for clarification on how the Council should allocate the reported new budget limit of 100,000 per fiscal year, for the next three years. Heather Gray then asked if a new capacity-building RFA should be created to reflect the new budget cap. Mr. Talbot responded that currently, the quarterly operations cost for NHCPG was \$9,600, which totaled \$38,400 a year, leaving \$61,600 for other services. This discussion

was tabled for a later date when more accurate figures could be provided via the State of New Hampshire budget and at a time when no NHCPG members are present, given that NHCPG is a potential bidder for the capacity building RFP.

The next order of business was in regard to problem gambling conference attendance. Mr. Talbot stated that he had attended the New England Consortium in June, in his role as Executive Director of the NHCPG; Maine, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Massachusetts all had representatives on the call. During the conference, budgets and hotline activity were discussed.

Mr. Talbot went on to say that the NHCPG's current year-to-date calls are 35, with 13 coming in from July to present. Six were lottery based, three were for sports gambling, and three were for casinos. One call was a miss dial for DraftKings. Mr. Talbot did want to call to attention to the fact that most people are finding assistance for gambling-related problems online rather than by phone for the sake of anonymity. Most calls that have been coming in are from concerned family members.

The next meeting of the N.E. Consortium will be virtual as well and hosted by Rhode Island; Mr. Talbot plans to attend, but if he is not available, he will present Nancy Murray, his Rhode Island counterpart, with his report.

Dot Duda offered that most people who have a gambling addiction often suffer from other addictions. She posed the question to Dr. LaPlante to see if colleges would be will to do research as to whether gambling and other addictions have increased during the pandemic. Dr. LaPlante did agree with the idea of research in this area but reminded everyone that the Commissioners from the Division on Addiction (herself and Dr. Gray) could not be involved with the creation of the RFP request to research services, as the Division on Addiction is a potential bidder and it would be a conflict of interest. The remaining three Commissioners (Mr. Talbot, Ms. McCann, and Ms. Duda) would be responsible for all decisions regarding a research-based RFP.

Dr. LaPlante, Dr. Gray, and Ms. McCann will be handling the RFP for capacity building, as they have no conflicts of interest in this area.

The next topic that was discussed was compensation for the Commissioners. Ms. McCann explained that when the Council was created per the legislation and subsequent law (RSA) that there would be no compensation per any member. The topic was briefly discussed and then tabled for a later date after for additional research.

A request was made to send a letter to Governor Sununu regarding the Council's request to reinstitute the maximum budget and to detail the sorely lacking gambling addiction resources here in New Hampshire. Ms. McCann stated that she would work on that letter.

Mr. Talbot then spoke about the River Casino and Jim Rafferty in the hopes of hosting another event to support the NHCPG.

At 1:33 pm, a motion was made by Maura McCann to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Commissioner Talbot and unanimously voted in the affirmative.

The next meeting of the Board will convene on December 16, 2020 hosted by Lottery Headquarters in Concord NH, via WebEx conferencing.

Respectfully submitted,

Maura McCann, Chair
New Hampshire Council on Responsible Gambling

DRAFT