

MEETING MINUTES OF THE
PALMER CITIZEN CASINO IMPACT STUDY COMMITTEE
GENERAL GROUP MEETING 24
PALMER TOWN BUILDING, MEETING ROOM I
JANUARY 21, 2009 – 6:30 PM

Meeting opened at 6:35 pm by Gerald Chudy, Chair.

ATTENDANCE

PRESENT Rocqueline Blazejowski, Gerald Chudy, Anthony Dimitropolis, CathyAnn Gehlhausen, Joseph Mastalerz, George Roy, Stephen Sears, Carol Sugrue, Michael Swiatlowski, Paul Wisnewski

ABSENT Charlotte Burns, Mickey Ghosh

MINUTES APPROVAL

Minutes Review for Meeting 17:

S. Sears would like it noted on page 1, paragraph 3 that Leon Dragone stated he would get back to the committee with more information.

A motion was made by P. Wisnewski to approve the minutes with correction.
J. Mastalerz seconded. The voted passed.

Minutes Review for Meeting 19:

M. Swiatlowski would like to add Leon Dragone (Northeast Realty) to the attendance.

S. Sears questions on page 2, paragraph 4 whether or not the word “impression” was the correct quote from Paul Brody. M. Swiatlowski will check the DVD. (The DVD confirms the statement “as citizen of the state of Connecticut, that is my impression also.”)

S. Sears would like the statement on page 3, paragraph 1 to note that the answer was specifically referring to the entrance/exit of the property.

On page 4, paragraph 5, “including schools” will be changed to “excluding schools”.

A motion was made by A. Dimitropolis to approve the minutes with correction.
R. Blazejowski seconded. The voted passed.

Minutes Review for Meeting 21:

P. Wisnewski would like to clarify on page 1, paragraph 7, that the Top Floor Learning program could provide ESL services to adults, not children in the schools.

P. Wisnewski would also like to clarify on page 2, paragraph 10, that he feels the first two scenarios were beyond possibilities.

S. Sears would like page 2, paragraph 3 re-stated as these are the notes from the sub-committee’s interview with Dr. Fournier. And also page 2, paragraph 5 should note that Dr. Paist had in mind a course taught at hotel complex and not at the school. Having this off-campus course would potentially free up space at Pathfinder for more students.

P. Wisnewski adds in this discussion that he spoke with the town administrator of Wilkes-Barre and the casino there only has slots and a racetrack. Pocono Downs existed before Mohegan Sun became involved.

A motion was made by A. Dimitropolis to approve the minutes with correction. J. Mastalerz seconded. The voted passed.

Minutes Review for Meeting 22:

M. Swiatlowski will fix the typo on page 1, paragraph 2.

S. Sears would like to note that Jim Ammann estimated the cost to be \$30 to \$50 million for the proposed water connection plans.

A motion was made by R. Blazejowski to approve the minutes with correction. G. Roy seconded. The voted passed.

Minutes Review for Meeting 23:

S. Sears would like page 1, paragraph 2 to note that all of the water department heads were in agreement with the recommendation of utilizing the Quabbin.

A. Dimitropolis would like to note that on page 1, paragraph 3, it should be clear that it is stated that the town has enough water for any foreseeable population growth, but regardless of population growth, the addition of a casino would require an alternative source such as the Quabbin.

A. Dimitropolis also would like to add on page 2, paragraph 6 that the estimated cost is between \$30 and \$50 million dollars.

S. Sears would like to amend the list of key cost factors on page 2, paragraph 7 to read: –entrance fee, –engineering, –construction, –cost of water, –maintenance, –treatment facility.

G. Chudy would like to note that Jim Ammann suggested that an escrow/force account agreement be formed as part of the negotiation process.

It is also discussed that the agreements between the Quabbin and Wilbraham be looked into.

A motion was made by P. Wisnewski to approve the minutes with correction. G. Roy seconded. The voted passed.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

A discussion is had regarding the tax status and ownership of the Sherman property. Leon Dragone did say he would look into this information for us but has not contacted anyone in the committee. P. Wisnewski will meet with the Assessor's office to seek information.

G. Chudy would like clarification on what we will be discussing with Matthew Streeter and Alice Davey next week. The group would like to hear about any recent developments from the town's perspective and learn of any experience Matthew Streeter may have since prior to his position in Palmer, he held office in a Connecticut town. The group would like to discuss any possible ways of obtaining grant money for tying into the Quabbin and any engineering studies to better prepare the town for a casino.

S. Sears asks if any information was received from Mohegan Sun regarding the unanswered questions from previous meetings. He suggests we contact Mohegan Sun for this information.

G. Chudy reads a press release sent to him from Tony M. Sousa regarding Senator Joan Menard's (D-Fall River) announcement of a casino bill to legalize casino gambling in the Commonwealth. Menard's bill calls for two resort casinos, one in Bristol County and one in Hampden County.

G. Chudy also reads an article from the Boston Herald regarding Senator Michael Morrissey's (D-Quincy) announcement of a casino bill which proposes two casinos. One casino would be located in southeastern Massachusetts and the other would be in MassPike-owned land in Warren.

S. Sears suggests that as part of our committee's report, we "cut & paste" all of the key information gathered through our notes/meetings/interviews. M. Swiatlowski would help in this area if someone was willing to read through and identify the information.

G. Chudy, to answer S. Sears' earlier question, reads a letter from Paul Brody of Mohegan Sun titled "Response to questions from November 12, 2008". Mr. Brody lists how communities in New York, Pennsylvania, and Missouri are paid for being host communities. All examples show payments made through the state's legislation:

- New York: funding from the state's general fund
- Pennsylvania: 9% of the gaming tax to host community
- Missouri: 10 host communities receive \$81 million in tax revenue in 2007 (\$2 per visitor and 10% of gaming tax)

Mr. Brody also answers that a college degree is valued, but not generally required for most of their jobs. He estimates that 5-10% of employees hold an associates degree or higher. Mr. Brody provided a population growth chart of Norwich, New London, and Groton, CT. The chart shows very little change in population from 1990 to 2005.

Mr. Brody explains that Mohegan Sun recruits "seasonal" international student workers, generally for 3 to 4 months during the summer and that no American worker has been displaced by the program. Mr. Brody also explains Mohegan Sun's policy on emergency service costs; the costs are borne by the patient and/or their insurance provider.

UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULE

- February 4 – guest from Gambling Anonymous
 – Town Manager and Community Development Director
 – revised sub-committee reports due
- February 18 – review and discuss sub-committee reports
- March 4 – final report preparation

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by P. Wisniewski to adjourn meeting at 8:15 pm.
R. Blazejowski seconded. The vote passed (9:0).

MINUTES SUBMITTED BY MICHAEL SWIATLOWSKI.
APPROVED – DRAFT