



Hamilton

**GAMING FACILITY PROPOSAL SUB-COMMITTEE
REPORT 12-005**

9:30 a.m.

Thursday, December 13, 2012

Council Chambers

Hamilton City Hall

71 Main Street West

Present: Mayor R. Bratina (Chair); Councillor R. Pasuta (Vice Chair)
Councillors S. Merulla, J. Partridge, T. Whitehead

Also Present: Councillor J. Farr

THE GAMING FACILITY PROPOSAL SUB-COMMITTEE PRESENTS REPORT 12-005 AND RESPECTFULLY RECOMMENDS:

1. Health and Social Impacts of Gambling (BOH12040) (City Wide)

- (a) That the City of Hamilton adopt the Public Health approach outlined in Report BOH12040 and attached hereto as Appendix "A" when considering issues related to gaming, including an emphasis on healthy public policy and casino operational policy conditions to mitigate gambling related harm;
- (b) That a representative from the Ontario Problem Gambling Institute – Centre of Addiction and Mental Health be invited to participate in the Hamilton Educational Forums to provide expert information about the health and social impacts of gambling, and the Hamilton Public Health Services Fact Sheet on the Health and Social Impacts of Gambling be made available;
- (c) That Public Health staff be directed to come forward with options to the Board of Health to improve local gambling prevention activities, with potential funding provided through gaming revenue;
- (d) That the Province be asked to commission a longitudinal research program to study the health, social and economic costs and benefits, at both a provincial and local level, of any gaming expansion. This would include developing a baseline and tracking impacts as the changes are implemented.

General Issues Committee – January 14, 2013

2. Correspondence respecting Casino Location (New Business)

That the following items be received:

- (a) Correspondence from Matt Jelly respecting casino location (Attached hereto as Appendix "B")
- (b) Correspondence from Reverend Aaron Gerrard, on behalf of the Churches of the Ancaster Ministerial Association, expressing their opposition to any proposals to bring a casino into downtown Hamilton (Attached hereto as Appendix "C")

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COMMITTEE:

(a) CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

The Clerk advised of the following change:

- (i) Correspondence from Matt Jelly respecting casino location
- (ii) Correspondence from Reverend Aaron Gerrard, on behalf of the Churches of the Ancaster Ministerial Association, expressing their opposition to any proposals to bring a casino into downtown Hamilton (Referred by Council on December 12, 2012)

On a motion, the agenda was approved, as amended.

(b) DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

(c) PREVIOUS MINUTES

On a motion, the November 30, 2012 Minutes of the Gaming Facility Proposal Sub-Committee were approved, as presented.

(d) DISCUSSION ITEMS

- (i) **Health and Social Impacts of Gambling (BOH12040) (City Wide) (Item 4.1)**

Dr. E. Richardson, Medical Officer of Health, and Susan Boyd, Program Manager, Alcohol, Drug and Gambling Services, responded to questions of the Sub-Committee.

Request for Additional Information (New Business – No Copy)

On a motion, the following direction was provided to staff:

(aa) That staff be directed to provide an economic impact report weighing the pros and cons of a casino impact on:

1. Public health
2. Economic development

and report back to the Gaming Facility Proposal Sub-Committee;

(bb) That staff be directed to provide information to the Gaming Facility Proposal Sub-Committee with respect to tracking and mapping of existing problem gamblers in the City of Hamilton by postal code.

(ii) Additional Casino Conditions (Item 4.2)

On a motion, the additional casino conditions as outlined in Item 4.2 (attached hereto as Appendix “D”) were referred to staff for consideration and/or inclusion in the final report respecting casino location.

(iii) Revised Timelines (Item 4.3)

On a motion, the revised timelines respecting future meetings of the Sub-Committee and schedule of reports to the General Issues Committee, was received.

(e) NOTICE OF MOTION

Councillor S. Merulla put forward the following Notice of Motion:

That staff be directed to convene an in-service workshop which would provide a clear understanding of what addiction means and the impacts on the community.

On a motion, the rules of order were suspended in order to allow for the introduction of a motion respecting an in-service workshop.

On a motion, staff was directed to convene an in-service workshop which would provide a clear understanding of what addiction means and the impacts on the community.

(f) GENERAL INFORMATION/OTHER BUSINESS

(i) Input from Hamilton Police Service

Councillor Merulla requested that an item respecting “response from the Hamilton Police Service” be placed on the next meeting agenda of the Sub-Committee.

(ii) Casino Locations (New Business – No Copy)

Tim McCabe distributed two maps to the Sub-Committee. The first map of the downtown indicated the three zones that currently permit commercial entertainment (D1, D2 and D3 zones) as well as the West Harbour.

The second map indicated other areas in the City of Hamilton which permit commercial entertainment, in conjunction with a hotel.

(g) ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Sub-Committee adjourned at 11:21 a.m.

Respectfully submitted

Mayor R. Bratina, Chair
Gaming Facility Proposal Sub-Committee

Carolyn Biggs
Legislative Co-ordinator
Office of the City Clerk

Recommended Approach

Evidence supports that increasing the availability and accessibility of gaming within a community can be a contributing factor to prevalence rates of problem gambling. Prevention and treatment of problem gambling is a complex issue and currently there is no one approach to adequately address this issue. When problem gambling develops, it is often a hidden problem and research indicates that only 1% of problem gamblers engage in treatment. Often individuals are not seeking treatment until they are in crisis either financially or emotionally.

Preventing and minimizing the negative impacts of gambling is important when considering a community's health. Adopting a public health approach to gambling, focusing on broad based interventions including prevention, treatment, research and policy based interventions that target prevention of harm to gamblers, is recommended. This helps address the complexity of gambling on many levels helping to maintain responsible gambling behaviour in the majority of individuals and supporting those who have moved along the continuum to problem gambling.

Developing and implementing healthy public policy should be a focus for the current deliberations on expanding gaming in Hamilton. There is evidence that all prevention interventions have some effectiveness, however, overall policy interventions were found to have higher rates of effectiveness. The TPH position paper outlines recommendations regarding gambling policy to assist with minimizing harm related to gambling activities that should be considered for the Hamilton community (Appendix D).

A public health approach is recommended that considers the health and social impacts, along with economic impacts. This information should be made public and included in any future consultations around gambling. A fact sheet will be distributed separately that could be used for this purpose. As well, the impact of potential gaming expansion should be monitored and a full analysis of the impact of any changes should be completed.

Finally, the following are key operating policies that should be considered for implementation for any changes to gambling that are contemplated. These align closely with those recommended by TPH and CAMH:

- Limiting hours of casino operation: no 24 hour access to venues, closed at least 6 hours per day.
- Restricting the number of electronic gaming machines (EGMs) and slowing down machine speed of play and features that promote false beliefs of the odds of winning.
- Prohibiting ATMs on the gambling floor.
- Implementing a mandatory player card system, including the issuance of monthly patron statements that compare personal record of loss, frequency and duration of play against full membership medians and averages.
- Making casino loyalty programs less harmful
- Implementing a maximum bet size, and a daily loss maximum
- Implementing a strong casino self-exclusion programs, based on the mandatory player card system.
- Designating areas for alcohol purchase and not providing alcohol service on casino floors to reduce impaired judgment.

Appendix "B" to Item 2(a) of Gaming Facility
Proposal Sub-Committee Report 12-005

Dear members of the Gaming Facility Subcommittee,

On Friday and over the weekend, I was in contact with Councillor Terry Whitehead, member of the Gaming Facility Subcommittee, both in person for coffee and via multiple emails.

Councillor Whitehead and I seem to disagree about the merits of placing a Casino in the downtown area, or in any neighbourhood for that matter. Councillor Whitehead and I also seem to disagree that there are thousands of people who live in the commercial area of the downtown core, the only area in the city being considered as an alternative location should the operation at Flamborough Downs discontinue. Councillor Whitehead also seems to disagree with the medical officers of health for both Hamilton and Toronto in their expert advice, that the proximity of a Casino has a relation to increased problem gambling.

I am writing the committee to clarify some statements made by this member in emails to myself and other members of the public. The Councillor has repeatedly cited a study that shows clearly that a downtown Casino is far more viable than a Casino in any other location in the city. However, I asked Councillor Whitehead to supply this study, and he claimed that this was up to the researchers who did the study to release it. He will not name or provide this study.

Councillor Whitehead has repeatedly referred to a potential 2% tax increase that he feels would be imposed should a Casino not be built in the downtown- claiming that a Casino would bring in an approximate \$14 Million in revenue annually, a number that cannot be supported by what the committee has heard from the OLG itself. I would like to ask the committee whether this figure is based on information that has been received by the committee in open session, or if this is simply an estimate the councillor has developed on his own.

It is extremely important that communications from members of this committee to the public contain accurate information, in order for citizens to make an informed choice.

I have a particular concern, which stems from references Councillor Whitehead has made about the Casino including a museum- he mentioned this to me in person, as well as in various emails to Hamiltonians over the weekend.

I have paid close attention to the Casino debate thus far, and have watched every minute of the deliberations of the Gaming Facility Proposal Subcommittee. I do not recall any specifics of a bid being outlined to members. I would like to question why it seems that one Councillor is privy to specific details of a private bid which is still forthcoming to this committee and to the broader public.

Considering council's recent discussions about the need for more clear controls on lobbyists representing commercial interests and how they interact with councillors, I feel it is important for Councillor Whitehead to divulge to members of this committee any information he seems to have about a Casino's economic impacts, as well as a clear explanation of what contact he has had with individuals advancing bids for a potential gaming facility.

In Councillor Whitehead's own words, "I think have an obligation to meet with people to get clarification on development in our neighbourhoods and so forth. There's nothing wrong with that," he stated. "What's wrong is that we should be telling the general public and the taxpayers who's meeting with us."

I would agree.

Thank you,

Matt Jelly

November 30, 2012

The Ancaster Ministerial Association

Re: Downtown Casino Discussion

To Mayor & Members of Council,

On behalf of the Ancaster Ministerial Association, we the undersigned express to you our strong opposition to any proposals to bring a casino into downtown Hamilton.

The Ancaster Ministerial believes in a strong downtown core and applauds any new ventures which seek to contribute to that end. However, after reading the reports from Ward 2 community groups such as the Beasley Neighbourhood Association and hearing from other communities which have invited casinos into their downtowns, we strongly believe that the pursuit of a casino in downtown Hamilton would lead to net negative effects within the community.

Gambling, though socially accepted and undoubtedly a source of great income for local governments, does not affect all equally. **A casino in the downtown core would have adverse effects on the most vulnerable in our society.** Sarah V. Wayland comments in her report, *Casinos and Low-Income Households: Research Review*, prepared for the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction, "If a casino is built downtown, Hamilton's low income households are likely to bear significant social, economic, and other costs, in exchange for an increase in mostly lower-paying jobs."¹ Wayland provides an extensive and in-depth examination of the affects of casinos on local economies and the most vulnerable. Wayland's research points to one conclusion: it would be a gross mistake to invite a casino into Hamilton's downtown.

If council decides that the revenue from a casino is irresistible, we strongly encourage council to look at other sites.

We hope that you will consider our comments before the OLG's imposed deadline.

Sincerely,

Rev. Aaron D. Gerrard

On behalf of the Churches of the Ancaster Ministerial Association

Ancaster Alliance Church, Alberton Presbyterian Church, Ancaster Christian Reformed Church, Bethesda United Church, Turning Point, Heritage Fellowship Baptist Church, Jerseyville United Church, Marshall Memorial United Church, Meadowlands Fellowship Christian Reformed Church, Ryerson United Church, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, St. Ann's Roman Catholic Church, St. John's Anglican Church, St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, & The Salvation Army Meadowlands Church

¹ <http://raisethehammer.org/article/1703>



Hamilton

Corporate Services

Appendix "D" to Information Item (d)(ii) of Gaming Facility
Proposal Sub-Committee Report 12-005

Memorandum

Date: December 7, 2012
To: Mayor and Members
Gaming Facility Proposal Sub-Committee
From: Carolyn Biggs, Legislative Co-ordinator
Subject: **Additional Conditions for Gaming Facility
Item 4.2 of December 13 Sub-Committee Agenda**

Mayor and Members of the Sub-Committee:

Information Item (g)(iv)(aa) of Report 12-035 of the General Issues Committee reads as follows:

**(g)(iv) Gaming Facility Proposal Sub-Committee Report 12-004 – November 30, 2012
(Item 8.8)**

(aa) Casino Conditions

The following conditions respecting the casino were forwarded to the Gaming Facility Proposal Sub-Committee for consideration:

- If the casino is located in Hamilton proper and not in Flamborough, concerned about providing parking for the casino
- Casino should be responsible to provide 24/7 first response on casino property; want to ensure that with thousands of people on the premises on an on-going basis, that there is quick response
- Capital funds for a centre of excellence for Substance and Gambling Addiction in Hamilton
- Given size of casino structures, require LEED certification on any new facility that is built; will have significant impact on the community
- Suggest direction to City Manager to meet with City Managers of other possible host communities and ascertain exactly what each of those municipalities is wanting as a standard for a fee and come to an agreement together

Therefore, as directed, the above information is presented to the Gaming Facility Proposal Sub-Committee for consideration.

:cab.