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For more information on Michigan's gaming industry, please visit www.michigangaming.com

Editor in Chief:

David D. Waddell, Esq.
Phone: 517.507.3859
waddell@rmclegal.com

*Senior Gaming Analyst
& Editor:*

Robert R. Russell, II
Phone: 517.507.3858
russell@rmclegal.com

Reporter

Douglas L. Minke
Phone: 313.221.9380
minke@rmclegal.com

Reporter

Blaine R. DeGracia
Phone: 517.507.3857
degracia@rmclegal.com

Subscription information:
info@michigangaming.com

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RMC Ventures, LLC

University Place Center
333 Albert Ave, Suite 450
East Lansing, MI 48823
Phone: 517.507.3860
Fax: 517.908.0235
www.rmclegal.com

The _____ MICHIGAN GAMING _____ Newsletter



OFFICE OF RACING COMMISSIONER RELEASES 2008 ANNUAL REPORT: REVENUE DECLINE \$30 MILLION

On Wednesday, Michigan Racing Commissioner Christine White released her agency's 2008 Annual Report, summarizing the operation of the State's pari-mutuel horse racing industry during its 75th anniversary year.

In 2008, Michigan's six race tracks held 1,737 days of live and simulcast racing, drawing more than 1.1 million visitors and total wagers in excess of \$231 million. These figures, however, were down from 2007, when Michigan tracks held 1,936 days of live and simulcast racing drawing nearly \$261 million in wagers. The State of Michigan collected \$7.4 million in wagering taxes from the 3.5% tax on all money wagered on simulcast races. The State does not tax wagers placed on live races.

In addition to the financial figures, the 2008 Annual Report also noted that the Office of Racing Commissioner conducted more than 13,000 equine drug tests, issued 300 fines and imparted 73 suspensions in an effort to maintain the integrity of the industry.

Racing Commissioner Christine White commented: "while our industry is facing some great challenges, I feel that Michigan has only seen its first 75 years of pari-mutual racing."

A copy of the Office of Racing Commissioner's full 2008 Annual Report can be found at the following link:

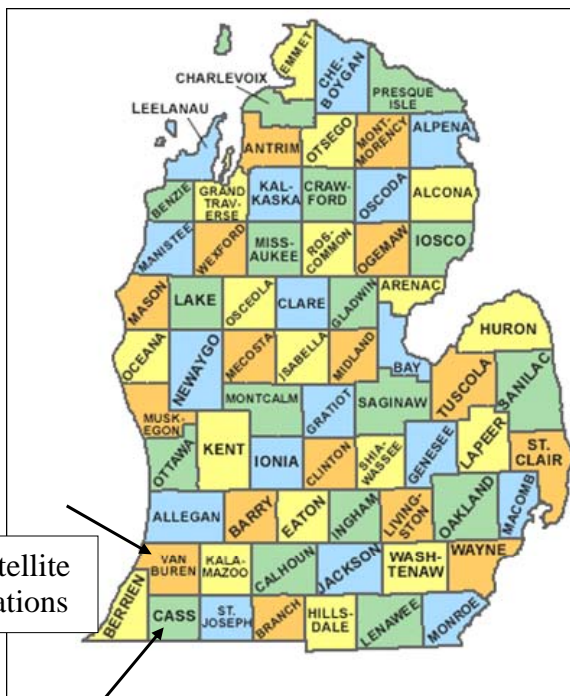
www.michigan.gov/documents/horseracing/2008_ORC_Annual_Report_274935_7.pdf

POKAGON BAND RELEASES LOCAL REVENUE SHARING FUNDS; BREAKS GROUND ON ADMINISTRATIVE HEADQUARTERS

This week, the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians (Pokagon Band), which operates the Four Winds Casino Resort in New Buffalo, Michigan, announced that it would be releasing approximately \$6.2 million in electronic gaming device revenue to the local revenue sharing board. The Pokagon Band had been holding these funds in an interest bearing escrow account for over a year, citing concerns it had with the bylaws of the Pokagon-Harbor Country Local Revenue Sharing Board (LRSB), as well as the proposed funding distributions. Under its tribal gaming compact with the State of Michigan, the Pokagon Band must pay 2% of electronic gaming device revenue to the local revenue sharing board.

The Pokagon Band's disputes were resolved by a recent amendment to its tribal gaming compact. The compact amendment also expand the LRSB from three members to five, and further allow the tribe to build up to two additional satellite casinos with a maximum of 1,000 electronic games of chance, in addition to its Four Winds Casino Resort. These satellite casinos are authorized to be built in both Van Buren and Cass Counties.

Image of Michigan's Lower Peninsula



Optional Satellite Casino Locations

Once these funds are released to the LRSB, which is expected to occur within the next couple of weeks, the LRSB will then work to distribute the funds to school districts and area local governments.

Also this week, the Pokagon Band broke ground on a \$5 Million administrative headquarters building located on its tribal campus near Dowagiac, Michigan. When complete, the 19,000 square foot administrative building will house eight tribal departments, with room for 50 employees.

PETITION FOR OHIO CASINO AMENDMENT APPROVED BY OHIO BALLOT BOARD

On April 13, the Ohio Ballot Board approved petition language for a proposed amendment to the state's constitution that, if supported by Ohio voters, would legalize casino gaming. This action allows the Ohio Jobs and Growth Committee, the group behind the amendment, to collect signatures from registered Ohio voters in an attempt to place the proposal on the November 2009 ballot.

The Board's approval was the final step in a two-month long attempt to formulate language for the petition. The proposed amendment was first rejected by the Ohio Attorney General in March because the specific locations of the four proposed casino sites were too vague. After resubmitting modified language to include more specific casino locations, as well as a inserting a provision stating that the casinos would have no effect on the state lottery or bingo, the petition was approved by the Attorney General and submitted to the Board.

The April 13th vote by the Board was 4-1, finding that the language consisted of a single constitutional amendment. Chairwoman Jennifer Brunner, the Secretary of State, was the sole dissenting vote, stating that language in the proposed amendment that links Ohio gaming laws to those in neighboring states would be an unprecedented link between Ohio and other states' laws.

(Continued on page 3)

If approved by voters in November, the amendment would create four casinos, one each in Toledo, Cleveland, Columbus, and Cincinnati. Projected revenue for the casinos is set at \$1.8 billion, with one-third set aside for taxes that would go to local communities, school districts, and other public projects. The amendment would require at least \$1 billion in initial investment and would allow all forms of gaming currently allowed in neighboring states.

The Ohio Jobs and Growth Committee must now collect 402,275 signatures from registered Ohio voters by July 1 for the proposal to be placed on the November ballot. Four previous measures have reached the ballot since 1990, the most recent of which failed at the polls in November, 2008. Proponents are hoping that the current economic conditions will sway voters to approve the proposal, citing the prospect of up to 20,000 new jobs and an estimated \$600 million in annual tax revenue.

The full text of the amendment and petition can be found at the Ohio Jobs and Growth Committee's website, located here:

<http://www.ohiojobsandgrowth.org>