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The _____ MICHIGAN GAMING _____ Newsletter



FIREKEEPERS CASINO OPENS TO THE PUBLIC

On Wednesday, August 5, 2009, and after nearly ten years of planning, the Class III FireKeepers Casino, located in Battle Creek, Michigan, opened its doors to the public.

“Today marks a significant milestone in the history of our Tribe. Our members, the local community and our team members have all been looking forward to opening the doors of FireKeepers Casino,” said Laura Spurr, Chair of the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi (“NHBPI”), owners of the new casino.

The \$300 million property features a 107,000 square foot gaming floor complete with a variety of lounges and five new restaurants. The gaming floor includes:

- Slot machines – More than 2,680 slot machines offering the most recent slot selections. Wheel of Fortune, Jaws, Wizard of Oz, and Monopoly Money Grab are among those found at FireKeepers Casino.
- Table Games – FireKeepers offers 78 table games including Blackjack, Roulette, Craps, Big Six, Pai Gow and Baccarat with a variety of limits including a high limit area.
- Poker Room – FireKeepers offers a 120 seat Poker Room with a selection of gamings, including Texas Hold ‘em, Stud, Omaha and others by request.
- Bingo – FireKeepers offers a 300 seat Multi-purpose Room that will feature bingo to enthusiasts.

“We are thrilled to open this magnificent property to the public,” said R. Bruce McKee, General Manager of FireKeepers Casino. “Michigan has waited patiently for jobs, and for the fantastic dining and entertainment options that

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FireKeepers has to offer.”

Located on Michigan Avenue near Exit 104 of I-94, just outside of Battle Creek, Michigan, the FireKeepers Casino project is owned by the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi Indians. The actual casino will be managed by Gaming Entertainment (Michigan), L.L.C., a joint venture between Las Vegas-based Full House Resorts Inc., and RAM Entertainment, L.L.C., a privately owned investment company.

LOCKWOOD APPOINTED ACTING RACING COMMISSIONER

According to the Michigan Office of Racing Commissioner website, Governor Jennifer Granholm has appointed Patricia Lockwood as acting Racing Commissioner. Ms. Lockwood is a Genesee County Commissioner and a former Democratic member of the Michigan Legislature. Her appointment comes after former Racing Commissioner Christine White resigned June 30, 2009, for an appointment by President Barack Obama as the Michigan State Executive Director for the Farm Service Agency at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Ms. Lockwood previously served as a state representative from Fenton, Michigan from 1998 to 2001 and was the mayor of Fenton, Michigan from 1989 to 2004. In March of 2004, she was appointed as the state’s Emerald Ash Borer Policy Director.

OHIO BALLOT INITIATIVE MOVES FORWARD

Last Friday, July 31, 2009, the Ohio Supreme Court rejected an attempt by Scioto Downs, a Columbus-area horse racing track, to stop efforts by proponents of a casino proposal from reaching the November, 2009 ballot.

Scioto Downs had sought to force Ohio Secretary of State Jennifer Brunner to investigate allegations that fraud was committed in the collection of over 850,000 petition signatures.

Over 450,000 valid signatures were previously submitted by the Ohio Jobs and Growth Committee and verified by the Ohio Secretary of State. As

required by Ohio law, 402,275 signatures had to be submitted for the issue to be placed on the November ballot. Ohio Supreme Court Justices ruled that Brunner and elections officials no longer had the authority to invalidate submitted signatures.

Thus, Ohio voters will be asked on the November 2009 state-wide ballot whether casinos should be built in Cleveland, Cincinnati, Columbus, and Toledo. The tax rate for the casinos would be 33%, the minimum capital investment per casino location would be \$250 million each and each casino would be required to pay a \$50 million licensing fee.

Opponents of the proposed constitutional amendment have formed TruthPAC, a committee lead by Scott Kozar. Mr. Kozar is a Huron, Ohio, native working with a Washington public relations firm, which according to a TruthPAC press-release, “will counter the exaggerated claims put forth by casino supporters.

The casino plan is backed by the newly-formed “Ohio Jobs and Growth Committee,” lead by such figures as Quicken Loans CEO and Cleveland Cavaliers owner Dan Gilbert, former U.S. Congressman and former Mayor of Cincinnati Charlie Luken and Penn National Gaming. Other investors and supporters include the group MyOhioNow, which supported the 2008 casino initiative. The initiative would have allowed for a single casino site in southwest Ohio, but it failed in the November 2008 election, gaining just 37.6% of the vote. Previous attempts to amend Ohio’s constitution and add a casino to the state of Ohio have failed in 1990, 1996, 2006 and most recently in 2008.