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# The MICHIGAN GAMING Newsletter



## FIREKEEPERS CASINO UPDATE

Today, February 12, 2010, the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi (NHBP) Tribal Council presented its first payment to the FireKeepers Local Revenue Sharing Board. The nearly \$2 million payment took place in the Calhoun County Board of Commissioner's Room in Marshall, MI.

The funds represent 2% of the "net win" or gross revenues from electronic gaming devices at FireKeepers Casino. The \$1,933,683.41 payment is representative of the five month period ending December 31, 2009.

"Our Tribe is proud to be able to provide these funds from our casino with our governmental partners in the local communities," said Laura Spurr, Tribal Chief of the NHBP. "With the reduction of state local revenue sharing to local governments, these funds will certainly be needed to put to good use. The Tribe's FireKeepers Casino enterprise is successful because we have enjoyed a great partnership with the local communities."

In addition, the Tribe will also make a payment to the state of Michigan in the amount of \$3,867,366.79, which represents 4% of electronic gaming profits guaranteed to the state for 2009. Funds will go directly to the Jobs for Michigan Investment Fund.

## FIREKEEPERS EXPANSION PLANS

According to the NHBP publication, *Turtle Press*, the tribe has also begun expansion plans for FireKeepers Casino. The casino complex opened on August 5, 2009 in Battle Creek, Michigan and FireKeepers rests on 78 acres. The current facility utilizes approximately half of this property.

According to the report, the NHBP has contracted with casino design firm

Thalden-Boyd Emery Architects to help develop a 'Master Plan.'

A Tribal Membership Roundtable Meeting to discuss the initiation of the Master Plan will take place next Saturday, February 20, 2010 at the Pine Creek Reservation Community Center from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Comments from the membership review will be submitted in final format on May 3, 2010.

## **MAYOR BING: "DETROIT, WE NEED TO PROMOTE OUR CASINOS"**

Yesterday, February 11, 2010, Detroit Mayor Dave Bing announced at a *Time* magazine and Brookings Institute-sponsored forum entitled "Reimagining Detroit: Making Washington A Partner in Detroit's Next Economy," that if the city properly right-sizes, while marketing its positive attributes, and creates ways to develop safe communities to attract new growth, it may have a bright future.

Mayor Bing noted such strengths such as the city's casinos. "Outside of Las Vegas and Atlantic City, we've got as much entertainment as anyplace," he said, referring to the city's various attractions.

In addition, Mayor Bing announced plans to tear down 10,000 vacant buildings over the next three years, but stressed that he needed federal funding to begin knocking down the blighted buildings.

## **SENATE BILL SEEKS TO ALLOW NATIVE AMERICAN CASINO FUNDING FOR SCHOLARSHIPS**

On February 2, 2010, legislation was introduced in the Michigan Senate which, if passed, would allow public schools with Native American casinos in their districts to establish scholarship funding for students and graduates. It would also allow school districts to use the money for operational expenses.

Senate Bill 1097 (SB 1097) provides that "[a] school district may establish and administer scholarships for its students or graduates to

support their attendance at a postsecondary educational institution from funds the school district receives as a result of a compact entered into between this state and a federally recognized Indian tribe pursuant to the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act." Michigan's Native American casinos are obligated to make the two percent (2%) revenue sharing payments to local governments pursuant to their gaming compacts with the state of Michigan.

SB 1097 is sponsored by Sen. Ron Jelinek (R-Three Oaks). Sen. Mike Nofs (R- Battle Creek) and Sen. Jerry Van Woerkom (R-Muskegon) are co-sponsors of the bill, both of whom have Tribal-run casinos in their districts. The bill now goes before the Senate Appropriations Committee for approval.

"The bill won't take money away from other state purposes because the money is from casinos, not the state," Sen. Jelinek told *Mirs News*. "We have raised \$1 million so far, and it would help students in postsecondary institutions with their tuition and living expenses."

## **RESTRUCTURED GRANT PROGRAM TO OFFER MORE FUNDING FOR GAMBLING DISORDER RESEARCH**

The National Center for Responsible Gaming (NCRG) announced on Friday, February 12, that the organization will be awarding approximately \$350,000 in funding for competitive research project grants through its Institute for Research on Gambling Disorders. The restructured Project Grant program offers twice as many funding opportunities than previous years and will award grants primarily to researchers focusing on the treatment and prevention of gambling disorders.

Christine Reilly, executive director of the Institute, stated in a press release that "[t]he changes announced today represent a natural evolution of our existing program, further expanding opportunities for researchers and providing critical support needed to ensure continued growth of this field of study." The funding program has

*(Continued on page 3)*

culminated in over 60 research initiatives that have resulted in over 150 scholarly articles published in peer-reviewed journals since the NCRG's inception.

The NCRG was founded in 1996 and was the first organization to provide research grants exclusively to those developing insights into the realm of gambling disorders. In addition to scholarly research, the Institute has participated in the development of youth and college programs aimed at curbing underage gambling and publishes *Issues and Insights*, a monthly column that explores the latest research in the field of gambling disorders.

Last year, the NCRG established Centers for Excellence in Gambling Research at the University of Minnesota and Yale University in order to support its research initiatives.

More information regarding the new Project Grants program and how to apply for the grants can be found at the NCRG website: [www.gamblingdisorders.org](http://www.gamblingdisorders.org).

potential businesses to submit a "letter of introduction" regarding their services.

The e-mail address is as follows: [info@rockventuresohio.com](mailto:info@rockventuresohio.com).

## **OHIO: ROCK VENTURES TURNS TO EMAIL FOR NEW BUSINESS HIRES**

Rock Ventures, LLC, which is headed by Quicken Loans founder and Cleveland Cavaliers owner Dan Gilbert, has set up an e-mail address for companies interested in conducting future business concerning the construction of casinos in Cincinnati and Cleveland, Ohio.

Last November, Ohio voters approved Issue 3 by a 53% vote, thus allowing casinos to be built in the cities of Cleveland, Cincinnati, Columbus, and Toledo, Ohio. Mr. Gilbert won the exclusive right to develop the casino sites in Cincinnati and Cleveland.

According to the *Business Courier of Cincinnati*, Rock Ventures, LLC is hoping to hire design firms, construction companies, and other vendors to help build and operate the planned casino. Although the hiring process will not take place in the immediate future, Rock Ventures, LLC has created the e-mail address submission process for