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MGCB Authorizes Soaring Eagle Gaming to Offer iGaming and Sports Betting

On April 14, Soaring Eagle Gaming, the Saginaw Chippewa tribe's gaming division, became the fifteenth internet gaming and sports betting operator in Michigan after the Michigan Gaming Control Board ("MGCB") authorized its launch. Soaring Eagle Gaming will operate as Eagle Casino and Sports and has partnered with platform provider GAN to offer its iGaming and sports betting products.

"Michigan now has a full complement of 15 internet gaming and sports betting providers with the authorization of Eagle Casino and Sports," noted MGCB Executive Director Henry Williams.

With the launch of Eagle Gaming and Sports, all of Michigan's federally recognized tribes now offer iGaming and sports betting in the State: "I congratulate the Saginaw Chippewa tribe as they expand their gaming offerings," said Williams.

Eagle Casino and Sports is now live in Michigan. A list of other authorized online gaming operators and their platform providers in Michigan can be found [here](#).

American Gaming Association Continues Campaign to Crack Down on Illegal Gambling

Continuing its efforts against illegal gambling, the American Gaming Association ("AGA") recently sent a [letter](#) to Attorney General Merrick Garland urging the Department of Justice ("DOJ") to take enforcement action against illegal gambling operators. In the letter, the AGA outlines the dangers associated with

illegal, online sportsbooks and casinos and unregulated “skill game machines”. Consumers playing on illegal online sportsbooks do not have any recourse should the illegal operators not pay out winnings and the sites do not have the responsible gaming and know your customer (“KYC”) features that legal gaming operators are required to implement. There are no testing or regulatory standards to ensure fair play. Additionally, illegal operators pay no state or federal taxes.

The AGA called on the DOJ to address illegal gambling by taking the following three actions:

- Continuing to educate consumers on legal gaming options and the dangers associated with illegal operations.
- Investigating and indicting the largest offshore operations—such as Bovada, MyBookie and BetOnline—that openly violate federal and state laws.
- Clarifying that “skill-based” machine manufacturers must comply with Johnson Act registration requirements and anti-money laundering standards and pursuing aggressive enforcement actions against those entities that do not fully comply.

In a [press release](#), AGA President and CEO Bill Miller noted: “While the challenge of illegal gambling is not new, the brazen and coordinated manner in which it occurs—both online and in communities—has elevated this problem to a level that requires significant federal attention. We urge the Department to make it a priority to act...to protect American consumers, crack down on illegal operators, and enforce federal regulations.”

The AGA has identified illegal gambling as a priority and last year authored a white paper relating to unregulated gaming machines as covered in the [Michigan Gaming Newsletter, Volume 27, Issue 13](#).

Detroit Casinos Report \$122.86 Million March Aggregate Revenue

According to the March [revenues](#) released by the Michigan Gaming Control Board (“MGCB”), the three Detroit casinos reported \$122.86 million in monthly aggregate revenue in March. Table games and slots generated \$120.93 million in revenue, and retail sports betting generated \$1.93 million in revenue.

The March market shares were:

- MGM, 46%
- MotorCity, 33%
- Greektown, 21%

The three Detroit casinos reported \$113.84 million in monthly aggregate revenue during March 2021. Monthly revenue for table games and slots was 9.1% higher compared to March 2021 results. Monthly revenue was up 26.5% when compared to February 2022 results.

When compared with March 2021, monthly gaming revenue results were:

- MGM, \$55.92 million, up 29.4%
- MotorCity, \$39.29 million, down 6.5%
- Greektown, \$25.72 million, up 0.4 %

The three Detroit casinos paid \$9.8 million in gaming taxes to the State of Michigan, compared to \$9 million for the same period last year. The casinos also reported submitting \$14.4 million in wagering taxes and development agreement payments to the City of Detroit in March.

Table games and slot revenue was 11% higher in Q1 of 2022 than in Q1 of 2021. The three Detroit casinos reported submitting gaming taxes in the amount of \$25.6 million to the State of Michigan this quarter as compared to \$23 million for the same time period last year.

Quarterly gaming revenue by casino was:

- MGM, \$150.8 million, up 35.2%
- MotorCity, \$98.1 million, down 7.8%

- Greektown, \$66.5 million, up 0.7%

Retail sports betting qualified adjusted gross receipts (“QAGR”) for March fell \$1.04 million compared with March 2021 results. Monthly QAGR was up by \$2.8 million when compared with February 2022.

March QAGR by casino was:

- MGM, \$545,336
- MotorCity, \$718,442
- Greektown, \$664,550

Total handle was \$26,355,304. Total gross receipts reported by the three Detroit casinos were \$1,696,047. The three Detroit casinos reported submitting taxes on retail sports betting in the amounts of \$72,891 to the State of Michigan and \$89,089 to the City of Detroit.

Year to date thru March 31, aggregate retail sports betting QAGR results were:

- MGM, \$852,039
- MotorCity, \$839,588
- Greektown, \$1,297,222

Fantasy contest operators reported total adjusted revenues of \$762,104 and paid taxes of \$64,017 during February 2022.

Fantasy contest operators reported aggregated total adjusted revenues of \$2.5 million and paid taxes of \$208,001 to the state through Feb 28, 2022.

FireKeepers Makes Record Contributions to State of Michigan and Local Community

In a [press release](#), the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi (NHBP), which owns FireKeepers Casino Hotel, announced record-setting contributions to the State of Michigan and the FireKeepers Local Revenue Sharing Board (FLRSB) in 2021, totaling a combined \$27.4 million.

NHBP and FireKeepers distributed just over \$21 million to the State, which was presented in a check to Michigan District 63 State Representative Matt Hall. The 2021 payment to the State represents an 11.4% increase over the 2019 distribution.

Additionally, the group presented a check for nearly \$6.4 million to FLRSB Chairperson Joe Caron. This payment is a 9.2% increase over the 2019 allocation. Since the first distribution in 2010, contributions to FLRSB have been distributed to several organizations, such as Harper Creek Community Schools, Willard Library, Athens Township, and the City of Battle Creek, among others.

The 2021 results raise NHBP and FireKeepers’ total contributions to over \$194.5 million and \$66.1 million to the State of Michigan and the FLRSB respectively. The combined lifetime contribution to both recipients is \$260,672,586.

“Record revenue sharing distributions represent both the tribe’s continued substantial investments in this award-winning property and the dedication of [the tribe’s] Team Members to deliver outstanding guest service,” commented NHBP Tribal Council Chairperson Jamie Stuck.

Little River Casino and Everi Spearhead \$70,000 in Charitable Contributions

According to a [report](#) in the Manistee News Advocate, Little River Casino Resort announced that it collected charitable contributions from its customers totaling over \$70,000 to the Lakeshore Children’s Advocacy Center and the Arc of Manistee County. The donations are being made in partnership with gaming supplier Everi, Inc. who worked with the casino to create a “Change for Charity” program which collects donations from casino guests at Kiosks where gaming tickets can be redeemed.

“Little River Casino Resort also provides donation ticket boxes next to our ticket redemption kiosks that display the chosen charities,” said Tiphonie Smith, operational finance manager, in a news release.

The Lakeshore Children’s Advocacy Center provides services to families in traumatic circumstances. Further details on this charity are available at its [website](#).

“The Little River Casino Resort is our largest corporate sponsor, and our team is beyond grateful for the generous financial support provided,” said Megan McCarthy, executive director of the advocacy center, in a press release. “Little River Casino Resort’s Change for Charity is making life-changing donations in its support of the Lakeshore Children’s Advocacy Center. These funds go to support direct client care of children and families in trauma in our community, and they have allowed us to continue to meet client needs during a time of unprecedented reports of violence against children.”

The Arc of Manistee County is a charity that defines its Mission as being “to ensure that people with developmental disabilities are valued in order that they and their families can participate fully in and contribute to their community.” More information on this charity is available at its [website](#).