

**Nebraska Commission on Problem Gambling  
August 12, 2022  
700 South 16<sup>th</sup> Street  
Lincoln Nebraska**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**The meeting was called to order at 9:35 a.m.**

**Roll Call:** Present in person: Lutz, Moore, Zohner, Volnek, Arch and Lambert.  
Absent excused: Leckband.

**Announcements:**

Chairperson Lutz made the following announcements:

The notice of this meeting was posted publicly on July 28, 2022 on the state events calendar, and on August 2, 2022 on the program's website. The notice of meeting with the amended agenda has been available continuously here in the office of the Problem Gamblers Assistance Program in the Ferguson House, 700 South 16<sup>th</sup> street, Lincoln, Nebraska.

This meeting of the Commission on Problem Gambling is conducted according to the requirements of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act. A copy of the Open Meetings Act is posted on the door to this room.

Copies of other printed materials that may be considered by the Commission during the meeting are also available to the public on the table in the lobby. Public comments on issues presented during this meeting will be allowed by the chair from time to time during the meeting and may also be requested by any member of the commission at any time.

I want to also note that the sequence of our discussion of agenda items and the timing of discussion are tentative and subject to ruling by the chair as this meeting goes on.

Let us now pause for a moment of reflection before we move on to the next item on the agenda.

**Approval of minutes of previous meeting:** Chairperson Lutz called for amendments or corrections to the minutes of the meeting of May 20, 2022, and hearing none, Commissioner Moore moved approval, seconded by Commissioner

Lambert. The Chair called for a vote. Voting yes: Lutz, Moore, Zohner, Volnek, Arch and Lambert. Voting no: none. Motion carried.

**The written Director's narrative report was distributed and is attached to these minutes.**

**National Conference:** The director reported attendance at the national conference of the National Council on Problem Gambling, held in Boston on July 19-21, where there was significant emphasis on sports betting both for its impact on gamblers and on college and professional athletes. An introduction to Game Sense, a program designed to intervene in the casino with patrons who are apparently in trouble with their gambling, may be helpful as Nebraska casinos adopt problem gambling programming. The Commission reviewed the executive summary of the 2021 survey of problem gambling services in the United States.

**Finance:** Several financial reports from the Department of Administrative Services Accounting Division were distributed and reviewed with the Commission. These are referred to in the written report.

**Summary of Fiscal Year-to-Date Operations:** The director's report summarizes the results of operations during the period July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022. The Commission reviewed spread sheets that itemize contractor performance and overall cost of services.

**Affirm Executive Committee action: Increase contract award amount to Choices Treatment Center of Lincoln.**

The Commission reviewed and discussed the minutes of the executive committee dated July 2, 2022 approving increase of the contract award to Choices Treatment Center from 485,000 to 550,000, to allow for payment for June services. Commissioner Arch moved for affirmation of the action taken by the executive committee. Commissioner Moore seconded the motion. After discussion the Chair called for a vote. Voting yes: Lutz, Moore, Zohner, Volnek, Arch and Lambert. Voting no: none. Motion carried.

**Approve counselor contract awards for fiscal year 2022-23.**

The Commission reviewed a list of counselor contract awards for the current fiscal year. The total of the awards is \$1,480,000, which is 77% of the total projected in the program budget adopted on May 20. The amount awarded leaves \$437,500 within the budget to increase awards based on demand as the

year goes on. Commissioner Arch moved approval of the amounts, seconded by Commissioner Lambert. After discussion the chair called for a vote. Voting yes: Lutz, Moore, Zohner, Volnek, Arch and Lambert. Voting no: none. Motion carried.

**Approval payment of annual dues to the National Association of Administrators of Disordered Gambling Services.**

The director proposed approval by the Commission of payment of annual dues to the NAADGS in the amount of \$3,500 for the year July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023. The Association was formed at the initiative of a former director of the Nebraska program, and provides opportunities to exchange information and programming ideas with other programs in the United States. Commissioner Moore moved approval of the payment, seconded by Commissioner Zohner. After discussion the chair called for a vote. Voting yes: Lutz, Moore, Zohner, Volnek, Arch and Lambert. Voting no: none. Motion carried.

**Program Data and Helpline reports**

Staff reported on data gathered from individuals accepted into counseling and callers to our helpline. The report on client data included review of the extensive Excel workbook that tabulates and analyzes data gathered since July 1, 2013.

**Agent/MediaSpark contract report**

The annual report by Agent Brand on the progress of the digital media campaign was received and is included in the commission's materials. In general, the campaign is performing as expected with increases in all tactics. The campaign focuses on awareness and informing the public about the program's counseling services.

**Proposal for an RFP to be issued this fiscal year for the program digital media campaign**

Staff presented an outline of concepts for a new RFP to be issued in the second half of the current fiscal year for the digital media campaign for years beginning July 1, 2023. If program revenue permits the budget may be \$500,000 per year. Staff requested a resolution directing them to proceed with development of the scope of work for the RFP. Commissioner Arch moved

adoption of the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Moore. After discussion the chair called for a vote. Voting yes: Lutz, Moore, Zohner, Volnek, Arch and Lambert. Voting no: none. Motion carried.

**Problem Gamblers Assistance Program biennial budget**

The director presented copies of biennial budget narrative documents and explained the process of development of state budgets. The final budget request is due by September 15. A copy of the documents will be submitted to the Commissioner before the due date.

**Director performance review and pay increase**

Commissioners discussed the result of the annual director’s performance review. Comments were favorable. Commissioner Moore moved to increase the director pay by 4%, seconded by Commissioner Lambert. After discussion the chair called for a vote. Voting yes: Lutz, Moore, Zohner, Volnek, Arch and Lambert. Voting no: none. Motion carried.

The next meeting of the Commission will be held on November 18, 2022 beginning at 9:30 a.m. at Ferguson House in Lincoln.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

ATTEST:

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Todd Zohner, Secretary

**NEBRASKA COMMISSION ON PROBLEM GAMBLING  
AUGUST 12, 2022  
DIRECTOR'S NARRATIVE REPORT**

**AGENDA ISSUES THAT WILL AFFECT THE BUDGET**

6. Affirm Exec. Committee action awarding an increase by the amount of to the Choices Treatment Center contract in June to assure available allocation to pay for June services.
7. Approve total of counselor contract awards issued in June, effective beginning July 1.
8. Approve payment of annual dues to the National Association of Administrators of Disordered Gambling Services, in the amount of \$3,500.00.

**ACTIVITIES SINCE LAST MEETING**

**ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON PROBLEM GAMBLING** I attended the annual conference in Boston on July 19-21. Over 600 people attended. Sixty separate presentations covered subjects including safer sports betting, responsible gambling, treatment and prevention.

**TRAINING WEBINARS** Webinars by Dr. Jon Grant on May 26 (comorbidities in gambling disorder) and Dr. Tim Fong on June 7 (impact of gambling disorder on physical health) were recorded and posted on the website. We expect to produce more webinars about similar topics this year.

**COMMISSION BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM JULY 1, 2023 TO JUNE 30, 2025: TAB 13 IN COMMISSION BINDERS**

**TAB 13** materials are the narrative elements of the state biennial budget process – the description of program activities, objectives and performance measures. Final budget documents including detailed budgets will be due on September 15.

**STATUS OF CASINOS**

The casino operators in Lincoln, Omaha and Grand Island have all filed license applications. Developers predict limited operations in Lincoln and Grand Island by next fall, and in Omaha late next spring.

**LEGISLATION: TAB 3**

The Legislature will not be in session until January.

**FINANCIAL REPORTS: TAB 4**

State accounting financial reports for the period July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022, are in tab 4 of today's materials.

The **Program Summary** itemizes revenue and spending for the year. Totals are on the second page of the report: **revenue \$1,967,897 and spending \$1,856,331**. Program revenue was 3.6% more than last year, while overall spending was up by about 20%. Total spending increased by \$312,000 which was driven mainly by increases in counseling (government aid in these reports) and problem gambling messages (Agent Brand multimedia contract).

The **Fund Summary by Fund** shows you the status of the Gamblers Assistance Fund, which is the main vehicle for the Program's revenue and spending. On the first page, far right column, on the line **Fund Equity Undesignated** shows cash on hand as of July 1, 2021 was **\$930,364**. Cash on hand on June 30, 2022 is shown on the top line, page 1, second column from the right

under the heading **Account Balance Debit: \$1,041,929**. This is a 12% increase in the program's net cash position compared to a year ago.

The **Budget Status** Report shows you that with 100% of the fiscal year elapsed, and our program had spent 83% of our approved budget. We have stayed under budget every year.

#### **INTERNAL OPERATIONS SPREADSHEETS: TAB 5**

The Excel spreadsheets **Gamblers Assistance Contracts Performance** shows you the itemized results by contractor since July for the major categories of service. Near the bottom of the third page is a set of boxes with monthly overall totals. Here is a comparison to prior years:

- For the period July 2021 through June 2022, 224 new clients were admitted into our counseling services. Last year there were 232 new client admissions; the year before, 174.
- Over fiscal year, for the period July 2021 through June 2022, an average of 179 admitted clients (not including short-term urgent care) have attended counseling each month.
- Counselors were paid \$1,162,238 for counseling services. The year before the total was \$981,411; the year before that, it was \$1,207,720.

A second spreadsheet – **Itemized Cost of Counseling Service** - shows quantities and cost of the different items of counseling services. Counselors were paid for 8,540 hours of counseling. A year ago, the total was 9,219 hours, and the year before that the total was 10,900 hours.

#### **OTHER TOPICS FOR THE COMMISSION**

The dividers in the Commission binders include documents for the other items on the agenda. John Pulverenti of Omaha and Matt Monheiser of Sidney are still waiting to be appointed by the Governor.

David Geier, Director  
August 12, 2022.