

COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 22-004
REGARDING EXCLUSION OF BARBARA BELL FROM
EXCURSION GAMBLING BOATS AND FACILITIES IN MISSOURI

January 19, 2022

WHEREAS, pursuant to 11 CSR 45-15.030 the Missouri Gaming Commission (the “Commission”) has the authority to place a person on the Exclusion List for having been convicted of a felony in any jurisdiction of any crime involving moral turpitude or of a crime involving gaming, violating any provision of Chapter 313 RSMo or any rule promulgated by the Missouri Gaming Commission, performing any act or having a notorious or unsavory reputation which would adversely affect public confidence and trust in gaming, or having her name on any valid and current exclusion list from another jurisdiction in the United States; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to 11 CSR 45-15.010, placement on the Exclusion List prohibits such person from entering or having contact of any kind with any Missouri riverboat gaming operation; and

WHEREAS, on multiple occasions in 2014 and 2015, while employed as a dealer at the Lady Luck Casino Caruthersville¹ (the “Casino”), Matthew S. Downey improperly dealt Mississippi Stud Poker and Black Jack games by intentionally exposing cards to patrons, including Ms. Bell, thereby giving her knowledge of the outcome of the game and an advantage against other patrons. Ms. Bell compensated Mr. Downey for helping her cheat at those games. On November 17, 2015, Mr. Downey pled guilty to felony Violation of Laws Pertaining to River Boat Gambling, in violation of §313.830.4(4), RSMo (2014) in the Circuit Court of Pemiscot County, Missouri; and

WHEREAS, on multiple occasions in 2014 and 2015, while employed as a dealer at the Casino, Karla M. Benitez engaged in patterns of behaviors while dealing Mississippi Stud Poker and Black Jack to casino patrons, including Ms. Bell, that gave those patrons knowledge of the outcome of the game and an advantage over other patrons. On March 1, 2016, Ms. Benitez pled guilty to misdemeanor Attempted Violation of Laws Pertaining to River Boat Gambling, in violation of §313.830.4(4), RSMo (2014) in the Circuit Court of Pemiscot County, Missouri; and

WHEREAS, on multiple occasions in 2014 and 2015, while employed as a Table Games Dealer at the Casino, James W. Goodman improperly dealt Mississippi Stud Poker games by intentionally exposing the community card to certain patrons, including Ms. Bell. Mr. Goodman was compensated by Ms. Bell for exposing the cards dealt while he worked the Mississippi Stud Poker games in December 2014 and January and February 2015. On November 3, 2015, Mr. Goodman pled guilty to felony Violation of Laws Pertaining to River Boat Gambling, in violation of §313.830.4(4), RSMo (2014) in the Circuit Court of Pemiscot County, Missouri; and

¹ Lady Luck Casino Caruthersville is currently known as Century Casino Caruthersville. The Casino’s name was changed in 2019.

WHEREAS, Ms. Bell was permanently barred from the Casino effective September 24, 2015, after she was identified as being involved in the cheating and collusion investigation conducted by the Missouri Highway Patrol assigned to the MGC at the Casino beginning in January 2015. The investigation revealed that Ms. Bell met with at least one MGC licensee and provided monetary payment for the dealer to reveal cards to her, in violation of gaming regulations. These actions provided Ms. Bell with knowledge of the outcome of the game that other patrons were not provided under the approved rules of the games. The investigation also found that Ms. Bell coordinated with another patron who was colluding with those dealers to enhance her winning and minimize her losses. The investigation resulted in the arrest and guilty pleas of Mr. Downey, Ms. Benitez, and Mr. Goodman, as set forth above. Mr. Downey, Ms. Benitez, and Mr. Goodman's employment with the Casino were also terminated and their gaming licenses revoked as a result of their involvement in the cheating and collusion activities described above concerning Ms. Bell.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Commission hereby finds that Barbara Bell is eligible for permanent placement on the Exclusion List, and the Commission directs the Executive Director to issue a Notice of Exclusion to Barbara Bell.

SO ADOPTED.



Mike Leara
Chairman
Missouri Gaming Commission