

MISSOURI GAMING COMMISSION
COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 26-033

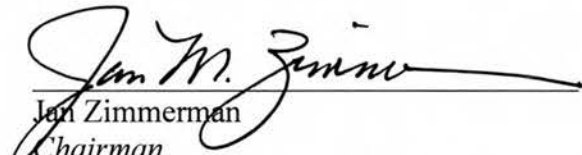
STEFANE A. NICHOLS
June 24, 2026

WHEREAS, Stefane A. Nichols ("Nichols"), requested a hearing to contest the proposed disciplinary action initiated against him on September 22, 2025, by the Commission's issuance of a Preliminary Order for Disciplinary Action, DC-25-087; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to 11 CSR 45-13.010, et. seq., an administrative hearing was held on Nichols' request and the Hearing Officer submitted the proposed Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and Recommendation for Final Order attached hereto (collectively the "Final Order") for review by the Commission; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Commission has reviewed the Final Order and hereby issues to Nichols a suspension of his occupational license for five (5) days in the above-referenced case in the matter of DC-25-087; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this shall be considered a final decision of the Missouri Gaming Commission.


Jan Zimmerman
Chairman
Missouri Gaming Commission

IN THE MISSOURI GAMING COMMISSION

In Re: Stefane Andre Nichols

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License Number MGC338450

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DC 25-0087

FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND RECOMMENDATION

On December 30, 2025, a hearing was conducted on a request for a hearing to review the Missouri Gaming Commission's proposed disciplinary action against the Level II Occupational License of Stefane A. Nichols, License Number MGC338450. After consideration of the testimony, exhibits, arguments of counsel and the licensee, the undersigned contracted hearing officer submits the following findings of fact, conclusions of law and recommendation for consideration by the Missouri Gaming Commission ("MGC"):

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On or about September 22, 2025, the Executive Director notified the licensee of proposed discipline against the licensee's Level II Occupational License. The licensee timely requested a hearing on the proposed disciplinary action. A hearing was held at the MGC's offices in Jefferson City. The hearing was attended by the MGC's Deputy Legal Counsel, Thomas Venneman, the licensee and this hearing officer, along with witness Troy Graham of the Missouri Highway Patrol. At the close of evidence the evidentiary record was left open for the licensee to submit video copy of controversial advertisements utilized by the St. Jo Frontier Casino in connection with a planned advertising campaign with Missouri Western State University's athletic department ("MWSU"). Copy of the videos was later received and reviewed by this hearing officer. The evidentiary record was then closed.

FINDINGS OF FACT

It is undisputed that during all relevant times the licensee was the Director of Advertising/Marketing for St. Jo Frontier Casino owned by Affinity Gaming (“Affinity”). In September, 2024, the casino was contacted by MWSU’s athletic department about contracting under a sponsorship agreement. On October 28, 2024 -- before submitting the proposed sponsorship agreement to Affinity’s corporate legal team – the licensee sent two (2) video advertisements to the athletic department which were played on the video scoreboard at a MWSU football game on November 11, 2024. The licensee testified that this was done in a show of good faith to the MWSU athletic department in pursuit of the sponsorship agreement. The licensee later submitted the sponsorship agreement to Affinity’s legal team on November 12, 2024. The sponsorship agreement remained under review until at least January of 2025 when it was approved by Affinity and subsequently signed by the licensee under a back-dated signature reflecting the date of its original submission. It should be noted that other than the two (2) advertisements that were played at the MWSU’s football game on November 11, 2024, no further advertisements of any kind ever occurred despite the fact that St. Jo Frontier Casino paid the contracted fees due to the MWSU athletic department under the sponsorship agreement.

On February 17, 2025, St. Jo Frontier Casino’s outside legal counsel contacted Nikki Evans, MGC’s General Counsel, by email seeking clarification regarding whether Missouri’s gaming regulations expressly precluded the sponsorship agreement or would otherwise be viewed as unlawful. At some point prior to March 5, 2025, MGC leadership reviewed the sponsorship agreement and sought consultation with the MGC. By email to St. Jo Frontier Casino’s outside legal counsel dated March 5, 2025, Mrs. Evans reported that the sponsorship agreement would be viewed by the MGC as a violation of 11 CSR 45-5.053(3)(C) and referred

to the AGA Responsible Gaming Code of Conduct provisions for responsible advertising, including relevant provisions that prohibit advertising designed to appeal to minors or placed before audiences consisting of individuals expected to be below legal age to participate in gambling or sports betting activity. The email from Mrs. Evans was reviewed by the licensee on March 5, 2025. The licensee took no subsequent action to report to the MGC that the two (2) advertisements were in fact sent to and played at a MWSU football game., a matter about which the MGC was then unaware.

On March 7, 2025, soon after receiving the email from Mrs. Evans, the licensee and members of St. Jo Frontier Casiono's leadership recontacted the MGC for guidance on how to reposition the sponsorship agreement for reconsideration. Ultimately, on May 23, 2025, the MGC commenced an investigation into the matter. It was then that the MGC learned that the two (2) advertisements had been sent to and played at a MWSU football game the past November.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The Missouri General Assembly delegated the MGC the authority to supervise gambling operations governed by sections 313.800 to 313.850, RSMo. Section 313.805, RSMo, states, "The commission shall have full jurisdiction over and shall supervise all gambling operations governed by sections 313.800 to 313.850." The statute also authorized the MGC to "promulgate rules and regulations to implement sections 313.800 to 313.850." As the holder of an occupational license, the licensee is subject to the provisions of Sections 313.800 to 313.850, RSMo, and the regulations promulgated thereunder by the MGC.

11 CSR 45-5.053(3)(C) prohibits the licensee from: “Failing to conduct advertising and public relations activities in accordance with decency, dignity, good taste, and honest and fair representation.” 11 CSR 45-10.030(1) requires that licensees “promptly report to the commission any facts which the licensee has reasonable grounds to believe indicate a violation of law (other than minor traffic violations), minimum internal control standard requirements or commission rule committed by licensees, their employees or others, including, without limitation, the performance of licensed activities different from those permitted under their license.”

ANALYSIS

The facts that (A) two (2) advertisements were provided to the MWSU athletic department by the licensee where the licensee knew the advertisements would be played at a MWSU football game; and (B) that the licensee later became aware that the advertisements were viewed by the MGC to be in violation of 11 CSR 45-5.053(3)(C); and (C) the licensee did not report, let alone promptly report, the violation committed by him – establishes the licensee’s violation of 11 CSR 45-10.030(1) and that the licensee’s license is subject to disciplinary action. The issue of whether or not the advertisements themselves were in fact not in accordance with decency, dignity, good taste, and honest and fair representation – as required by 11 CSR 45-5.053(3)(C) – has already been determined in that the MGC has gone on record through the email sent on March 5, 2025 by its General Counsel, Nikki Evans, in determining that the sponsorship agreement, including the advertisements contemplated in it, in fact constituted a violation of that standard.

RECOMMENDATION

For all of the above reasons, this hearing officer recommends that the Executive Director's proposed discipline consisting of a five (5) day suspension of the licensee's license be accepted and approved by the MGC.

Dated: May 4, 2026

/s/ Thomas B. Snider _____

Thomas B. Snider, MO Bar # 49971
MGC Contracted Hearing Officer