

Message from Chairman Mike Leara



When the COVID-19 pandemic began the Missouri Gaming Commission kept abreast of state health and wellness directives. Closing the state's riverboat casinos was not as easy as just locking the doors. Local home dock cities and counties who rely on riverboat revenues would lose admission fees and gaming taxes. Thousands of casino employees would be out of work. Worthy causes such as the Veterans Capital Improvement Trust Fund, the Access Missouri Financial Assistance Fund, the National Guard Trust Fund, and the Problem Gambling Fund stood to lose vast amounts of money. MGC expenses, which are paid with casino admission fees, were a concern, not to mention the casino companies themselves. On March 17, 2020, we made the hard decision to close the riverboat casinos when most businesses were shutting their doors due to the pandemic. MGC extended the casino closure order four more times. Most casinos reopened June 1st in compliance with local health and wellness directives. St. Louis County casinos, which remained closed until June 16th, reopened with social distancing and masks as well. It was during this time MGC employees were working remotely with only essential staff at our offices. We continue the teleworking to a smaller degree now to encourage social distancing and wellness within our staff.

To say that FY2020 has been a challenging time is an understatement.

Prior to the COVID-19 crisis MGC was busy with the day-to-day business of regulating riverboat casino gambling, charitable bingo, and daily fantasy sports contests.

The legislative session was abuzz with gaming related bills for illegal machines, sports wagering, and video lottery terminal legislation. We anticipated a hectic session and again, the COVID-19 issue put a stop to the momentum.

MGC was also busy with casino ownership movement. In December, Century Casinos bought three casino properties from Eldorado Resorts, with two being in Missouri. In June 2020 these casinos reopened under the names Century Casino Cape Girardeau and Century Casino Caruthersville.

Twin River Worldwide Holdings purchased the Isle of Capri Casino in Kansas City from Eldorado Resorts. Twin River plans to redevelop the area with most capital expenditures occurring in 2021. The casino will be rebranded as Casino K.C.

In other action, Eldorado Resorts, which owns Lumiere Place in downtown St. Louis, and Isle of Capri-Boonville, acquired Caesars Entertainment which includes Harrah's Kansas City for \$17.3 billion in a cash-and-stock deal, which makes Eldorado Resorts the largest gambling company in the United States.

Another facet of MGC regulation is Bingo. Bingo numbers continue downward in regard to the number of operators in Missouri. The COVID-19 pandemic did not help matters. Before COVID-19 our numbers stood at 209 operational bingo games. 112 are now in operation. Several halls have reported they will cease operation during FY2021.

Missouri is holding steady at seven fantasy sports operators and we are expecting another two companies to come on board in the next year. You can see more information on page 28 of this report.

The FY2020 MGC Annual Report is a great resource for those interested in the mission of the Missouri Gaming Commission. Inside you'll find information on our commissioners, the casino companies' economic impact, competitive tax rates, and our expenses. The back pages feature each riverboat gaming casino, and the home dock city and county. How the home dock cities and counties spend their share of the admissions fees and gaming taxes reveal the good in riverboat gaming. Riverboat gaming taxes and fees contribute significantly to the State of Missouri.