

## Gaming regulators to reconsider casino application for southeastern Mass.

Written by Administrator

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Gaming regulators are meeting today to discuss the next steps in deciding whether to reopen a bidding process for a southeastern Massachusetts casino.

The Massachusetts Gaming Commission will discuss options for how to move forward with restarting the bidding process, including from a company that wants a second chance at a license for a casino on the Brockton Fairgrounds.

The 2011 expanded gaming legislation, signed into law by then-Gov. Deval Patrick, allowed for a single slots parlor and three possible resort casinos within the state. Plainridge Park Casino, the slots parlor, opened in June 2015. MGM Springfield opened its doors last year and Encore Boston Harbor, operated by Wynn Resorts, is expected to open in June.

In 2016, gambling regulators dashed any hopes Mass Gaming & Entertainment had of operating a resort-style casino in Brockton, saying their original proposal lacked the quality sought by the commission.

MG&E sent letters to the Massachusetts Gaming Commission in the summer of 2018, petitioning the commission to reconsider its previous denial of a casino in Brockton without reopening a broad application process for the region's casino license.

In response, the state commission's letter written by its general counsel Catherine Blue said that state regulations prohibit the commission from reconsidering their proposal without launching another competitive application process.

"The Commission has received requests in the past to reconsider applications after the Commission's denial of a license," Blue wrote in her letter to MG&E. "In all cases, staff advised the Commission that based upon section 17(g) (of the state's gaming law), the Commission may not have the ability to reconsider the denial of a gaming license, and if it did have the authority, it did not have a process to reconsider the denial of a gaming license."

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Blue wrote that the commissioners found MG&E's application "failed to demonstrate that the proposed project would maximize revenue to the Commonwealth or that it would offer the highest and best value to create a secure and robust gaming market in Region C (southeastern Massachusetts)."

MG&E, backed by Rush Street Gaming, said its roughly \$700 million project is "ready to start" and the \$85 million licensing fee "is ready to be paid today." Developers behind the project say the state would generate more than \$70 million in annual state tax revenue and up to \$13 million for Brockton.

Southeastern Massachusetts is the only section of the state without a casino. Representatives for MG&E did not immediately respond for comment.

**Read more** <https://www.bostonherald.com/2019/01/23/gaming-regulators-to-consider-reopenin-g-bid-process-for-southeastern-mass-casino/>