

Norfolk council votes unanimously to support legalizing Indian casino gaming

Written by Administrator

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NORFOLK, Va. (WAVY) -- The City of Norfolk is asking state lawmakers to help make their casino plans a reality.

On Tuesday night, council voted unanimously to send a message to state lawmakers, asking them to pass legislation that would make it legal for a federally recognized Native American tribe -- which is also authorized to conduct gaming under federal law -- to operate a resort casino in the city.

In mid-December, [**the City of Norfolk announced**](#) the Pamunkey Indian Tribe is looking to construct a \$700 million casino and resort on the banks of the Elizabeth River.

The Pamunkeys happen to be the only tribe currently authorized to conduct gaming in the entire state of Virginia.

The resolution didn't mention the legalization of casino gaming for non-Native American operations.

The city's message would help the Pamunkey tribe pursue opening a casino under potential state law, before [**the lengthy federal process can be completed**](#), according to Norfolk Mayor Kenny Alexander.

The [**City of Portsmouth is also looking for**](#) casino gaming to be legalized in order to build on their waterfront.

In an interview last week, [**the developer behind the proposed Portsmouth casino**](#) said he doesn't know if the market is deep enough for two casinos that close together.

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However, Alexander took a different stance.

"I think again the market will dictate the size of the casino," Alexander said. "I can speak to the casino that we're proposing in the city of Norfolk ... 3,500 jobs and it's a major economic driver not only for the City of Norfolk but for the region."

WAVY's Capital Bureau has reported that the Virginia Senate has combined casino gambling proposals from Norfolk and Portsmouth -- and sent them to the Finance Committee for further study.

This puts the Norfolk proposal which is supported by the Pamunkey Indian tribe under the same legislation as a plan that includes the cities of Portsmouth, Danville and Bristol.

Read more <https://www.wavy.com/news/local-news/norfolk/norfolk-council-votes-unanimously-to-support-legalizing-indian-casino-gaming/1738539747>