

Possible disciplinary action against two Iowa casino executives was deferred until criminal allegations against them are resolved in court, the Iowa Racing and Gaming Commission decided Wednesday.

M. Brent Stevens, chief executive of Peninsula Gaming, and Jonathan Swain, Peninsula's chief operating officer, have both pleaded not guilty in Polk County

District Court. They have been accused by special prosecutor Lawrence Scalise of making illegal contributions last year to Gov. Chet Culver's re-election campaign.

Peninsula Gaming operates the Diamond Jo casinos in Dubuque and Worth County.

The regulatory panel discussed the special prosecutor's charges at its regular meeting Wednesday because members didn't want the public to think they were ignoring the possibility of discipline against the Peninsula executives, commission Chairwoman Toni Urban of Des Moines said.

Stevens and Swain hold state licenses in Iowa's casino industry. A criminal conviction could result in action against the licenses.

"We are not going to sit as the judge and jury," Urban said. "We don't know what the facts are, and so we are going to wait until there is a disposition of charges."

Scalise filed charges against Stevens and Swain while investigating \$25,000 contributions to Culver's campaign. No charges were filed against Culver or anyone in his campaign, and the campaign donated the money to charity, which is allowed by law.

Stevens and Swain are accused of illegally making a campaign contribution in the name of another. They are also charged with willful failure to disclose a campaign contribution. The charges are serious misdemeanors.

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Written by Administrator

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Also facing charges are Davenport lawyer Curt Beason, Fort Dodge businessman Steve Daniel, and Peninsula Gaming and Webster County Entertainment, which unsuccessfully sought a casino license last spring.

All pleaded not guilty.

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