

With Sale Off The Table, Everett Casino Will Open June 23

Written by Administrator
Wednesday, 22 May 2019 14:00 -

Following days of uncertainty, the top executive at Encore Boston Harbor told the Massachusetts Gaming Commission that the company's \$2.6 billion casino in Everett will open its doors to the public next month, as originally scheduled.

"We'll be ready to go on June 23rd at 10 a.m.," Encore Boston Harbor President Robert DeSalvio told the five commissioners during their regularly scheduled meeting Wednesday.

DeSalvio's comments came roughly 12 hours after parent company Wynn Resorts and MGM Resorts [announced](#) they had broken off talks for MGM to purchase the Everett property. It was [just Friday](#) that the two gambling rivals said they were having "very preliminary" discussions about a possible sale.

Those talks came about as the gaming commission investigated whether Wynn hid details of a \$7.5 million settlement of sexual misconduct charges against company founder and former CEO Steve Wynn. The company must pay a \$35 million fine by May 31, as [imposed](#) by the gaming commission. The commission also fined the current CEO and Wynn's handpicked successor and protege, Matt Maddox, for failing to respond to employee concerns over Steve Wynn's behavior.

Word of the potential sale created intense consternation among local officials in both Everett and Springfield over the past several days.

Had MGM purchased the Everett casino, it would have had to divest itself of MGM Springfield, which opened in August.

Word that the sale was off seemed to be welcome news to commissioners who had been monitoring the potential deal.

"No one ever said — and I'm new here — that the gaming commission's job was going to be easy. And on that front, it does not disappoint," said Chair Cathy Judd-Stein, who joined the

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commission in March.

Judd-Stein pointed out that the state's [gaming law](#) clearly spells out how a transfer of a license would be handled.

"Under the statute, any transfer of interest will always require commission approval, preceded by an extended period of evaluation and review," Judd-Stein said. "Like all matters that come before the commission and as is required of us by law, any such request would be reviewed fairly and objectively, based on its merits, and with the strict enforcement of all applicable laws to protect the best interests of the commonwealth, including our host and surrounding communities."

Added Commissioner Gayle Cameron: "We have been laser focused on ... making sure all the commitments are met to communities, the jobs, all of those commitments, all of those positive impacts of gaming, that has really always been our focus. That's something we've never forgotten about; we think that's a crucial responsibility for us as a commission to make sure those commitments are met."

Alcohol OK'd Until 4 AM

Once the statements regarding the potential sale were complete, the commission shifted gears and got to the minutiae of approving changed plans and personnel policies for the Everett casino.

The most significant was the OK to allow complimentary alcoholic drinks to be served on the gaming floor to active gamblers between 2 and 4 a.m.

MGM Springfield has the same 4 a.m. permission.

After the meeting, DeSalvio deflected reporters' questions about the uncertainty over the past

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several days due to the sale discussions.

"The company issued a statement, those discussions have ceased, and that is it, case closed," he said.

The company will now work toward the June 23 opening — a Sunday morning, so as not to affect weekday rush hour traffic.

"We expect there will be significant crowds there," DeSalvio said. "We are really looking forward to welcoming the public to the facility. I think they're going to be amazed at what they see."

Before the opening, there will be three eight-hour "test days," in which casino operators demonstrate to regulators that all gaming systems are working properly, and to give Wynn a chance to work out any issues that might arise.

Read more <https://www.wbur.org/bostonmix/2019/05/22/wynn-resorts-encore-opening>