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Springfield Mayor Domenic Sarno names advisory committee



These are artist's renderings of proposals for casinos in Springfield: Top left, Ameristar Casinos at the former Westinghouse Electric site in East Springfield; bottom left, MGM Resorts International in the South End; right, Penn National Gaming in the North End. (Photo by File sketches provided by Ameristar, MGM, Penn National)

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(http://connect.masslive.com/user/pgoonan/index.html) By **Peter Goonan, The Republican**
 (http://connect.masslive.com/user/pgoonan/posts.html)

on November 01, 2012 at 2:45 PM, updated November 01, 2012 at 9:41 PM

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SPRINGFIELD — Mayor **Domenic J. Sarno** (http://topics.masslive.com/tag/domenic-sarno/index.html) on Thursday named a new,

CASINO HEADLINES

Today

six-member advisory committee that will serve to screen the three companies that are competing to build a **casino in Springfield** (<http://topics.masslive.com/tag/springfield-casino/index.html>).

The newly formed ad hoc Phase II Casino Review Committee will assist Sarno in deciding which company or companies he should choose to negotiate a host community agreement for a future casino project. Any negotiated agreement will need approval from the City Council, local voters, and the **state Gaming Commission** (<http://topics.masslive.com/tag/massachusetts-gaming-commission/index.html>).

“We look forward to a robust competition that will determine the company or companies with whom we will enter into a host community agreement,” Sarno said in a prepared release. “Our goal is to select the most viable site(s) and to have the strongest deal(s) for the residents and business community of the City of Springfield and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.”

Under state law, the Gaming Commission is empowered to grant up to three casino licenses in Massachusetts, including one designated for Western Massachusetts.

The new advisory committee consists of the following members:

- Judge Nancy Dusek-Gomez, who retired from the Massachusetts Trial Court in



Springfield Casino Selection Advisory Committee members from left to right, Kevin Kennedy, Kathleen Kane, Nancy-Dusek-Gomez and Jill

Rush Street Gaming of Chicago becomes latest company to enter Massachusetts casino competition (http://www.masslive.com/politics/index.ssf/2012/11/rush_street_gaming_of_chicago.htm)

Connecticut casinos close as Hurricane Sandy approaches East Coast (http://www.masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2012/10/connecticut_casinos_close_as_h.htm)

Business Monday: Milford Casino plan rises like a zombie, marketplace key to understanding Afghanistan, and more (http://www.masslive.com/business-news/index.ssf/2012/10/business_monday_milford_casino_p)

Revised casino plan rises like zombie in Milford (http://www.masslive.com/business-news/index.ssf/2012/10/revised_casino_plan_rises_like_zom)

Ameristar Casinos unveils \$910 million project at Page Boulevard site (http://www.masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2012/10/ameristar_casinos_unveils_910.html)



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2011 after 25 years as a judge of the Springfield District Court.

McCarthy-Payne. They were introduced at a press conference Thursday afternoon at City Hall. Two other members were not present.

Mark M. Murray, The Republican

- Kathleen Kane, managing director with The Springfield Group of Northwestern Mutual Financial Network in Springfield.
- Haskell O. Kennedy Jr., who retired in 2009 after working for the State of Connecticut Department of Labor for 20 years, serving most recently as the director of the Office of Diversity and Equity Programs.
- Kevin E. Kennedy, who serves as Springfield’s chief development officer and was previously chief economic development assistant to U.S. Rep. Richard E. Neal, D-Springfield.
- Jill McCarthy-Payne, a lawyer and professor of criminal justice at American International College.
- Joanne Morales-Harrison, a community re-entry unit manager with the Hampden County Sheriff’s Department, and a prior member of the Springfield Police Commission.

The three companies competing for the casino license in Springfield are:

- Ameristar Casinos, proposing a project at the former Westinghouse Electric property in East Springfield;
- MGM Resorts International, proposing a project in the South End; and
- Penn National Gaming, planning a project in the North End of the downtown corridor.

In addition, the owner of Mohegan Sun in Connecticut is proposing a casino in Palmer off the Massachusetts Turnpike, which needs town approval, and would compete with any Springfield projects for the sole casino license in Western Massachusetts.

The new ad hoc committee will serve to provide “non-binding advice, input and counsel” to the mayor.

Sarno previously appointed a five-member committee that served to pre-qualify the three competing companies in Springfield, known as Phase 1 of the screening process.

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All three companies submitted their qualifications and conceptual plans, and were deemed qualified recently to enter into the second phase by the screening committee. Kennedy is the only member of the new advisory committee who also served on the initial screening committee.

On Thursday, the city formally launched a Phase II Request for Proposals, in which the three casino companies will submit extensive plans for their destination casinos and detail the economic impacts their projects will have on the local, regional and state economy.

The three casino developers in Springfield will present their proposals and answer questions during future meetings scheduled by the city's hired casino consultant, Shefsky & Froelich of Chicago. The new advisory committee will be expected to attend those meetings and review all materials, consultant summaries and evaluations, and studies pertaining to the Request for Proposals process, officials said.

The committee would then advise the mayor on the pros and cons of each proposal, officials said.

Following the announcement at City Hall, the Rev. Talbert W. Swan II, president of the Springfield branch of the NAACP, urged Sarno to expand the advisory group "to include recommendations from organizations that represent communities of color, the City Council and neighborhood councils."

"I further request that the NAACP, Puerto Rican Cultural Center and City Councilor Zaida Luna be included on the panel," Swan said in an email to Sarno. "Councilor Luna represents two neighborhoods of the three proposed projects."

Sarno said the committee members he chose were diverse, and have proven records as being individuals of "high integrity and professionalism."

Council President James J. Ferrera III had no objections to Sarno's selections saying the mayor "can appoint whoever he wants to his advisory board." The council has its own role and has its own advisory committee chaired by former Police Chief Paula Meara and contains members of the council, he said.

Councilor Bud L. Williams said he is disappointed that Sarno did not select either Ferrera or a councilor designated by Ferrera to serve on the new advisory committee.

Sarno and Kevin E. Kennedy, the city's chief development officer, said the process will remain very open and transparent, and the council will be kept informed regularly.

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Four of the six advisory committee members are residents of Springfield. One member, retired Judge Nancy Dusek-Gomez is a resident of East Longmeadow and Kathleen Kane is a resident of West Brookfield. Kane was nominated by the Springfield Chamber of Commerce.

Sarno will rely on the details of the submitted proposals and on advice from the advisory committee, his top economic development advisers and a hired consultant in order to negotiate a host community agreement with one or more of the competing companies.

Dusek-Gomez said she is “very well equipped to review the proposals and give advice to the mayor.”

“For 25 years, I was a professional fact-finder,” Dusek-Gomez said. “I heard cogent arguments supportive of different positions and made decisions as to the best outcome for the litigants and many times the larger community.”

The casino is a very important issue in terms of jobs and economic development, Dusek Gomez said, adding: “I see it as a rebirth of the city.”

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spflddad (<http://connect.masslive.com/user/spflddad/index.html>)

(<http://connect.masslive.com>

I know I have asked this before but did anyone awhile back get a casino survey? They asked questions about what locations North or South end would you vote for, if you had a favorable opinion on the mayor, both Picknelly brothers, etc. I found it all very interesting. This was before MGM & Penn National announced interest in the downtown locations. I was very blunt with my answers and honest about how I don't trust this

/user mayor or his friends.

/spfl  (<http://connect.masslive.com/user/lbk458/index.html>)lbk458 likes this.

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13 Hours Ago (http://masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2012/11/springfield_mayor_domenic_sarno_53.html/post/2012-11-01/1351817946-295-274.html)

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Several comments on this panel.

Sarno where are the average citizens for your citizens ad hoc committee?

This mostly affects the citizens of Springfield, not East Longmeadow or West Brookfield, so is it really appropriate to have "outsiders" on this committee?

Talbot Swan needs to realize that this is not about color or ethnicity. And if he feels that Zaida Luna needs to be on this committee than Michael Fenton needs to be on it to represent his people in East Springfield.

And finally Dusak-Gomez comment

The casino is a very important issue in terms of jobs and economic development, Dusek Gomez said, adding: "I see it as a rebirth of the city."

to me just says, Okay mayor you and Kennedy are correct MGM looks good to me.

This whole process stinks, the mayor knows it, Kennedy knows it but hey to us voters everything about having more than one casino to vote on will be too confusing.....after all that is a direct quote from Kennedy himself.

 (<http://connect.masslive.com/user/lbk458/index.html>)lbk458 likes this.

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lbk458 (<http://connect.masslive.com/user/lbk458/index.html>)

I think Kennedy is in the pocket of Penn National. It makes sense when you think of who is involved.

- Dom Sarno
- Peter Picknelly (Sarno's good buddy and major campaign contributor) - who is working with Penn National. I think that's the kicker, especially given his close relationship with the paper (remember that fluff piece a few months back on him?)
- Richie Neal - friends with both Sarno and Picknelly
- Charles Kingston, a felon and a holdover from the Albano administration. I've heard he is close with Neal too. He's probably controlling Dom's every move on behalf of Penn and Picknelly.



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Think about it, both Picknellys are in good with all those involved. Either way one of them wins big, because after all we all know the casino will go downtown. I do believe that is why Kennedy was hired. I heard rumors before all the casino locations were announced that he had plans on his office wall for a downtown location.

m (<http://masslive.com/>)

14 Hours Ago (http://masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2012/11/springfield_mayor_domenic_sarno_53.html/post/2012-11-01/1351817528-533-540.html)

ml)



Ryan (http://connect.masslive.com/user/SickofSpfldcorruption/index.html)

Very sad that the paper doesn't do any reporting on the crooks involved in Springfield. Why would they though when they have a money stake in this! They have a history of covering for the local hack elite though remember former DA Ryan (no relation to the class act Charlie Ryan)



(http://connect.masslive.com/user/spflddad/index.html)spflddad

likes this.



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fpneighbor3 (http://connect.masslive.com/user/fpneighbor3/index.html)

He forgot to mention the chairman of the Payola Sub-committee: Charlie Kingston



(http://connect.masslive.com/user/SickofSpfldcorruption/index.html)

likes this.



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california1967 (http://connect.masslive.com/user/constitution2010/index.html)

Dom covered his political hack network with these appointments.



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Let the envelopes of cash start flowing!

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Don't you mean let the envelopes of cash to continue to flow...



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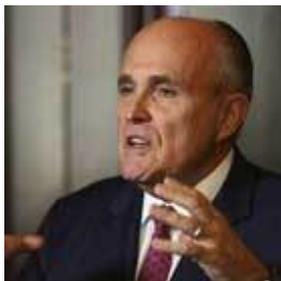
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