

January 3, 2019

RMA Charitable Gaming Committee Final Report Released

The report includes five principles and four recommendations that would contribute to a more equalized charitable gaming model

At the Fall 2017 RMA convention, members passed [resolution 13-17F: AAMDC Advisory Committee to Support the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission in Reviewing Charitable Gaming in Alberta](#). The resolution called on RMA to form a member committee with a mandate to research Alberta's charitable gaming model and develop recommendations to change the model to support equality for all eligible organizations in the province.

RMA formed the committee in spring 2018. The committee included representatives from each RMA district, one board and staff representative from the AUMA, and one RMA board member serving as committee chair. Committee members are as follows:

- Randy Taylor, Committee Chair – Former RMA District 1 Director
- Doreen Blumhagen, District 2 Representative – County of Paintearth
- Doug Drozd, District 3 Representative – County of Barrhead
- Dan Boisvert, District 4 Representative – Northern Sunrise County
- Craig Lukinuk, District 5 Representative – Smoky Lake County
- Charlene Smylie, AUMA Representative – Village of Wabamun
- Michelle Kane, AUMA Policy Analyst

The committee first met in May 2018. In total, the committee met six times, and undertook extensive research including a jurisdictional scan and meetings with several stakeholders related to the charitable gaming system.

The [committee's final report](#) provides a detailed description and analysis of Alberta's current charitable gaming system and its impacts on charitable organizations across the province. It also includes five principles that the committee believes would characterize an effective and equal charitable gaming system, as well as four recommendations, which if adopted by the Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis Commission (AGLC) and other stakeholders, would provide meaningful first steps in transitioning the system to one that is equal for all organizations involved. The principles and recommendations are explained in detail in the report, but can be summarized as follows:

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Principles

Principle 1: Stability

Any changes made to the model should limit short-term “shocks” to organizations that rely on gaming revenues to support their operations.

Principle 2: Equitable Value

All organizations eligible to derive funding from charitable gaming events in Alberta should be treated as having similar value and importance to society.

Principle 3: Equitable Access

All charities in Alberta should have equitable access to fundraising opportunities through charitable gaming volunteerism.

Principle 4: Flexibility

Charities of all sizes and capacities should have the ability to generate revenue through charitable gaming volunteerism. The system should reduce barriers to participation as much as possible.

Principle 5: Volunteer-Driven

Volunteers play a critical role in raising proceeds for their own organizations, and in supporting the sustainability of Alberta’s casinos. Barriers to volunteering should be mitigated for organizations in all areas of the province.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Pool a portion of the revenues generated in each region and distribute equally to all regions

Pooling 20% of revenues generated in each casino region and sharing them equally among all regions is a first step towards equality. This approach will not require fundamental changes to the current model and will significantly reduce the current revenue gap among regions.

Recommendation 2: Address inequities associated with the model

Revising the current travel and expense policies will reduce unfair costs that rural organizations incur to volunteer at casinos in comparison to organizations located near casinos. This and other minor changes will not disrupt the model but will help address inequities associated with it.

Recommendation 3: Stakeholders, including the AGLC, RMA and AUMA, should take a collaborative approach to improving the current gaming model

An inequitable structure disadvantages some organizations and advantages others. Previous consultations have resulted in entrenched positions in which those disadvantaged by the current model call for change and those advantaged call for the status quo. For meaningful improvements to be made, all stakeholders must acknowledge that the current system is not equal, and the model can be improved to better support organizations in all areas of the province.

Recommendation 4: Regularly Review the Model and Proceed Towards Equality

As the AGLC has indicated that a review of the current charitable gaming model is likely to commence in early 2019, RMA members are encouraged to use the report, principles and recommendations to inform their input into the review process. RMA will share the report directly with mayors/reeves and CAOs of all member municipalities and would encourage members to pass the report along to organizations within their communities.

RMA would like to thank the committee members for their hard work and dedication to this issue.

To access the final report, [click here](#).

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