

CHRONOLOGY OF THE IOWA RACING AND GAMING COMMISSION

In May of 1983, the Iowa Legislature passed the Pari-Mutuel Wagering Act allowing qualified sponsoring organizations to apply for a license to conduct pari-mutuel wagering on horse and dog racing. The Governor signed the bill and subsequently appointed the first Racing Commission on July 1, 1983. The Act provided for a Commission consisting of five members each serving a staggered three-year term. The Commission appoints an Administrator for a four-year term, responsible for the daily operations of the Commission.

July 18, 1984, the Commission:

- Granted a conditional three-year license to the Racing Association of Central Iowa for thoroughbred racing in Bondurant.
- Granted a conditional three-year winter season greyhound racing license to the National Cattle Congress, who began operations on October 15, 1986 as Waterloo Greyhound Park in Waterloo.
- Granted a three-year seasonal greyhound racing license to the Dubuque Racing Association, Ltd, who began operations on June 1, 1985 as Dubuque Greyhound Park in Dubuque.
- Denied a conditional license to Nakoni Park, Inc. for horse racing in Cedar Rapids.
- Denied a license to Council Bluffs Greyhound Association for greyhound racing in Council Bluffs.
- Denied a license to Southwest Iowa Racing Association for greyhound racing in Shenandoah.
- Denied a license to West Liberty for the Muscatine County Fair for greyhound racing in West Liberty.

August 28, 1984, a three-year conditional license was granted to Iowa West Racing Association for greyhound racing in Council Bluffs. This facility opened on February 27, 1986 as Bluffs Run.

At the expiration of each initial three-year license, live racing dates were approved annually in June of each year.

December 20, 1984, Racing Association of Central Iowa's petition to change the location of their proposed thoroughbred facility from Bondurant to Altoona was approved. This facility opened on March 1, 1989 as Prairie Meadows.

March 15, 1985, a three-year license was granted to the Iowa Horse Racing Association, Ltd., for pari-mutuel harness racing at various county fair locations throughout the state. (1985 locations in Cedar Rapids, Des Moines, Denison, Nashua, Humboldt, What Cheer and Monticello; 1986 locations-Des Moines, Cedar Rapids, Humboldt, Keokuk, Denison, Spencer, and Monticello;

1987 locations in Des Moines, Humboldt and What Cheer and 1988 locations in Des Moines, Keokuk and What Cheer)

July 11, 1985, a conditional three-year license was granted to the Cedar Rapids Horse Racing, Inc. in Cedar Rapids. On January 14, 1986, the license was voluntarily surrendered.

July 14, 1987, a license was denied to the Heartland Association for a horse track in Hiawatha and a renewal license was granted to Racing Association of Central Iowa.

July 1, 1989, legislation was enacted, allowing pari-mutuel wagering on simulcast races received by a licensed pari-mutuel facility conducting a minimum number of live performances. Simulcasting is the telecasting of live audio and visual signals of pari-mutuel races received from an authorized racing facility for the purpose of pari-mutuel wagering.

July 1, 1989, legislation was enacted allowing the Commission to license qualified sponsoring organizations to conduct gambling games on excursion gambling boats in a county where the electorate approves a proposition by referendum.

Excursion boat gambling referendums held in 1989:

- August 15 Clayton County (failed)
- August 15 Dubuque County (approved)
- August 22 Lee and Des Moines Counties (approved)
- August 29 Scott, Muscatine and Clinton Counties (approved)
- September 5 Jackson County (approved)
- September 26 Woodbury County (approved)

March 8, 1990, the Commission granted excursion boat gambling licenses to the following entities (Qualified Sponsoring Organization/Excursion Boat Operator):

- Dubuque Racing Association/Dubuque Casino Belle Inc., who began operation on April 1, 1991 as the Dubuque Casino Belle in Dubuque.
- Southeast Iowa Regional Authority/Steamboat Southeast, Inc., who began operation on May 10, 1991 as Emerald Lady, serving Burlington, Ft. Madison and Keokuk.
- Riverbend Regional Authority/Steamboat Development Corporation, who began operation on April 1, 1991 as the Diamond Lady in Bettendorf.
- Riverboat Development Authority/The Connelly Group. L.P., who began operation on April 1, 1991 as the President in Davenport.
- Missouri River Historical Development, Inc./Missouri Riverboat Associates, L.P. in Sioux City. After failing to secure financing, their license was revoked by the Commission October 1, 1990.

November 27, 1990, an excursion boat gambling license was granted to the Missouri River Historical Development, Inc./Steamboat Sioux City Inc., who voluntarily surrendered their license on March 26, 1992.

January 17, 1991, an excursion boat gambling license was granted to the Clinton County Gaming Association/Mississippi Belle II, Inc., who began operation on June 12, 1991 as the Mississippi Belle II in Clinton.

November 27, 1991, Prairie Meadows filed for Chapter 11 Bankruptcy. The Final Order was issued on May 17, 1993 bringing them out of Bankruptcy.

May of 1992, legislation was enacted removing the live performance requirement for simulcast wagering at pari-mutuel facilities. In 1994, that legislation was amended requiring at least sixty performances of nine live races each day of the season in order for simulcasting to occur.

Excursion boat gambling referendums were approved on August 20, 1991 in Allamakee County and on October 15, 1991 in Clayton County.

During 1992, the Director of the Department of Inspections and Appeals negotiated three Native American Indian tribal gaming compacts for the Governor. The Commission has no regulatory or oversight responsibility for the compacts.

- The Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska began operation of WinnaVegas Casino near Sloan on April 30, 1992.
- The Omaha Tribe of Nebraska began operation of CasinOmaha near Onawa on June 22, 1992.
- The Sac and Fox Tribe of the Mississippi in Iowa began operation of Meskwaki Bingo and Casino near Tama on December 31, 1992.

In July of 1992, the licensees serving Bettendorf and Burlington/Ft Madison/ Keokuk ceased operations leaving three operating excursion boat licensees in Iowa.

July 2, 1992, a three year license was granted to the Missouri River Historical Development, Inc./Sioux City Riverboat Corp., who began operation as the Sioux City Sue-in Sioux City on January 29, 1993.

An excursion boat gambling referendum was approved on November 3, 1992 in Polk County.

In March of 1993, the licensee serving Dubuque ceased operation leaving three operating excursion boat licensees in: Clinton, Davenport and Sioux City. However, that same month a license was granted to the Dubuque Racing Association/Greater Dubuque Riverboat Entertainment Company, L.C., who began operation as the Diamond Jo Casino in Dubuque on May 18, 1994.

September 16, 1993, an excursion boat license was denied to Summit Riverboat Casinos Sioux City, Inc./Missouri River Historical Development, Inc.

December 10, 1993, National Cattle Congress, Inc. (Waterloo Greyhound Park) filed for Chapter 11 Bankruptcy. The Final Order issued on June 26, 1996 brought them out of Bankruptcy.

January 20, 1994, an excursion gambling boat license was granted to the Southeast Iowa Regional Riverboat Corporation/Catfish Bend Casinos L.C., who began operation as Catfish Bend Casino in Burlington/Ft. Madison on November 16, 1994.

Legislation was enacted in March of 1994:

- Removing the \$200/day loss limit and the maximum \$5/hand wager.
- Requiring an additional local referendum in counties already authorized for excursion boat gambling to allow for unlimited wagers and removal of the loss limits.

- Raising the age restriction for wagering from 18 to 21 (persons 18 and older may be employed in a gambling area).
- Allowing for certain gambling games at racetrack enclosures existing on January 1, 1994 subject to a local referendum.
- Changing the minimum passenger capacity of an excursion gambling boat from 500 to 250 persons.
- Eliminating the requirement that no more than 30% of the square footage of the vessel be used for gambling.
- Requiring that if a proposition to operate gambling games on an excursion gambling boat or at a racetrack enclosure is approved by a majority of the county electorate voting on the proposition, the board of supervisors shall submit the same proposition at the general election held in 2002 and, unless the operation of gambling games is not terminated earlier, at the general election held at each subsequent eight-year interval.
- Allowing for the use of nickels and quarters for wagering.
- Eliminating the prohibition against gambling while dockside.
- Changing the wagering tax to fund the Gambler's Treatment Program from three percent to three-tenths of one percent of the adjusted gross revenue.
- Removing boarding restrictions and allowed the Commission to set the minimum number of excursions and excursion times.
- Allowing licensees to conduct gambling on a 24 hour a day basis.

Gambling game referendums were held in the following counties in 1994:

- May 10 Clinton and Clayton Counties (approved)
- May 17 Lee, Des Moines, Woodbury, and Scott (approved)
- Dubuque and Pottawattamie (approved both racetrack and boat)
- May 17 Black Hawk (racetrack enclosure-failed) Polk (racetrack enclosure-
- approved)
- July 12 Jackson (approved)
- September 27 Black Hawk (racetrack enclosure-failed)
- November 8 Polk (excursion boat failed)

Excursion gambling boat licensees began unlimited gambling in June of 1994.

May 11, 1994, a lease agreement and a stock sale agreement between Sioux City Riverboat Corporation, Inc. and Gaming Development Group were approved.

November 18, 1994, excursion gambling boat licenses were granted to the Marquette Gaming Corporation/Gamblers Supply Management Company, who began operation as the Miss Marquette on December 26, 1994 in Marquette and to the Missouri River Historical Development Inc./Belle of Sioux City, L.P. , began operation as the Belle of Sioux City on December 1, 1994 in Sioux City. The Sioux City Riverboat Corporation ceased operation at that time. In 1996, Marquette Gaming Corporation changed its name to Upper Mississippi Gaming Corporation.

January 18, 1995, an excursion gambling boat license was granted to Riverbend Regional Authority/Lady Luck Bettendorf, L.C., who began operation as Lady Luck on April 21, 1995 in Bettendorf. It had been approximately three years since Bettendorf was last served by a riverboat.

January 20, 1995, excursion gambling boat licenses were granted to Iowa West Racing Association/Harvey's Iowa Management Company, Inc., who began operation as Harveys Casino Hotel on January 1, 1996 and Iowa West Racing Association/Ameristar Council Bluffs Inc., who began operation as Ameristar Casino on January 19, 1996, both located in Council Bluffs. Four licenses were denied in the Council Bluffs area: President Riverboat Casino-Carter Lake, Inc./Pottawattamie County Gaming Association; Boomtown Iowa, L.C./Iowa West Racing Association; Iowa Par-A-Dice, L.P./Iowa West Racing Association; and Abbott L.C.-MOM Inc./Pottawattamie County Gaming Association.

An excursion boat gambling referendum was approved on February 28, 1995 in Clarke County.

February 28, 1995, a gambling games racetrack enclosure license was granted to Iowa West Racing Association, who began operation as Bluffs Run Casino on March 15, 1995 in its Council Bluffs facility.

Also on February 28, 1995, a gambling games racetrack enclosure license was granted to Racing Association of Central Iowa, who began operation as Prairie Meadows Racetrack and Casino on April 1, 1995 in its Altoona facility.

In July of 1995, legislation was enacted requiring the Commission to cooperate with the gamblers assistance program and to incorporate information regarding the program and its toll-free telephone number in printed materials distributed by the Commission. It also provided that, as a condition of licensing, the Commission could require licensees to have the information available in a conspicuous place.

July 20, 1995, a gambling games racetrack enclosure license was granted to Dubuque Racing Association, who began operation as Dubuque Greyhound Park and Casino on November 22, 1995 in its Dubuque facility.

July 20, 1995, an excursion gambling boat license was denied for Clarke County Development Corporation/Argosy of Iowa, Inc. in Osceola.

November 16, 1995, the racing dates of February 25, 1995 – April 21, 1996 were denied to the National Cattle Congress. On January 30, 1996, the racing dates of February 14 – April 21, 1996 were denied and on March 7, 1996, a pari-mutuel wagering license was denied for the National Cattle Congress. Operations ceased at Waterloo Greyhound Park on July 13, 1996 in Waterloo.

April 18, 1996, an excursion gambling boat license was denied for ILLIAMO/Midwest Gaming in Keokuk.

June 20, 1996, SODAK Gaming Inc. was approved to purchase the Gamblers Supply Management Company, the licensed excursion gambling boat operator at Marquette.

An excursion boat gambling referendum failed on November 5, 1996 in Dallas County.

April 8, 1997, an excursion gambling boat license was denied for Clarke County Development Corporation/Argosy of Iowa, Inc. in Osceola.

A second excursion boat gambling referendum was approved on November 18, 1997, in Clarke County.

November 20, 1997, an excursion gambling boat license was granted to Clarke County Development Corporation/Southern Iowa Gaming Company, who began operations on January 1, 2000 as Lakeside Casino Resort.

October 22, 1998, the Commission approved the change in ownership from Harveys Casino Resorts, parent company of Harveys Iowa Management Company, Inc., to Colony Investors III, L.P. and Colony HCR VoteCo, L.L.C.

January 21, 1999, the Commission approved the sale of assets from the Greater Dubuque Riverboat Entertainment Co. (Dubuque Diamond Jo) to AB Capital, L.L.C.

May 20, 1999, an excursion boat license was granted to the Dubuque Racing Association/Peninsula Gaming Company, L.L.C. (name changed from AB Capital, L.L.C.) to operate a riverboat in Dubuque. The change in ownership of the operation of the Diamond Jo was effective on July 15, 1999.

September 23, 1999, the Commission approved the purchase of Bluffs Run physical structure from Southwest Iowa Foundation by Iowa West Racing Association (IWRA); the purchase and sale agreement and joint escrow instructions by and between HBR Realty Company, Inc., and IWRA; Lease by and between HBR Realty Company, Inc., and IWRA; and the Management Agreement between Harveys BR Management Company, Inc. and IWRA.

October 21, 1999, an excursion gambling boat license was granted to the Upper Mississippi Gaming Corp./Lady Luck Marquette, Inc., to operate a riverboat in Marquette. The change in ownership of the operation was effective on October 30, 1999. Lady Luck Gaming Corporation purchased the stock of Gamblers Supply Management Company.

January 20, 2000, excursion gambling boat licenses were granted to the Upper Mississippi Gaming Corp./Isle of Capri Marquette, Inc. operating as the Miss Marquette which later changed to Isle of Capri Marquette; and the Scott County Regional Authority/Isle of Capri Bettendorf, L. C. operating as Lady Luck Bettendorf which later changed to Isle of Capri Bettendorf. Both operations changed ownership on March 2, 2000. This was a result of the Isle of Capri, Inc., merger with Lady Luck Gaming Corporation and BRDC, Inc.

September 15, 2000, an excursion gambling boat license was granted to the Riverboat Development Authority/IOC Davenport, L.C., operating as The President (operating as Rhythm City in March of 2001). The change in ownership of the operation occurred October 10, 2000.

June 21, 2001, sale of the ownership interest in Harveys Casino Resorts, parent of wholly-subsiidiaries: Harveys Iowa Management Company and Harveys BR Management Co., to Harrah's Entertainment, Inc. was approved and an excursion gambling boat license was granted to Iowa West Racing Association/Harveys Iowa Management Company, Inc., an indirect wholly-owned subsidiary of Harrah's Entertainment, Inc.

November 15, 2001, merger of Mississippi Belle II, Inc., into Mississippi Belle II Employees Ownership Company with the sale of a 51 percent interest to Mississippi Belle II Ownership Company. Employee Stock Ownership Trust was approved and an excursion gambling boat license was granted to Clinton County Gaming Association, Ltd./Mississippi Belle II Employees Ownership Company.

June 2002, the Supreme Court of Iowa found that there was no rational reason for treating racetrack slot machines differently than riverboat slot machines and declared unconstitutional that portion of the statute that imposed the discriminatory tax upon racetracks. This decision lowered the tax paid by the racetrack enclosures to 20% instead of the graduated tax structure. This decision was appealed by the State.

November 5, 2002, gaming referenda* passed in Woodbury, Jackson, Lee, Des Moines, Polk (track only), Pottawattamie (boat and track), Clarke, Clinton, Clayton, Scott, and Dubuque (boat and track) counties. (*excursion boat gambling referenda only unless otherwise noted)

June 2003, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that the State's differential tax rate did not violate the Federal Equal Protection clause. The Iowa Supreme Court's judgment to the contrary was reversed, and the case was remanded for further proceedings not inconsistent with this opinion.

Gambling game referendums were held in the following counties in 2003:

- June 17 Palo Alto County (approved)
- June 24 Worth County (approved)
- July 8 Dickinson County (failed)
- September 16 Cerro Gordo County (failed)
- October 10 Black Hawk County (approved)
- October 28 Wapello County (approved)
- November 4 Linn County (failed)
- December 16 Clay County (failed)

Gambling game referendums were held in the following counties in 2004:

- January 9 Sac County (failed)
- January 27 Franklin County (approved)
- March 23 Webster County (approved)
- August 31 Washington County (approved)

February 2004, the Supreme Court of Iowa upheld its earlier decision to declare the differential tax invalid under the Iowa Constitution because they were convinced that the classifications made in the Code lacked a rational basis for a differing tax rate in the constitutional sense.

Legislation was enacted in May of 2004:

- Providing for a County Endowment Fund under the control of the Department of Revenue in which one-half of one percent of adjusted gross revenue from the gaming tax goes into the Fund. The Fund will have a separate account for each county in which no licensee under chapter 99F exists.
- Requiring licensees to establish a voluntarily exclusion program, whereby a person may voluntarily ban themselves from all facilities under 99D and 99F for life.
- Prohibiting cash and credit devices in the wagering area or on the gaming floor.
- Providing a \$500 penalty for an underage person who makes or attempts to make a wager under 99D and 99F.
- Removing the fifty-cent admission fee per person entering a racetrack enclosure and establishing a regulatory fee similar to excursion gambling boats.

- Changing the amount of money going into the Gambling Treatment Fund from three-tenths of one percent to one-half of one percent of the adjusted gross revenue from the gaming tax.
- Requiring that the CPA conducting the annual audit be selected by the board of supervisors of the licensee's county.
- Defining "Excursion gambling boat" to include a moored barge.
- Authorizing table games, which include video machines that simulate table games, at racetrack enclosures.
- Requiring that an operating agreement between a qualified sponsoring organization and an operator provide for a minimum distribution for charitable purposes to average at least three percent of the adjusted gross receipts for each license year.
- Setting the minimum percentages for annual purses for horse racing between January 1, 2006 and January 1, 2021 at 11% for net receipts of \$200m or less and at 6% for net receipts over \$200m. Net receipts are defined as the annual adjusted gross receipts from all gambling games less the annual amount of money pledged by the owner of the facility to fund a project approved to receive Vision Iowa funds.
- Providing that an excursion gambling boat may be located or operated on a natural or man-made lake or reservoir, as long as the size would accommodate recreational activity; and also providing that a boat may be located on a body of water adjacent to a river within 1000 feet from the high water mark of the river.
- Requiring a licensee to indicate by June 30 of each year if they will operate a barge, a boat that will cruise or a boat that will not cruise.
- Removing the requirement that a licensee must have a section reserved solely for underage persons.
- Following a 'no' vote a referendum cannot be held for at least eight years.
- Providing for an initial license fee for new licenses which shall be paid in one-fifth installments over a four year period beginning with the date the license is granted: \$5 million-county population of 15,000 or less; \$10 million-county population of more than 15,000 and less than 100,000; and \$20 million-county population of 100,000 or more.
- Providing for a revised wagering tax structure that is imposed on a fiscal year basis rather than annually. The new tax structure is as follows: Excursion gambling boat = 22%; Racetrack enclosure in the same county as other licensees and not issued a table games license = 22%; Racetrack enclosure in the same county as other licensees and issued a table games license but with adjusted gross receipts of less than \$100 million = 22%; Racetrack enclosure in the same county as other licensees, issued a table games license and with adjusted gross receipts of more than \$100 million = 24% and Racetrack enclosures with no other licensees in the same county = 24%.
- Providing for the Legislative Council to commission a socioeconomic study of gambling with the report available by July 1, 2005.

At the June 10, 2004 Commission Meeting, the Commission established November 10, 2004, as the date that all applications for new riverboat gambling facilities be filed with the Commission provided the Commission takes the necessary steps to final adopt the rule to lift the moratorium.

July 15, 2004, the Commission approved Ameristar's expansion and renovation request, including additional gaming positions and granted the Table Game License for the Racing Association of Central Iowa/Prairie Meadows Racetrack & Casino.

At the September 2, 2004 Commission Meeting, the Commission final adopt the rule to lift the moratorium.

On November 10, 2004, the Commission received ten applications for new excursion gambling boat licenses and at the November 19 Commission meeting, a timetable for a review and evaluation process was announced.

November 17, 2004, an excursion boat license was granted to the Clarke County Development Company/Herbst Gaming, Inc. to operate a riverboat in Osceola. The change in ownership of the operation of the Lakeside Casino Resort will be effective on February 1, 2005.

On May 11, 2005, the Commission took action on new excursion gambling boat applications.

The Commission **granted** a license to the following applicants:

- Wild Rose Emmetsburg, LLC/Palo Alto County Gaming Development Corporation (Emmetsburg)
- Diamond Jo Worth, LLC/Worth County Development Authority (Worth County)
- IOC Black Hawk County, Inc./Black Hawk County Gaming Association (Waterloo)
- Washington County Casino Resort, LLC/Washington County Riverboat Foundation, Inc. (Riverside)

The Commission **denied** without prejudice a license to the following applicants:

- Mineral City Hotel & Casino, LLC/Heart of Iowa Foundation (Fort Dodge)
- Northwest Iowa Gaming Co./Palo Alto County Development Corporation (Emmetsburg)
- Landmark Gaming, LC/Franklin County Development Association (Franklin County)
- Cedar Valley Gaming Company, LLC/Cedar Valley Grants, Inc. (Waterloo)
- Black Hawk County Greyhound Park & Casino, LLC/National Dairy Cattle Congress, Inc. (Waterloo)
- Wild Rose Ottumwa, LLC/River Hills Riverboat Authority (Ottumwa)

On June 9, 2005, the Commission approved the acquisition of Argosy Gaming by Penn National Gaming, Inc.

On July 14, 2005, the Commission discussed the possibility of reinstating the moratorium rule on additional excursion gambling boat licenses and racetrack enclosure licenses. It was the feeling of the Commission that they did not want to reinstate a moratorium rule, however, each Commissioner expressed their opinion that while not wanting to reinstate a moratorium rule, they were not inclined to issue any additional licenses until the four new licensees were built and operating results could be evaluated. ([Complete history of moratorium rule](#))

June 8, 2006, the Commission approved the sale of the Mississippi Belle II assets to Wild Rose Clinton, L.L.C. and then an excursion gambling boat license was issued to Wild Rose Clinton, L.L.C./Clinton County Community Development Association.

June 8, 2006, the Commission approved an excursion gambling boat license to Catfish Bend Casinos II, LLC/Southeast Iowa Regional Riverboat Commission to facilitate the division of the existing Catfish Bend Casinos, LLC into two separate entities: Catfish Bend Casinos II, LLC which will own and operate the existing casino operations in Des Moines and Lee Counties and Catfish Bend Riverside, LLC which will continue to own an interest in, and perform existing management agreements for Washington County Casino Resort.

July 13, 2006, the Commission approved an expansion plan for the Diamond Jo Worth facility in Northwood.

Excursion boat gambling referendums held on November 7, 2006 was approved in Tama County and failed in Buena Vista County.

Legislation enacted during the 2007 Legislative Session:

- Administrator's compensation, based upon knowledge and experience, will be set by the Governor.
- To qualify for the Iowa horse and dog breeders fund, a dog shall have been whelped in Iowa and raised for the first six months of its life in Iowa in a state inspected licensed facility.
- A horse can be determined to be a bleeder if any licensed practicing veterinarian observes bleeding.
- Eliminates the provision that the placing of a horse in a race cannot be affected for excessive concentrations of phenylbutazone in the system of the horse.
- Increases the maximum allowable concentration of phenylbutazone per milliliter of blood in a horse from two point two micrograms of the substance to five micrograms.
- Modifies the acceptable dose level of furosemide that can be administered to a horse prior to a race to no less than one hundred fifty milligrams and no more than five hundred milligrams.
- Certain drug tests currently required to be conducted on horses that suffer a breakdown on the racetrack are discretionary and no longer mandatory.
- Authorizes gambling structures defined as any man-made stationary structure approved by the Commission that 1) does not include a racetrack enclosure, 2) is subject to land-based building codes rather than maritime or Iowa Department of Natural Resources inspection laws and regulations and 3) is licensed to conduct lawful gambling as provided in Chapter 99F.

On November 8, 2007, the Commission approved Catfish Bend Casino to cease operation of their facility in Fort Madison on November 15, 2007. The facility in Burlington will continue to operate as a moored barge.

An excursion boat gambling referendum failed on December 4, 2007 in Cherokee County.

On March 6, 2008, the Commission approved licenses for Dubuque Racing Association/Peninsula Gaming Company, LLC and Clinton County Community Development Association/Wild Rose Clinton, LLC; to operate a Gambling Structures upon completion of their new facilities.

An excursion boat gambling referendum was approved on September 23, 2008 for Lyon County.

On November 13, 2008, the Commission retained the services of two nationally recognized companies in the gaming industry to conduct studies for the Commission (The Innovation Group and GVA Marquette). The studies are to identify any unserved or underserved markets in Iowa. The studies will then provide projections as to the potential revenue which could be generated by those markets given varying levels of investment and the projected impact on existing licensed facilities in Iowa. In addition, the studies will provide the same projections for casinos in those counties which have passed referenda and expressed a desire to seek a license for a casino in their county, whether or not they are deemed unserved. Those counties are Franklin, Lyon,

Tama, Wapello and Webster. The studies are scheduled for completion in May or early June.

At the June 4, 2009, Commission Meeting, the Commission heard the final reports by The Innovation Group and GVA Marquette Advisors to identify any underserved gaming markets in Iowa.

During the July 16, 2009, Commission Meeting, the Commission discussed the granting of additional gaming licensees. Following a lengthy discussion, the Commission determined they would open up the process and would accept applications until October 1, 2009.

On March 4, 2010, the Commission did not renew the license of Southeast Iowa Regional Riverboat Commission/Catfish Bend Casinos II license to operate in Fort Madison due to inactivity.

On May 13, 2010, the Commission took action on new excursion gambling boat applications.

The Commission **granted** a license to the following applicant:

- Lyon County Resort & Casino, LLC/Lyon County Riverboat Foundation, Inc.

The Commission **denied** a license to the following applicants:

- Webster County Gaming, LLC/Heart of Iowa Foundation (Fort Dodge)
- Ingenus of Iowa, LLC/River Hills Riverboat Authority (Ottumwa)
- Signature Management Group of Iowa, LLC/Tama County Community Enrichment, Inc. (Tama)

Legislation enacted during 2011 Legislative Session:

- Allowed advance deposit wagering
- Set the purse structure for all horse racing so that seventy-six percent is designated for thoroughbred racing, fifteen and one-quarter percent is designated for quarter horse racing and eight and three-quarter percent is designated for standardbred racing.
- Allowed only quarter horse and thoroughbred racing to be conducted at the horse racetrack located in Polk county (67 day thoroughbred meet and 26 day quarter horse meet).
- Removed the requirement for a referendum every eight years in order to operate gambling games if a proposition to operate gambling games is approved by a majority of the county electorate voting on the proposition in two successive elections.
- Required the commission to prepare a report for delivery to the general assembly no later than December 1, 2011, regarding the creation of a framework for the state regulation of intrastate internet poker.

On March 8, 2012, the Commission issues a license to Missouri River Historical Development/Belle of Sioux City, L.P. d/b/a Argosy Casino Sioux City conditioned upon the parties negotiating and submitting a new operating agreement by June 7, 2012. As there was no operating agreement by June 7, the license was not renewed. However, the facility continues doing business by operation of the law.

On March 8, 2012, the Commission approved a contract between Prairie Meadows Racetrack and Casino and ODS Technologies d/b/a TVG Network to operate Horse Race Advance Deposit Account Wagering Service.

On June 7, 2012, the Commission opened up the licensing process in Woodbury County to any potential operators and potential non-profits to apply for a license.

On September 27, 2012, the Commission approved the stock purchase of Peninsula Gaming, LLC by Boyd Gaming Corporation.

On November 15, 2012, the Commission approved the construction of converting the Harrahs facility into a Gambling Structure to open the summer of 2013.

An excursion boat gambling referendum was approved on March 5, 2013 for Linn County.

On April 18, 2013, the Commission granted a license to Missouri River Historical Development/Sioux City Entertainment, Inc. for a Gambling Structure in Sioux City.

An excursion boat gambling referendum was denied on May 7, 2013 for Warren County.

On June 6, 2013, the Commission **denied** a license to the following applicants:

- Belle of Sioux City, L.P./Greater Siouxland Improvement Association (Siouxland site)
- Belle of Sioux City, L.P./Greater Siouxland Improvement Association (Sioux City site)
- Warrior Entertainment, LLC/Siouxland Strong, Inc.

On June 6, 2013, the Commission approved the stock purchase of Ameristar by Pinnacle Entertainment Inc.

An excursion boat gambling referendum was approved on August 6, 2013 for Greene County.

On October 10, 2013, the Commission retained the services of Marquette Advisors and Union Gaming Analytics to conduct a market analysis on gaming in the state of Iowa. The analysis will focus on identifying underserved and currently serviced, but underperforming, markets statewide; and also include an assessment of any applications from Linn County or Greene county that may be submitted.

On November 21, 2013, the Commission retained the services of Strategic Economics Group and Spectrum Gaming Group to conduct a study on the socioeconomic impact of gambling on Iowans.

On January 9, 2014, the Commission approved the asset purchase of IOC Davenport, Inc. by Scott County Casino, LLC.

On April 16, 2014, the Commission denied, without prejudice, the application of Cedar Rapids Development Group, LLC and Linn County Gaming Association, Inc.

On April 16, 2014, the Commission denied the 2013-2014 license renewal application submitted by Belle of Sioux City, L.P., for the Argosy Casino. This action set in motion an end to operation of the Argosy Casino by operation of law. The conduct of gambling games at the Argosy Casino-Sioux City shall cease on or before July 1, 2014. After all remedies had been exhausted, the facility closed on July 31, 2014.

Legislation enacted during the 2014 Legislative Session:

- Allowed Iowa West Racing Association and Dubuque Racing Association to maintain a license to conduct gambling games without the requirement of scheduling performances of live dog races.
- Allowed the Iowa Greyhound Association to apply for a pari-mutuel license to race greyhounds at Dubuque.
- Established the Iowa greyhound pari-mutuel racing fund under the control of the Commission.

On June 12, 2014, the Commission approved a license for Grow Greene County Gaming to conduct gambling games and Wild Rose Jefferson, LLC to operate the gambling structure.

On October 9, 2014, the Commission retained Spectrum Gaming Group pursuant to Iowa Code 99D.9B to assist the Commission in determining how the monies in the Iowa Greyhound Pari-Mutuel Racing Fund will be distributed.

On November 12, 2014, the Commission granted a pari-mutuel license to the Iowa Greyhound Association for greyhound racing in Dubuque.

On November 12, 2014, the Commission approved the request by the Dubuque Racing Association d/b/a as Mystique Casino to conduct gambling games at a gambling structure instead of a racetrack enclosure, effective January 1, 2015.

On March 5, 2015, the Commission distributed the purse escrow fund created in an arbitration decision issued in December 1995. The Commission divided the escrow fund one half for purses at Bluffs Run, distributed on a prorated basis based on past purse earning for the years 2011-2015 and one half to the Iowa Greyhound Association for purses.

On April 16, 2015, the Commission approved the request by Scott County Regional Authority to convert their license to authorize the conduct of gambling games at a gambling structure upon completion of land-based construction by IOC Bettendorf.

Legislation enacted during 2015 Legislative session:

- Required the Commission to conduct a study concerning the possible authorization of exchange wagering and prepare a report for delivery to the general assembly no later than December 1, 2015

On June 4, 2015, the Commission approved the request by Riverboat Development Authority to convert their license to authorize the conduct of gambling games at a gambling structure upon completion of land-based construction by Rhythm City Casino, LLC d/b/a Rhythm City Casino (RCC).

On September 24, 2015, the Commission approved a license for advanced deposit wagering for Game Play Network, Inc. conditioned upon any games offered by Game Play Network on the ADW platform be approved by Commission staff prior to implementing the game; and to approve the related ADW Operator Agreement between Game Play Network, Inc., Prairie Meadows Racetrack & Casino and the IHBPA.

Currently, there are seventeen excursion gambling boats or gambling structures, two racetrack enclosures, one pari-mutuel track and three Native American Indian Casinos operating in Iowa.

[Home](#)

[Top of Page](#)