

**Massachusetts State Lottery Commission
Official Minutes of 03/25/2025 Meeting**

Massachusetts State Lottery Commission

150 Mount Vernon Street, Suite 300

Dorchester, Massachusetts 02125

Tel: (781) 849-5555

Fax: (781) 849-5546

TTY: (781) 849-5678

Official Meeting Minutes

DATE: Tuesday, March 25, 2025

TIME: 10:30 a.m.

All Attendees Participated Remotely through Zoom Conferencing System

MEMBERS PRESENT: Deborah B. Goldberg, Treasurer and Receiver General
Meghan S. Liddy, Commissioner
Thomas Smith-Vaughan, Chief Operating Officer, Office of the Comptroller,
designee of Comptroller William McNamara
Suleyken Walker, General Counsel, Executive Office of Public Safety and
Security, designee of Secretary Terrence M. Reidy

MEMBERS ABSENT: Nina X. Liang, Commissioner

ALSO PRESENT: Mark William Bracken, Executive Director, Lottery
Gregory Polin, General Counsel, Lottery
Steven Martins, Chief Revenue Officer, Lottery
John Rinkacs, Chief Technology Officer, Lottery
Didier Bertola, Chief Financial Officer, Lottery
Christian Teja, Chief iLottery Officer, Lottery
Michael Lorden, Director of Sales and Regional Operations, Lottery
Matthew DiFrancesco, Director of Operations, Lottery
Thomas Cream, Director of IT, Lottery
Delwin Dickinson, Director of Modernization, Innovation and Performance,
Lottery
Liz Giffen, Director, Digital Operations, Lottery
Greg Versaw, Director of Human Resources, Operations and Services
Group, Lottery
Keith Macri, Creative Director, Lottery
Subrata Baguli, Director, Cyber Security, Lottery
Rachel Guerra, Deputy Director, Communications
Christopher Taffe, Associate General Counsel, Lottery
Sandra Lemanski, Assistant Director, Security & Compliance, Lottery
Lisa Vallier, Assistant Director, IT, Lottery
Franklin Carreiro, Assistant Director, IT, Lottery
Benjamin Wood, Assistant Director, Stakeholder Engagement, Lottery
Gregory Gallagher, Assistant Director, Digital Operations, Lottery
Thomas Dougherty, Regional Manager, Lawrence, Lottery

**Massachusetts State Lottery Commission
Official Minutes of 03/25/2025 Meeting**

Michael Lanava, Regional Manager, Worcester/Springfield, Lottery
Steve Moore, Regional Manager, New Bedford, Lottery
Judy Rampino-Moore, Executive Assistant, Lottery
Julie Goggin, Human Resources Business Partner, Lottery
Thomas Aiello, Manager, Product and Promotional Development, Instant Tickets, Lottery
Kristen Chaput, Manager, Product and Promotional Development, Monitor Games, Lottery
Tim Karalexis, Manager, Product and Promotional Development, Draw Games, Lottery
Jamie Martel, Social Media Coordinator, Lottery
Max O'Day, Communications Specialist, Lottery
Kate Sutton, Marketing Specialist, Instant Tickets, Lottery
Justin Donnini, Marketing Specialist, Draw Games, Lottery
Julia Lehmann, Marketing Specialist, Monitor Games, Lottery

James MacDonald, First Deputy Treasurer, Treasury
Chandra Bork, Deputy Treasurer and Chief of Staff, Treasury
Emily Kowtoniuk, Director of Policy and Legislative Affairs, Treasury
Andrew Napolitano, Communications Director, Treasury
Sandra Lynch, General Counsel, Treasury
Lizandra Gomes, Deputy Chief of Staff, Treasury
Makayla Fucile, Special Assistant, Treasury

Nicole J. Cocozza, Hearing Officer, Prince Lobel Tye LLP
Mohammad Asif, Lottery Sales Agent, Bus Stop Variety, Appellant

Jennifer Wankling, Director, Sales & Marketing, Pollard Banknote
Mark Basedow, Operations Specialist, Lotto.com Inc.
Amy Gabrila, Senior GameSense Advisor, The Massachusetts Council on Gaming and Health
Paul Donovan, Partner at Kearney, Donovan & McGee
Ashley Powers, Kearney, Donovan & McGee

Steven C. Panagiotakos, Strategic Policy Advisor at Greenwood & Hall
Lowell, Massachusetts

I. Opening of Meeting

Treasurer Deborah B. Goldberg opened the Massachusetts State Lottery Commission ("Commission") meeting at 10:32 a.m.

Treasurer Goldberg stated:

"Pursuant to the Commonwealth's Open Meeting Law, Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30A, Section 20, I would like to advise that any person may make a video or audio recording of this open meeting. However, I am obligated to inform attendees of any recording at the beginning of the meeting," and she asked those who are making any recording identify themselves as doing so.

Judy Rampino-Moore, Lottery, identified herself as making a recording.

Massachusetts State Lottery Commission Official Minutes of 03/25/2025 Meeting

Treasurer Goldberg referenced the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30A, section 20, and identified the following Commissioners as present: Commissioner Meghan Liddy, Chief Operating Officer Thomas Smith-Vaughan, General Counsel Suleyken Walker, and herself, Treasurer Deborah B. Goldberg. Treasurer Goldberg stated that the Commissioners would be participating remotely for the meeting pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, which permits remote participation by all Commissioners and allows the use of adequate alternative means, such as audio or video conferencing, to ensure public access to the deliberations of the Commission.

Treasurer Goldberg noted that the Commissioners are all participating by a conference call through Zoom conferencing and asked the Commissioners to identify any sort of technical difficulty. Treasurer Goldberg also stated that the Commissioners may participate in any votes scheduled to take place at today's meeting and that all votes must be taken by roll call.

II. Approval of the Minutes from February 25, 2025

Treasurer Goldberg asked the Commission to accept the minutes from the meeting held on February 25, 2025.

Commissioner Meghan Liddy made a motion to accept the minutes of the meeting and General Counsel Suleyken Walker seconded the motion.

Treasurer Goldberg, recognizing there was no further discussion, moved the motion to a roll call vote. Chief Operating Officer Thomas Smith-Vaughan: yes; General Counsel Suleyken Walker: yes; Commissioner Meghan Liddy: yes; and Treasurer Goldberg: yes. The Motion carried.

The minutes were approved at 10:35 a.m.

III. Executive Director's Report

Lottery Sales Update – February

Executive Director Mark William Bracken updated the Commission on Lottery figures for February 2025 and reported that the overall unadjusted sales for February 2025 were down \$37.1 million from February 2024.

The estimated February 2025 net profit and prize payout figures do not include accruals for prizes won that have not yet been paid. Due in part to a \$28.8 million decrease in Instant Ticket sales in February 2025 as compared to February 2024, the estimated net profit for February 2025 was \$84.7 million as compared to \$101.9 million in February 2024, resulting in an estimated \$17.2 million decrease in net profit. The estimated prize payout for February 2025 was 73.61 percent as compared to 71.36 percent in February 2024.

Executive Director Bracken reported on the figures for fiscal year 2025. He stated that the overall unadjusted sales for the first eight months of FY25 were down \$104.9 million from the first eight months of FY24. The estimated FY25 year-to-date net profit and prize payout figures both include accruals for prizes won that have not yet been paid. Due in part to an \$92.1 million decrease in sales of Powerball and a \$17.4 million decrease in Instant Ticket grand prizes claimed in the first

Massachusetts State Lottery Commission Official Minutes of 03/25/2025 Meeting

eight months of FY25 as compared to the first eight months of FY24 (\$211.4 million as compared to \$228.8 million), the estimated year-to-date net profit for the first eight months of FY25 is \$724.9 million as compared to \$778.3 million for the first eight months of FY24. After adding in a 2-day average net profit figure of \$5.9 million due to a shift in the calendar, the adjusted year-over-year change for the first eight months of FY25 versus the first eight months of FY24 is an estimated \$47.5 million decrease in net profit. The estimated year-to-date prize payout for the first eight months of FY25 is 74.25 percent as compared to 73.69 percent for the first eight months of FY24.

Executive Director Bracken provided a February 2025 sales breakdown. He reported that as compared to February of 2024, Lucky for Life sales were up \$126,158 and Keno sales were up \$69,845.

Prize Payout Percentage, Fiscal Year-to-Date by Month

Executive Director Bracken presented a five-year prize payout comparison chart and reported on the prize payout as a percentage of Lottery's sales as compared to the last five fiscal years. Referring to the chart in the meeting materials, he noted that while the prize payout is leveling off, it remains the highest it's been during the last five fiscal years although it has come down drastically from where it was in the beginning of this fiscal year.

Gross Sales Results – February Sales

Executive Director Bracken reported on the year-to-date FY25 versus FY24 sales through February Unadjusted Non-Fiscal Year as well as the Gross Sales Results for February FY25 versus February FY24.

Reporting on February FY25 versus February FY24, Executive Director Bracken reported Instant Ticket sales were down 8.9 percent, as well as The Numbers Game with sales down 2.9 percent, Mass Cash fell 5.8 percent, Megabucks sales were down 22 percent, Mega Millions sales were down 48.1 percent, and Powerball sales were down 24.6 percent. Monitor Games sales were nearly flat with a slight decrease of just over \$200,000.00. However, Instant Tickets took the biggest hit down \$28.8 million. Overall sales were down \$37.1 million.

Reporting on the year-to-date gross sales results for FY25 as compared to FY24 Unadjusted Non-Fiscal Year, Executive Director Bracken stated that Instant Ticket sales were down slightly by just over 0.5 percent, The Numbers Game sales were down by 2.2 percent, and Mass Cash sales decreased by 2.4 percent. However, Megabucks sales increased by 8 percent, contributing an additional \$1.3 million in sales. He noted that Mega Millions and Powerball took the biggest hits, with Mega Millions sales down by \$16.9 million, a 16.7 percent decline, and Powerball sales down by \$92.1 million, a 60 percent drop. On a positive note, Keno sales helped to offset some of the losses, with an increase of \$28.8 million, or 3.5 percent. As of the end of February, overall total sales for the fiscal year were down by \$104.9 million.

Mega Millions Changes in April

Executive Director Bracken invited Tim Karalexis, Draw Games Product Manager, to provide an update to the Commission on the upcoming changes to Mega Millions in April.

Massachusetts State Lottery Commission Official Minutes of 03/25/2025 Meeting

Product Manager Karalexis drew the Commission's attention to the meeting materials and reported that the Lottery is just under two weeks away from the changes to Mega Millions. The final drawing with the current format will take place on Friday, April 4th, before transitioning to a \$5 price point starting on April 5th. The first drawing with the new enhancements will occur on Tuesday, April 8th. These changes will include improved odds of winning the jackpot, bigger and more frequent jackpots, larger starting jackpots, and faster-growing jackpots. Additionally, there will be a built-in multiplier for every play, automatically improving non-jackpot wins by 2X, 3X, 4X, 5X, or 10X – up to \$10 million for matching the five white balls.

Product Manager Karalexis reported another key change is that there will be no breakeven prizes, meaning that when a player wins, they will always win more than the cost of the ticket, with a minimum prize of \$10. For example, for a \$5 ticket, the minimum prize would be \$10 with the minimum 2X multiplier. The number of Mega Ball options will be reduced from 25 to 24, which will improve the odds. Product Manager Karalexis described these as exciting changes and expressed his enthusiasm for the new format beginning on April 8th.

April 15 Instant Ticket Launch

Executive Director Bracken handed the presentation over to Instant Ticket Product Manager Tom Aiello to report on the April 15th Instant Ticket launch.

Product Manager Aiello announced that the April 15th launch will include four new games. He first unveiled the \$2 price point game “\$100,000 Double Match” with a top prize of \$100,000, printed using fluorescent green. This is a no-break-even game, meaning all winning tickets total \$4 or more. The game offers two ways to play and two ways to win. Players can match any of their numbers to the winning numbers, or they can match three like prize amounts.

Next in the April launch is the \$5 price point game “Triple 777” with a top prize of \$1,000,000. This game is printed on holographic scratch effects specialty paper, which will make it pop at retail. Players will have the chance to win up to 12 times.

Product Manager Aiello then presented a \$10 price point game “\$4,000,000 Cash King Doubler” featuring a top prize of \$4,000,000. This ticket is also printed using fluorescent green and includes a “doubler box.” If a player matches the doubler box to any of the winning numbers, all prizes won are doubled.

Product Manager Aiello presented the new \$30 price point ticket “\$15,000,000 Colossal Millions.” This game features a top prize of \$15,000,000 and is printed using holographic paper with fluorescent inks, offering three color schemes. He noted that this is the first time a \$30 price point ticket has been offered with color schemes. The colors include pink, purple, and blue, and the game features over (175) \$100,000 prizes, as well as great chances to win \$500 prizes. Additionally, this game offers 5 Second Chance Drawings with prizes ranging from \$100 to \$100,000.

April 15 Instant Ticket Launch POS

Product Manager Aiello next presented the Point of Sale (“POS”) material to support the April launch, which features an 8.5” x 11” poster showcasing all four tickets with the tagline “Giant Winnings.” This poster, created by the Lottery’s internal team, includes two callouts: “Over \$556,000,000 in Total Prizes” and “Over 14,000,000 Total Winners.” Also included in the POS

Massachusetts State Lottery Commission Official Minutes of 03/25/2025 Meeting

materials is an 8" x 4" topper, which will be placed on flex terminals. The topper features the \$30 game's three-color schemes and showcases the callouts "Win up to \$15,000,000" and "5 Second Chance Drawings."

April 15 Instant Ticket Launch Ads

Executive Director Bracken handed the presentation over to Lottery Creative Director Keith Macri to report on the creative content that will support the April launch.

Director Macri discussed the POS poster highlighting the new \$30 "\$15,000,000 Colossal Millions" ticket, explaining that the goal was to take a "larger than life" approach. He mentioned that the first video he would show is an animation for the ticket, designed to match the bold and striking art from the poster. The animation features the tickets alongside part of the city, making them as big and bold as the real skyline. He then played the video for the Commission, describing it as quick, staying on theme, bold, impactful, and emphasizing the chance to win big prizes.

Next, Director Macri presented a live-action social video created to support the ticket. He explained that the concept of these oversized tickets being integrated into the city came from the idea that such an event would be newsworthy, similar to how last year's solar eclipse inspired awe and wonder. He then played this video for the Commission.

Building on the "larger-than-life" theme, Director Macri revealed that three additional social digital ads were created to run alongside the main videos. These ads feature other tickets from the April launch placed in different parts of the city. The ads are designed to feel more organic and natural and are meant to complement each other. He then played one of these three videos for the Commission.

Partnership with New England Free Jacks

Executive Director Bracken asked Benjamin Wood, Assistant Director of Stakeholder Engagement, to report on the Lottery's partnership with The New England Free Jacks American professional rugby union team.

Assistant Director Wood stated that the Lottery began its partnership with Major League Rugby's New England Free Jacks to celebrate extraordinary members of the community. The Impact Free Jack award will recognize 16 individuals during the 2025 season who have made significant, positive impacts on their communities. Honorees are recognized at each of the eight regular season home matches during the 2025 season. On Saturday, March 15, the Lottery held its first tabling event at a Free Jacks game and the first pair of recipients were honored.

Executive Director Bracken added that the New England Free Jacks are based out of Quincy and have won the national championship twice in a row and consistently attract a large crowd.

March is Problem Gambling Awareness Month

Executive Director Bracken introduced Rachel Guerra who joined the Lottery a month ago as the new Deputy Director of Communications. He added that Deputy Director Guerra comes to the

Massachusetts State Lottery Commission Official Minutes of 03/25/2025 Meeting

Lottery from the Massachusetts Senate and the British Consulate and would be reporting on Problem Gambling Awareness month and the various ways the Lottery has participated in this effort.

Deputy Director Guerra expressed her appreciation for being at the meeting and reported that March is Problem Gambling Awareness Month. The Lottery has been using various platforms to raise awareness about the resources available to Massachusetts players. Referring to the meeting materials, she highlighted some of the avenues the Lottery has used for publicity, including messaging on the Lottery's website, social media accounts, and customer-facing displays such as those in Keno and The Wheel of Luck games. Additionally, the Lottery has directly reached out to players through email blasts and informational tabling events at both headquarters and regional offices. The Lottery has also continued its training efforts in collaboration with the Massachusetts Council on Gaming and Health, and this month, customer-facing employee training has been a key focus. Earlier this month, the Lottery issued a press release highlighting these initiatives and its ongoing partnership.

DPH'S New Screening Service

Deputy Director Guerra stated the Lottery continues to work with the Department of Public Health ("DPH") Office of Problem Gambling Services to promote responsible gambling and available resources. As part of its partnership, the Lottery is helping to promote DPH's new gambling health screener questionnaire which she personally answered and consisted of four questions. The Lottery donated radio inventory providing over 400 spots valued at more than \$113,000 and includes a :15 spot and a :30 spot directing listeners to this service. Deputy Director Guerra then played the spot for the Commission.

Deputy Director Guerra noted that digital assets will be included to promote the screener service which will begin running next month on Lottery monitors and customer-facing terminal displays.

Closing Remarks Before the Votes

Treasurer Goldberg commented that while she hears a lot of controversy surrounding the question of why the Lottery should receive more advertising dollars, she explained that the Lottery provides unrestricted local aid to communities. Therefore, when there are declines in sales, it directly impacts these communities which will increasingly face financial struggles. She emphasized that she wanted to make it very clear that there is enough data available to demonstrate the impact of the Lottery's contributions. When the Lottery receives that extra boost, even a small increase relative to the size of Lottery sales, it benefits local communities. The holiday season is a prime example of this. The Lottery made strategic efforts to save funds for that period, and once those resources ran out, sales declined, and communities suffered as a result. She stated that it is her responsibility, especially with federal government funding being increasingly cut, to produce as much as possible through various areas of state government to support the people. The Lottery plays a critical role in this, as it not only supports local communities but also helps local and small businesses thrive.

General Counsel Sulyeken Walker expressed her appreciation to Creative Director Macri, stating that, as always, he delivered an excellent presentation. She shared that one of her favorite aspects of these meetings is seeing the creative advertising produced by the team. She mentioned having seen the commercial featuring Boston Celtics legend Eddie House and thought it was fantastic. General Counsel Walker also stated that she completely agreed with the Treasurer, emphasizing that it's impressive what the team accomplishes with such limited resources. Executive Director Bracken

Massachusetts State Lottery Commission Official Minutes of 03/25/2025 Meeting

added that the actors in those ads were all Lottery employees, which helped create more efficient advertising. He noted that the :15 and :30 commercials will air on television for a very short period due to limited funding, so there will be shorter versions of them.

Executive Director Bracken addressed the Treasurer's point about advertising, noting that, with it being three weeks into March, Keno sales have significantly increased this year as compared to last year. Last year, the Lottery received an additional \$1 million for the Keno budget, increasing it from approximately \$3.3 million to \$4.3 million. This extra funding allowed the Lottery to invest in a year-long advertising campaign across radio, television, outdoor billboards, signage and online platforms. The results of this campaign can be directly linked to the \$1 million investment, which contributed to an increase, as of today, of \$28.2 million in sales and should finish fiscal year 2025 somewhere around \$35 to \$40 million higher than fiscal year 2024. After accounting for prizes, commissions, and book cashing bonuses, the additional \$1 million investment will result in a net profit of approximately \$8 million for the Commonwealth. Furthermore, when the Lottery received the extra \$1 million in its advertising budget, a significant portion was allocated to the holiday campaign – the Lottery hadn't done television advertising for the holiday campaign in the previous three years. Executive Director Bracken reminded the Commission that in October, Instant Ticket sales were significantly down for the fiscal year, but when the holiday campaign launched, sales increased every week for eight to nine weeks, ending the period in the positive. This point in mid-January marked the first time in the fiscal year that Instant Ticket sales were up overall. However, once the holiday campaign was taken off television, sales began to decline again, and the drop has been even more significant since. He also noted that the Lottery has issued a \$50 ticket for the past two Februaries, which has been a major sales driver. However, since both \$50 tickets are still on the market, it would not have been responsible to issue a third \$50 ticket in February 2025. Instead, that ticket will be launched in May, once the existing tickets are nearly sold out and as a result, significant sales from February, March, and April will be lost. Instant Ticket sales will likely continue to decline during this 12-week period, partly because the Lottery lacks the marketing resources to effectively push and raise awareness for the old \$50 ticket in order to sell out and make room for the new one. There are many reasons for these outcomes, and while some may view these explanations as excuses, the data is clear. The numbers can be directly linked to every ticket price point and even the type of ticket, whether it's a casino-style ticket or a "number match" ticket. The data shows which tickets are performing well and highlights where the shortfall is. The main issue is the lack of marketing funds. Without the necessary budget to properly promote and distribute the tickets, sales are affected. Efforts are being made to work with legislative partners to secure the funding needed. It's unfortunate because just an extra million or two for Instant Tickets and another million or two for advertising would make a significant difference, especially considering that the Lottery has the lowest operating costs in the nation and operated just around two percent against revenue where the next closest lottery is three percent.

Treasurer Goldberg stated that many people don't realize that the Massachusetts State Lottery is not its own profit center. While it needs to operate like a business, it faces constraints that are not typical of a business. Despite generating over \$6 billion in revenue, a case like this would likely leave business school students stunned by the level of efficiency and the results achieved with limited resources that are usually recommended for any business.

IV. Matters Requiring Approval of the Massachusetts State Lottery Commission

VOTE (1): For the reasons set forth in the attached memorandum dated March 14, 2025, the Massachusetts State Lottery Commission authorizes the Executive Director to expend an

**Massachusetts State Lottery Commission
Official Minutes of 03/25/2025 Meeting**

additional twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000.00) through State Contract VEH110 to purchase vehicles during fiscal year 2025.

The aggregate maximum obligation for fiscal year 2025 shall not exceed six hundred thousand dollars (\$600,000.00).

General Counsel Suleyken Walker made a motion for the Executive Director to expend the additional funds and Thomas Smith-Vaughan seconded the motion.

Executive Director Bracken reminded the Commission that a vote was taken earlier this year to purchase vehicles, but despite being ordered ten months before the end of the fiscal year, the vehicles will not arrive this fiscal year. The dealership does have other electric hybrid vehicles available, which cost slightly more, which is why the Lottery is requesting additional funds to secure the vehicles.

Treasurer Goldberg, recognizing there was no further discussion, moved the motion to a roll call vote. Chief Operating Officer Thomas Smith-Vaughan: yes; General Counsel Suleyken Walker: yes; Commissioner Meghan Liddy: yes; and Treasurer Goldberg: yes. The Motion carried.

VOTE (2): For the reasons set forth in the attached memorandum dated March 12, 2025, the Executive Director is authorized to expend up to three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000.00) during fiscal year 2025 for subject matter experts to perform development and support services for the Lottery middleware systems with the below vendor pursuant to state contract ITS77: Staff Augmentation:

Insight Global, LLC
1224 Hammond Drive
Suite 1500
Atlanta, GA 30346

Commissioner Meghan Liddy made a motion for the Executive Director to expend the additional funds and General Counsel Suleyken Walker seconded the motion.

Executive Director Bracken explained that the Lottery has been working with Insight Global for staff augmentation, for essentially hiring consultants. Although the Lottery has posted job openings for the positions they need, they have been unable to fill them due to a lack of qualified candidates or candidates who are unwilling to accept the positions because of the salary offered. These positions are related to the Lottery Middleware Systems, which he described as the “tech stack” that connects the Central Gaming System with other systems. Middleware is responsible for taking data from the Central Gaming System and transferring it to various other systems, such as the website, remote ticket checkers, service tech systems used by service personnel, and the Instant Game Ordering System. Essentially, Middleware acts as the connector between these systems. Additionally, the Lottery is currently short one staff member. A previous vote was not required because the cost was expected to stay under \$250,000 for the fiscal year. However, since the total is projected to rise to \$300,000, a vote is now necessary.

Treasurer Goldberg, recognizing there was no further discussion, moved the motion to a roll call vote. Chief Operating Officer Thomas Smith-Vaughan: yes; General Counsel Suleyken Walker: yes; Commissioner Meghan Liddy: yes; and Treasurer Goldberg: yes. The Motion carried.

**Massachusetts State Lottery Commission
Official Minutes of 03/25/2025 Meeting**

VOTE (3): For the reasons set forth in the attached memorandum dated March 20, 2025, the Executive Director is authorized to enter into a five-year contract for statewide communication network equipment and services with:

Verizon Business Network Services LLC
One Verizon Way
Basking Ridge, NJ 07920

This award is being made pursuant to a competitive bid process (RFR LOT # 2401).

The maximum obligation for the five-year contract shall not exceed thirty-seven million, five hundred thousand dollars (\$37,500,000.00).

General Counsel Suleyken Walker made a motion for the Executive Director to enter into the five-year contract and Chief Operating Officer Thomas Smith-Vaughan seconded the motion.

Executive Director Bracken described the process as “pretty exhaustive,” taking just over a year. He explained that the Lottery went out to bid after the contract with Verizon, the previous provider, expired. He reminded the Commission that this contract covers both the internal network and the network connecting over 7,000 agents. The cost is in line with what the Lottery is currently paying, based on votes from previous fiscal years. This contract is for five years, with options for extensions that could potentially extend the contract for up to 14 years if the Lottery chooses to exercise the three extensions. He acknowledged that this was a difficult contract to finalize and expressed appreciation for the team's hard work in securing it.

Chief Operating Officer Smith-Vaughan asked why the statewide ITT72 contract wasn't leveraged for this procurement, given its size. General Counsel Greg Polin explained that the main reason was that the Lottery requires a variety of comprehensive services that are somewhat unique from what would be available under the ITT72 contract.

Treasurer Goldberg, recognizing there was no further discussion, moved the motion to a roll call vote. Chief Operating Officer Thomas Smith-Vaughan: yes; General Counsel Suleyken Walker: yes; Commissioner Meghan Liddy: yes; and Treasurer Goldberg: yes. The Motion carried.

VOTE (4): That the Massachusetts State Lottery Commission hereby ratifies and adopts the Decision and Recommendation of Nicole Coccozza, Esq. (hearing officer sitting by designation) in re: Appeal of Bus Stop Variety (Main St. and Galen St.).

General Counsel Suleyken Walker made a motion to ratify and adopt the Decision and Recommendation and Commissioner Meghan Liddy seconded the motion.

Attorney Nicole Coccozza summarized the decision and recommendation regarding Mr. Mohammad Asif, a licensed Lottery sales agent operating two Bus Stop variety stores in Watertown, located on Main and Galen Streets. The matter stems from the Lottery's investigation into Mr. Asif and the recommendation to revoke his licenses for both stores.

On May 15, 2023, the Lottery issued a notice of intent to suspend Mr. Asif's license for sixty days based on suspected violations related to secondary market activity. Mr. Asif appealed this suspension after new evidence from a Massachusetts State Police investigation emerged. In response,

Massachusetts State Lottery Commission
Official Minutes of 03/25/2025 Meeting

the Lottery amended the suspension to a full license revocation. On March 28, 2024, Mr. Asif appealed again. A hearing was held at the director level on May 8, 2024, and the Lottery's designee upheld the revocation. Mr. Asif then sought a Commission-level appeal, which was heard on November 14, 2024.

Attorney Coccozza reviewed the evidence after the hearing and issued a written decision and recommendation on or about February 17, 2025. She concluded that Mr. Asif had repeatedly violated Lottery rules and regulations, making the revocation of both licenses necessary and appropriate.

The decision and recommendation is supported by documentation, statistical evidence, and credible testimony from Lottery Assistant Director of Security and Compliance, Sandra Lemanski, and Compliance Analyst Kevin Foster. Some of the key facts highlighted in the decision include that, between 2013 and 2020, Mr. Asif's stores were a primary source for tickets involved in the Jaafar family's illegal secondary market scheme. The Jaafar family claimed 135 high-prize tickets that were sold from Mr. Asif's stores, totaling approximately \$319,000. Mr. Asif admitted to connecting customers with the Jaafars to sell their winning tickets, and the Jaafars identified his stores as part of their illegal operation.

One particularly troubling fact was that, despite a verbal warning from the Lottery on March 9, 2022, to stop participating in the secondary market, Mr. Asif personally cashed 20 high-prize tickets between April 2022 and July 2023, and he admitted that at least 16 were purchased at a discount from customers. Additionally, Mr. Asif was involved in several other violations, including commingling trust accounts with illegal transactions. He attempted to cash a \$2,000 ticket, falsely claiming it was a birthday gift, but later admitted he had paid \$1,800 to buy it. He also used runners to cash tickets, with two of them testifying under oath that they were acting at his direction. One runner revealed that Mr. Asif pressured him to use SNAP benefits to repay a personal debt by purchasing \$900 worth of groceries.

In conclusion, all evidence demonstrated that Mr. Asif repeatedly violated Lottery regulations, acted unethically, and undermined public confidence in the Lottery system even after being warned.

Attorney Coccozza recommended that the Lottery's decision to revoke the licenses for both Bus Stop variety stores be affirmed.

After asking the Commissioner if there were any questions, General Counsel Polin informed the Commission that Mr. Mohammad Asif was on the call today and asked to speak before the Commission votes on the matter.

Mr. Asif asked the Commission for leniency, expressing his desire to have the Lottery back as part of his business. He explained that he owed a significant amount of money and needed to pay his bills. He conveyed that he had lost a lot of money in the past year and was now borrowing money. He admitted that he didn't know how he would be able to pay but said that if given the opportunity, he would be extremely grateful and would do his best moving forward, ensuring that he would not make any further mistakes.

General Counsel Polin thanked Mr. Asif and stated that speaking for the Lottery, we find the facts in this case to be troubling and ask that the Commission ratify and adopt this decision.

**Massachusetts State Lottery Commission
Official Minutes of 03/25/2025 Meeting**

Treasurer Goldberg, recognizing there was no further discussion, moved the motion to a roll call vote. Chief Operating Officer Thomas Smith-Vaughan: yes; General Counsel Suleyken Walker: yes; Commissioner Meghan Liddy: yes; and Treasurer Goldberg: yes. The Motion carried.

V. Other Business – Reserved for Matters the Chair did not Reasonably Anticipate at the Time of Posting

After asking if there was any other business to discuss, Treasurer Goldberg sought a motion to adjourn the meeting. General Counsel Suleyken Walker moved to adjourn and Commissioner Meghan Liddy seconded the motion.

Treasurer Goldberg, recognizing there was no further discussion, moved the motion to a roll call vote. Chief Operating Officer Thomas Smith-Vaughan: yes; General Counsel Suleyken Walker: yes; Commissioner Meghan Liddy: yes; and Treasurer Goldberg: yes. The Motion carried.

The Commission meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

List of Documents and Exhibits Used:

- MSLC March 2025 Commission Meeting Book
- MSLC Meeting Executive Director's Report, March 2025