

Maryland Lottery and Gaming Control Agency

Larry Hogan, Governor • Gordon Medenica, Director



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TO: Maryland Lottery and Gaming Control Commission
Gordon Medenica, Director

FROM: Carole Gentry, Managing Director of Communications

DIVISION: Communications

DATE: February 18, 2020

SUBJECT: Report for the February 2020 Commission Meeting

Following is a status update of ongoing and special projects in the Communications Division:

MEDIA RELATIONS

Key accomplishments last period:

News Coverage:

More than 20 articles or segments on the Maryland Lottery and/or Maryland's casinos were broadcast and/or published online in the past month by local/regional/industry media including WBAL-TV, Fox 45, the Baltimore Business Journal, WTOP and Gambling Compliance.

Broadcast Opportunities:

Managing Director of Communications Carole Gentry appeared on the monthly *Lottery Update* segment on WBAL-TV on 1/25, to discuss the latest games, prizes and promotions. The segment also included a live report featuring Communications staff member Doug Lloyd at the Maryland State Police Polar Bear Plunge, which was held at Sandy Point State Park in Annapolis. Doug also discussed Lottery news during live segments on WNAV-AM in Annapolis each Friday. Communications staff member Brandon Powell recorded an interview with WBOC radio in Salisbury on 2/12 to discuss the Cash4Life and Fast Play top-prize-winning tickets that were sold in Salisbury on 2/11 and 2/12.

Broadcast Outreach Supporting Fast Play Launch:

Communications staff members Roslyn Lane, Gail Pelovitz, Brandon Powell, Bryan Kelly and Doug Lloyd scheduled radio interviews with 19 stations in Annapolis, Baltimore, Frederick, Hagerstown and Salisbury between 2/14 and 2/21 to discuss the Lottery's new Fast Play games.

Winner Interviews and News Releases:

Communications staff interviewed more than 30 winners of \$20,000 or more in the past month. News releases were written on those winners and were posted on the Lottery website and/or sent to the media. Communications staff issued "The Week in Winners" news releases to news outlets across the state each Monday, detailing draw game and scratch-off tickets valued at \$10,000 or more that were sold or claimed during the previous week. Communications staff issued a news release on 2/6 to report the January 2020 casino revenue figures. A press release was issued on 2/11 to announce that a top-prize-winning Cash4Life ticket was sold in Salisbury. Just days later, a second news release was issued on 2/15 to announce that a second-tier prize-winning Cash4Life ticket was sold in Baltimore on Valentine's Day.

Daily News Headlines:

Communications staff sent daily news clip emails to Maryland Lottery and Gaming employees and members of the Commission during each day of the five-day workweek. Each email contained links to multiple media articles covering the lottery and gaming industries.

Winner Awareness:

In addition to winner interviews, blog posts and media alerts, Communications continued to focus on its overall winner awareness campaign using social media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) to highlight lottery prizes won by attendees at various events. The team also continued to garner media attention for “anonymous winners” who agree to publicity without revealing their identities.

Upcoming tasks for this period:**Broadcast Opportunities:**

Communications staff member Roslyn Lane will discuss Lottery news and promotions on the monthly *Lottery Update* segment on WBAL-TV on 2/29.

EVENTS AND SECOND-CHANCE PROMOTIONS**Key accomplishments last period:****Events and Community Outreach:**

The following is a list of events in the past month where Communications staff planned and managed the Lottery’s presence:

- Polar Bear Plunge, Annapolis – 1/25
- University of Maryland basketball vs. Iowa, College Park – 1/30
- Morgan State University basketball vs. Maryland Eastern Shore, Baltimore – 2/8

Second-chance Promotions:

Communications staff member Gail Pelovitz worked with the Baltimore Ravens to organize an event on 2/6 at M&T Bank Stadium to reveal the winner of the Seats For 20 Years second-chance promotion. WBAL-TV, Fox 45 and Pressbox covered the event. Gail also continued work on procedures and fulfillment of all Lottery second-chance contests.

Upcoming tasks for this period:**Events:**

The following is a list of upcoming events for which the Communications team will plan and manage the Lottery’s presence:

- Towson University basketball game vs. William & Mary, Towson – 2/20
- Morgan State University basketball game vs. Delaware State – 2/24
- Maryland Home and Garden Show, Timonium – 2/29 and 3/1
- MPT Women’s Leadership Forum, Baltimore – 3/4
- Cosmic Cocktail Party, Baltimore – 3/5
- Maryland Home and Garden Show, Timonium – 3/6 through 3/8
- University of Maryland basketball game vs. Michigan, College Park – 3/8

Second-chance Promotions:

Communications staff member Gail Pelovitz will continue working on procedures and fulfillment of all of the agency’s second-chance contests.

CORRESPONDENCE, NEWSLETTERS, PIA REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Key accomplishments last period:

Correspondence:

More than 100 e-mail inquiries and letters were received and answered by Communications staff.

Public Information Act Requests:

Communications staff completed responses to numerous PIA requests with assistance from the Attorney General’s Office and other Agency staff.

Newsletters:

Communications staff members Debbie McDaniel-Shaughney and Mary Clark completed and distributed the latest edition of the Gazette employee newsletter. They began writing and designing the next Retailer Report newsletter and planning content for the next Gazette.

“Retailer Corner:”

Posted twice-weekly blog entries on the “Retailer Corner” section of mdlottery.com.

Upcoming tasks for this period:

Correspondence:

Continue providing timely, accurate and complete responses to e-mail and other written inquiries.

Public Information Act Requests:

Continue providing timely, accurate and complete responses to PIA requests.

Newsletters:

Complete the next Retailer Report. Begin writing the next Gazette.

DRAWINGS MANAGEMENT

Key accomplishments last period:

Daily Drawings:

Twice-daily drawings of Pick 3/Pick 4, daily drawings of Bonus Match 5 and 5 Card Cash and twice-weekly drawings of Multi-Match were conducted successfully. The drawings team also ensured that winning numbers for those games, as well as multi-state games, Powerball, Mega Millions and Cash4Life were posted on mdlottery.com, the Lottery’s mobile device apps and winning numbers phone line.

Upcoming tasks for this period:

Daily Drawings:

Members of the drawings and Communications teams continue working with Lottery TV drawings partner WBAL-TV to review all creative elements associated with the execution of the drawings. Communications is also working with Marketing and Creative Services staff to enhance the look and feel for the Lottery drawings, including new on-air talent, set design and drawing machines.

Live Remote Drawings:

The Communications team is making plans for its first live remote evening drawing of the year. The drawing, which will be held on St. Patrick's Day, Tuesday, March 17, 2020, in Easton, Maryland, will highlight the festivities associated with the holiday, including a parade, Irish music and lots of fun and festive activities.