

TO: Maryland Lottery and Gaming Control Commission
John Martin, Director

FROM: Carole Gentry, Managing Director of Communications

DIVISION: Communications

DATE: March 15, 2022

SUBJECT: Report for the March 2022 Commission Meeting

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

MEDIA RELATIONS

News Coverage:

More than 50 articles or segments on the Maryland Lottery, Maryland's casinos, and/or Maryland's sports wagering program were broadcast and/or published online in the past month by local/regional/industry media including WBAL-TV (Baltimore); WJZ-TV (Baltimore); Fox 5 (Washington, D.C.), WTOP radio (Washington, D.C.) and the Baltimore Business Journal.

Broadcast Opportunities:

Communications staff member Roslyn Lane appeared via Zoom in the monthly Lottery Update segment on WBAL-TV on 1/26 to discuss the latest games and promotions. Managing Director of Communications Carole Gentry and Communications staff member Doug Lloyd will appear on the Lottery Update segment on 3/26. Carole will do the regular segment from WBAL's studio, and will then toss to Doug who will be on location at Sandy Point State Park for the Maryland State Police Polar Bear Plunge to support Special Olympics.

Lottery Director John Martin and other Lottery staff are continuing a series of weekly video conference interviews with Nestor Aparicio for WNST/baltimorepositive.com. The recorded segments are available each Friday.

Winner Interviews and News Releases:

Communications staff members resumed in-person interviews with winners of \$20,000 or more during the last week of February. Winner stories are published on mdlottery.com. Winners may remain anonymous, but stories include names and/or photos of winners who give written consent for publicity regarding their prizes.

Communications staff issued the following news releases in the past month:

- 2/24 — Statewide news release to report that the Maryland Lottery and Gaming Control Commission found Bingo World in Anne Arundel County and its operator partner RSI MD, LLC, qualified for a sports wagering facility license and a sports wagering facility operator license, respectively.
- 3/7 — Statewide news release to report February 2022 casino revenue.

- 3/10 — Statewide news release to report February 2022 sports wagering revenue.
- Every Monday (the next day if there is a holiday) — Statewide news release, “The Week in Winners,” listing each Lottery ticket worth \$10,000 or more that was sold or claimed in the preceding seven days.

Daily News Headlines:

Communications staff sent daily news headline 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.

EVENTS AND SECOND-CHANCE PROMOTIONS

VaxCash 2.0

Members of the Communications staff played vital roles in developing, managing and publicizing the VaxCash2.0 Promotion, a collaboration between the Lottery and the Maryland Department of Health. Announced by Governor Hogan on 2/8, the promotion aims to incentivize Marylanders to become fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by receiving booster shots. The promotion will award cash prizes to 12 vaccinated and boosted Marylanders in weekly drawings from 2/15 through 5/3. The winner of the first drawing on 2/15 was a Dundalk woman who claimed a \$500,000 prize. A Montgomery County man and a Hyattsville woman claimed the first two of 10 \$50,000 prizes in the drawings on 2/22 and 3/1. The \$50,000 winner in the 3/8 drawing is a Baltimore County resident who has not yet claimed the prize. The final drawing on 3/3 will award a \$1 million prize. The promotion follows a similar collaboration between the Lottery and MDH for a vaccine lottery promotion that ran from 5/25 to 7/4 in 2021.

The Communications team drafted copy for a VaxCash 2.0 page on mdlottery.com, including a detailed set of frequently asked questions and answers. Communications staff members also participated in creating the promotion’s rules and internal operating procedures and will guide the winners through the process of claiming their prizes. Winners will have the option to remain anonymous, and the Communications staff are handling winner publicity in addition to serving as the main point of contact for inquiries about the promotion from the public or the media.

Events and Community Outreach:

The coronavirus state of emergency led to the postponement or cancellation of many events since mid-March of 2020 where the Communications staff was planning to attend and promote the Lottery. With the diminishing numbers of COVID cases in the state, the Communications team is poised to resume a more active schedule of events this year. Assistant Director of Communications for Events and Promotions Gail Pelovitz has scheduled numerous events for the spring and summer months.

In the past month, the Communications staff managed the Lottery’s presence at the following events:

- Boosterama, Wheaton — 2/19
- Maryland Home & Garden Show, Timonium — 3/5 and 3/6
- Maryland Home & Garden Show, Timonium — 3/11 through 3/13

The Communications staff will manage the Lottery’s presence at the following upcoming events during the next month:

- Maryland State Police Polar Bear Plunge, Annapolis — 3/26
- Maryland Chicken Wing Festival, Crownsville — 4/2
- Ronald McDonald House Red Shoe Shuffle, Baltimore — 4/3
- Beer, Bourbon & BBQ, Timonium — 4/8 and 4/9
- Baltimore Orioles home opener, Baltimore — 4/11

Second-chance Promotions:

Communications staff members continue to work on procedures and fulfillment of all Lottery second-chance contests.

CORRESPONDENCE, NEWSLETTERS, PIA REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATIONS**Correspondence:**

More than 100 email inquiries and letters were received and answered by Communications staff over the past month. Communications staff continue to provide timely, accurate and complete responses to email and other written inquiries.

Public Information Act Requests:

Communications staff completed responses to PIA requests with assistance from the Attorney General's Office and other Agency staff, and continues to provide timely, accurate and complete responses to any such inquiries.

Newsletters:

Communications staff members Debbie McDaniel-Shaughney and Mary Clark will complete and publish the next edition of the Retailer Report newsletter by the end of March, and are working on content for the next edition of the Gazette employee newsletter.

"Retailer Corner:"

Communications staff continued posting three to five blog entries per week on the "Retailer Corner" section of mdlottery.com.

DRAWINGS MANAGEMENT**Daily Drawings:**

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

The Drawings team continues to follow proper social-distancing protocols to ensure the safety of drawing officials, announcers and other TV team members who are on-site at the drawings studio.