



City Council
**Health & Human
Services/Joint Meeting**

**36 Court Street
Springfield, MA 01103
<http://www.springfieldcityhall.com>**

**Councilor Brian Santaniello
(Chair)**

~Final~

**September 10,
2025**

2:30 PM

City Hall - Room 200

Call To Order

2:30 PM Meeting called to order on September 10, 2025, in Hybrid Room 200, 36 Court Street, Springfield, MA 01103.

Roll Call

Remote	Beth Ward Victor Davila	
Late		
Absent		
Present	Brian Santaniello Kateri Walsh Tim Allen Maria Perez Ryan — from the Reminder Roy Goodman Daniel Miller — MGM Helen Caulton Behavioral Health Rep Odessa Dwarika — Mass Council on Gaming & Health Juan Falcon — Director of Hispanics & American Library	

Public Portion

1. Discussion on gambling addiction and its effects on elders

Minutes:

Overview

The meeting addressed senior gambling issues in Springfield, including prevalence, vulnerabilities, and associated risks such as financial exploitation, elder abuse, and substance abuse. Participants discussed current data, community impacts, existing interventions, and the role of education and partnerships in prevention and awareness.

Key Discussion Points

- **Senior Gambling Trends and Vulnerabilities**

Approximately 68% of seniors engage in some form of gambling. Fixed incomes, social isolation, and health-related factors increase vulnerability. Prior efforts to train providers to recognize problem gambling were reviewed, along with the need for continued education at senior centers.

- **MGM Springfield Responsible Gaming Efforts**

MGM outlined responsible gaming initiatives tied to Responsible Gaming Education Month, including public awareness events, on-site GameSense advisors, surveys, and the “Play My Way” budgeting tool for players.

- **Elder Financial Abuse and Gambling**

Gambling-related financial abuse of seniors was discussed, including cases involving family members. The impact of certain medications (e.g., Parkinson’s treatments) on impulsive behaviors was noted. September was identified as an appropriate time to address these issues due to Elder Financial Abuse Awareness Month.

- **City and Community Intervention Programs**

Springfield’s problem gambling prevention and intervention programs, coordinated by Teresa Glenn and funded through the Gaming and Health Commission, were reviewed. Available resources include Gamblers Anonymous and the Massachusetts Problem Gambling Helpline (1-800-327-5050).

- **Gambling, Elder Abuse, and Substance Use**

Participants highlighted the intersection of gambling with elder abuse and substance use, emphasizing underreporting due to family dynamics and stigma. Senior centers and outreach staff often identify concerns indirectly through unmet basic needs.

- **Community Outreach and Partnerships**

The importance of collaboration among MGM, city departments, libraries, and community organizations was emphasized to improve awareness, resource sharing, and promotion of healthy alternatives to gambling. Upcoming outreach opportunities,

including an open house at Raymond Senior Center, were noted.

Next Steps

- Helen/Commissioner Caulton to distribute the PowerPoint presentation with Springfield gambling data and testimonies.
- Helen/Commissioner Caulton to coordinate with Teresa Glenn on educational programs at senior centers.
- MGM representatives to participate in senior center outreach on responsible gambling.
- Elder Affairs to continue promoting healthy, non-gambling activities for seniors and publicize the Raymond Senior Center open house.
- Committee to share their contact information with attendees.

Adjournment

The meeting concluded with agreement on the need for continued education, outreach, and cross-sector collaboration to address senior gambling risks and related elder protection issues.

[MIN_SIGNATURES]