

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
COUNTY OF NEWPORT**

The Town Council of the Town of Tiverton, County and State aforesaid held a Special Meeting on Monday, the 16th day of November 2015 at 7:00 p.m. at the Tiverton High School – Auditorium, 100 North Brayton Road.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Council President deMedeiros , Vice-President Chabot, Councilor Lambert, Councilor Peter Mello, Councilor Pelletier, Councilor Perry and Councilor Sousa.

Town Administrator Matthew Wojcik was present and Town Solicitor Anthony DeSisto was also present.

1. Call To Order:

President deMedeiros opened the Special Meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag then called the meeting to order. Town Clerk Nancy Mello conducted the Roll Call.

President deMedeiros called for a Moment of Silence for the victims in the terrorist attacks in Paris.

1.Council Public Hearing on Proposal by Twin River Worldwide Holdings, Inc. for Casino in Tiverton (Plat 203, Lot 111 and Plat 204 Lots 101,102,103,106,108) West Side of William Canning Blvd, Tiverton

President deMedeiros opened the Public Hearing on the proposal by Twin River Worldwide Holdings, Inc. (Twin River) for a casino in Tiverton. Members of the audience comment on the proposal. Roger Belanger, Stafford Road, commented on job creation not being properly articulated, opined comes to \$6/hour, was additionally concerned about smoking in the casino, guarantees for jobs for residents, tax benefits, increases in traffic, security, environmental protections; trees being destroyed and animals being displaced, adds no value to society, will affect quality of life in the region. Request the Council end this proposal now. Tim Byrne, Business Manager for the Plumbers and Pipe Fitters Union opined Twin River has done a good job of addressing the Town’s concerns, requested the Council let the people of the Town and the State decide. Denis D’Amore, Stafford Road, had given a letter to the Town Clerk, asking the Council to delay the vote until RI Department of Transportation (RIDOT) had completed its traffic study. Suggested a four lane roadway was needed between the roundabout and the MA line, would need cooperation from MA Department of Transportation. Mike Burk, Tiverton Democratic Town Committee (TDTC), commended the Council on the process and Twin River for engaging the community. The TDTC was not taking a position on the proposal, but was important to forward to the citizens so they can vote. William Fish, John Street, works at Twin River as a custodian, rebutted getting \$6/hour for the job, makes \$60,000 per year, has great benefits and retirement. Opined Tiverton should not miss the opportunity to expand the community. Todd Moore, Seapowet Avenue, expressed objection to the proposal, had many concerns including the financial, social and moral dimensions from gambling, submitted the letter read to the Town Clerk. Urged the Council to reject the proposal. Chris McDonough, Pelletier Lane, did not want a casino in his backyard. Barbara Pelletier, Bonniefield Drive, supported the proposal, opined would expand the tax base. The Town is faced with costly obligations like the landfill, sewer, roads and school repairs, need more money to grow the economy, hopes the Council votes yes. Robert Lachapelle, Pine Court, noted the taxpayers need a break and to pass up the opportunity would be a mistake. James O’Dell, Warren Avenue, commended the Council on the vetting process and Twin River on a good job explaining the project, called it a win/win for the Town. Mr. O’Dell added Lincoln does not pay interest on bonds for capital improvement, could save Tiverton \$600k per year. The Town could get on a system similar to Lincoln. Noted Tiverton was ranked nationally in the top 2% for tax burden, need something in this Town. Scott Borowy, Ledoux Lane, disagreed with having a casino, did note the vote should be with the people. Thinks the Town can do better.

Richard Miozza, Watuppa Avenue, was 100% for it, need the tax base improved. Assured by Twin River the casino would not go forward without the roundabout. Should give the opportunity to all citizens to vote on it. Cecil Leonard, Neck Road, urged the Council to put this on the ballot, shared Councilor Sousa’s skepticism about the money. Complimented the folks from Twin River on the way they approached the situation,

appreciated the effort. Sally Black, Broadview Drive, has been on the School Committee for 11 years, worked on many budgets, need tax relief, request this be put out to the people. Tina Sloane, Indian Point Road opined putting lipstick on a pig, will not benefit the residents, taxes will not go down, should not have a Tiverton casino in this bucolic, beautiful town. Constance Fleckenstein, Cottage Avenue, opined this was not a good image for Tiverton. Richard Miozza spoke again, opined that Newport was a tourist town; Tiverton does not have that situation. Steven Jackson, Colonial Avenue, not a gambler, opined the Town has to balance residential growth with economic growth, would like to see the taxes go down, and should let the people decide. Renee Jones, Highland Road, had some questions for the Twin River representatives; what happens next, how long will it take to get the \$4 million dollars in revenue and what was the time frame. John Taylor, Chairman of Twin River responded, if everything gets approved on the ballot, expect to be live by July 2018, will get benefits at that point. Mr. Taylor noted at ownership the building would be assessed through the construction period differently, have ample time to review and vet the proposal. Councilor Pelletier estimated the \$800k property tax would come from \$40 million valuation of the casino. Mark Russo, Attorney for Twin River, explained the land would be a separate valuation, improvements would be added. In Lincoln did not use reproductive value, there is a casino site value and other valuations. Would work with the Solicitor and the Tax Assessor to determine, not looking for a tax treaty. Right now the land has open space tax classification. Maureen Pickett, Captain's Circle questioned how Twin River would deal with the traffic problem from the MA side, traffic crosses the yellow line often, opined the roundabout was a good idea. Todd Brayton, Bryant Associates, conducted a traffic study, received crash data from the Fall River and Tiverton Police Departments, most of the accidents in that area come from where the roundabout is proposed. Ms. Pickett suggested the median barrier go from the Fall River side up to the roundabout so the traffic does not cross the yellow line. President deMedeiros called for comments from the public three more times, hearing none closed the public hearing.

Solicitor DeSisto explained the vote would be as a Resolution to the General Assembly to allow voters in Tiverton to be able to vote on the following question pursuant to Section 22 of Article VI of the RI Constitution and RI General Laws Section 41-9-14:

Question: "Shall an act be approved which would authorize a facility owned by Twin River – Tiverton LLC to be located in the Town of Tiverton at the intersection of William S. Canning Boulevard and Stafford Road, to be licensed as a pari-mutual facility offering state-operated video lottery games and state – operated casino gaming, such as tale games?" Be it further resolved, that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Town of Tiverton's Representatives and Senators, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House, and the Governor of the State of Rhode Island. There has been a suggestion that language be inserted "in substantially similar form" in the first part just before the word pursuant. Section 42-61-2.2 through 2.7 would also have to be amended. All the issues mentioned before will be in that section in detail. Solicitor DeSisto explained this resolution would be the first step, will be another resolution later. Councilor Sousa requested the question of the revenue be resolved for the \$3 million dollar minimum, the legislation have additional wording, talking about changing the Constitution. President deMedeiros explained this vote would be just to get it on the ballot, during the next year will work out all the details for the next resolution. Councilor Sousa disagreed, wanted to have the \$3 million put on the ballot with this resolution. Solicitor DeSisto clarified, this is not going to amend the State Constitution, and it is only authorizing a vote to be taken. If amending the State Constitution that requires a separate process, cannot do at this time. This follows what the Constitution says in order to authorize this type of gaming facility. Councilor Lambert opined the suggestions Councilor Sousa made have to do with a legislative change, not a Constitutional change. Councilor Pelletier requested clarification as to what mechanisms or types of enforcement the Town has relative to the \$3 million. Solicitor DeSisto explained the issue of what portion Tiverton gets is going to be embodied in the legislation, not sure it won't be changed, has not happened to the Lincoln facility but it is a possibility. Solicitor DeSisto suggested the Council might want to consider a host agreement and the type of relationship the Town would have with the host facility, can structure it in a variety of ways. It is a State run facility; revenues are not in the statute. Cannot have a relationship with a facility of this nature without being governed by legislation. Councilor Sousa suggested staffing for the design review may need to be looked at should have a properly constructed roundabout built before the voters go to the polls.

Councilor Chabot noted what was before the Council was to put the question on the ballot so the people can decide. Whether or not someone is for or against, Councilor Chabot opined it was up to the voters to decide, there will be over a year in which both sides can present their case.

2. Council Vote on Resolution Recommending General Assembly Approval for Placing Question Regarding the Casino on the November 2016 Ballot

Councilor Chabot made a motion to accept the Resolution as amended with adding the wording “in substantially similar form” and the name change from Town River to Twin River. Councilor Perry seconded the motion, some discussion followed. President deMedeiros noted the Council was aware of the concerns, will work diligently to make sure the Town gets the best bang for the bucks. Councilor Sousa sought clarification, with this vote it is only a request to put the question on the ballot, would need legislation to guarantee the revenue, don’t really have leverage. Solicitor DeSisto opined the leverage is to have this voted on. President deMedeiros noted the public will be fully aware of what is before them on whether or not they think this is a good deal. Councilor Pelletier noted the language moved for this resolution was to create language for the ballot, in substantially similar form, to put in the \$3million the legislature could take that out; Solicitor DeSisto agreed. Councilor Lambert noted the Council has one year to work with the State legislature to get assurances, recalled the revenues to the State from this facility could be from \$45 to 70 million. President deMedeiros noted the local State legislators work hard for the Town; expect they will be persuading their colleagues to support Tiverton. Councilor Perry noted this was an opportunity to give the voters the final say; would like to be able to do this more often.

Councilor Perry then moved the question; Councilor Chabot seconded the motion to move the question. Solicitor DeSisto clarified the motion would be to close all Council discussion. The motion to move the question passed on a vote of 5-2, Councilors Lambert and Pelletier opposed.

The motion to Accept the Resolve passed on vote of 6-1, Councilor Pelletier opposed

3. ADJOURNMENT:

Councilor Chabot made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Perry passed on a vote of 6-1, Councilor Pelletier opposed.

The Special Meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

A True Copy.

ATTEST: _____ Nancy L. Mello, Town Clerk