

October 12, 2022 – Chairman Plousis Marks the 45th Anniversary of the Casino Control Commission’s First Public Meeting

Forty-five years ago this month, the Casino Control Commission held its very first public meeting. The date was October 4, 1977. Public interest was robust and the Commission did not yet have its own public meeting space. That meeting was held in the General Assembly Chambers at the State House in Trenton.

The first order of business at that meeting was to announce the Commission’s adherence to the Open Public Meetings Act. Through all these years, it has continued as the first order of business at every public meeting, just as it was today.

The Commission’s mission is to promote public confidence and trust in the credibility and integrity of the gaming industry. In no small measure, public confidence and trust has been achieved and strengthened through the transparency that this Commission provides.

At the first public meeting, Chairman Lordi set the tone for the way the Commission would operate under his leadership. We still have his original meeting notes with us today. Going into that meeting, there was a lot on his mind: The weight of the responsibility given by the people to their government in approving the casino referendum. The promise of revitalizing the convention, entertainment and resort industries in Atlantic City. The desire to stimulate the economy of the entire State. And, in his words, “The awesome task of seeing that the job gets done and that it gets done right.”

At the first public meeting, many organizational details and proposed operations were discussed and debated among the Commission members. The members didn't agree on everything that day. The details of the agenda are less important than the honest, robust discussion and fair consideration of the different points of view that occurred. From day one, the public was able to see and hear for itself that this Commission would consider all facts and opinions while holding the public's interest first and foremost in its decisions. And that the Commission and its sister agency, the Division of Gaming Enforcement, would live up to the responsibility and get the job done right.

Of course, legalized gaming in New Jersey did not begin until the following spring. Over the months that followed, the Commission licensed the first casino, Resorts; its qualifiers, and key employees. Resorts opened its doors to the public on May 26, 1978. But in many ways New Jersey's foundation for legalized gambling was built in the early days of this Commission.

It is my honor and pleasure to mark the occasion of this anniversary of legalized gaming in New Jersey. I am pleased to announce that the Commission, along with the Division and other stakeholders in this industry, will recognize the 45th anniversary in a symposium being produced by Stockton University in Atlantic City. It will be held in-person and on-line on December 8 at 2:00 p.m. Details will be available in the coming days on our website as well as the website of Stockton's Levenson Institute of Gaming, Hospitality & Tourism, commonly known as LIGHT.