

**MUNICIPALITY OF CHATHAM-KENT**  
**COMMUNITY & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**  
**BUILDING, ENFORCEMENT & LICENSING SERVICES**

**TO:** Mayor and Members of Council  
**FROM:** Matthew Keech B.A. (Hons), Licensing Assistant  
**DATE:** March 14, 2008  
**SUBJECT:** Licensing of Card Tournaments

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**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that:

1. Administration be authorized to request the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO) consider card tournaments, such as euchre, as an eligible game to be licensed.

**BACKGROUND**

At the February 4, 2008 Council meeting, Councillor Parsons put forward a Notice of Motion that *“Council request the provincial government to amend lottery licensing rules to allow local Municipalities to issue licenses to local community organizations to conduct card tournaments, such as euchre.”* This Notice of Motion was deferred at both the February 4, 2008 and March 3, 2008 Council meeting. During such time, administration has had an opportunity to further explore the issue.

**COMMENTS**

Many organizations such as the Legions, The Moose, Knights of Columbus, and the Canadian Belgium Dutch Club, have historically held events such as Euchre Tournaments or Poker Tournaments to raise funds. At these events, participants pay an entry fee to play for a chance to win cash prizes.

By definition, card tournaments such as euchre, are considered to be an illegal form of gaming as they are not a licensable lottery scheme. Section 206 and 207 of the Criminal Code of Canada establishes the regulatory framework within which certain games are permissible. Part VII of the Code prohibits gaming in general, while section 207 allows for a number of exceptions to the general prohibition. These exceptions establish the framework for the Province or municipalities to issue lottery licenses for only certain lottery schemes.

Through the Province of Ontario Order in Council 2688/93 municipalities may issue licenses for the following schemes only:

- Bingo events with prize boards up to \$5,500;
- Raffles with prizes of up to \$50,000;
- Break Open Ticket events;
- Bazaar gaming events; and
- Media Bingo

In order to allow for these types of card tournaments, regulatory changes would be required to permit municipalities to issue lottery licenses to community organizations.

Administration would like the AGCO to consider card tournaments, such as euchre, as an eligible game to be licensed. As such, administration would like the AGCO to give consideration to the following:

- there is existing demand from consumers for a gaming experience which includes new products like card games;
- the addition of a card game licence will increase the viability and competitiveness of the charitable gaming sector in Ontario;
- other Canadian Gaming Commissions currently offer a Texas Hold'em Licence for charitable organizations;
- new products like licensed card tournaments will allow charitable organizations opportunities to increase revenue; and
- card games enrich the lives of seniors by providing a social activity.

## **COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN**

The recommendations in this report support the following objectives and strategic direction:

E: Civic Engagement – We are an engaged community

E3: Enhance networking and communication opportunities throughout Chatham-Kent.

### **Expected Results**

- Focus on information sharing and developing collaborative initiatives to address existing and emerging community issues and opportunities.

The recommendations will not adversely impact the remainder of the Community Strategic Plan.

## **CONSULTATION**

The AGCO was consulted regarding the matter and advised that through its 2005 Modernization of Charitable Gaming initiative, it is willing to entertain requests to update the regulation of charitable gaming in Ontario. Council may forward a request to the AGCO requesting that card tournaments, such as euchre, be considered as an eligible game to be licensed.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

As a result of the above recommendation, there are no financial impacts to the municipal budget at this time.

Prepared by:

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