

**WRAGGI**  
**Waterloo Region Action Group on Gambling Issues**  
**MINUTES**

**Date:** February 27, 2006

**Time:** 2:00-4:00 p.m.

**Location:** New Directions  
 Salvation Army  
 657 King Street East  
 Kitchener, ON

**Present:** Marion Kelterborn/Mary Denomme/ Lindsay Dolinsek (ROWPH), Jerry Forler, Bertha Thompson, Major James Hagglund (Salvation Army), Susan McLaren (SMCS), Anthony Benedetto (CFCC)

**Regrets:** Sandy Wang (ROWPH), Wayne Jordan/Paul Young (GA), Wayne Hobbs/Cathy McDonald-Reis (WCDSB), Chris Welker (Trustee in Bankruptcy)

**Recorder:** Susan McLaren

**Abbreviations:** WRAGGI (Waterloo Region Action Group on Gambling Issues), ROWPH (Region of Waterloo Public Health), WCDSB (Waterloo Catholic District School Board), SMCS (St. Mary's Counselling Service), OLG (Ontario Lottery & Gaming Corporation), RGC (Responsible Gambling Council), Catholic Family Counselling Service (CFCC), Gamblers Anonymous (GA).

**1.0 WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS**

Discussion of the "How Slots Work" presentation by Dr. Kevin Harrigan from Univeristy of Waterloo that some members attended before the meeting. The feedback was favorable.

**2.0 RECORDER** - Susan McLaren agreed to record the minutes.

**3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN**

GROUP MEMBER	ITEM	ACTION
Jerry Forler	<p>Read a letter from Elizabeth Witmer responding to WRAGGI's letter of concern re using a new lottery (<i>Quest for Gold</i>) as a means to raise funds for young athletes, who are in the high-risk age group for developing gambling problems. Ms. Witmer forwarded our letter on to Jim Watson (Minister of Health Promotion).</p> <p>Mentioned that children's stores are displaying games that have gambling themes. He was wondering if WRAGGI would want to write letters to these stores to draw awareness to the fact that these toys could groom a young person to develop a gambling problem.</p>	<p>Marion suggested that we gather information about which stores have these toys in order to consider a comprehensive letter-writing project.</p>

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Bertha Thompson	<p>Shared newspaper articles regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Quebec woman who refused to follow the direction of her employer at 711 to actively solicit customers to buy lottery tickets. It went to court and the woman won the judgment.</li> <li>• How golf as a sport is taking an anti-gambling stance.</li> <li>• Federal health decision that a person cannot buy cigarettes with points earned on casinos' <i>Winners Circle</i> cards.</li> <li>• A Chicago study on odors found that a floral scent pumped into casinos increased gambling on slots up to 40%.</li> <li>• David Asper's housekeeper stole money from him to fuel her gambling problem.</li> <li>• Wayne Gretzky articles on the recent sports betting ring.</li> <li>• Atlantic City is shifting their focus to try to attract youth to its casinos.</li> </ul>	
Susan McLaren	<p>Shared that <i>Shoppers Drugmart</i> is now accepting <i>Winners' Circle</i> points from casino patrons, but would not agree to post materials on problem gambling awareness.</p>	
Marion Kelterborn	<p>Shared that <i>Cirque de Soleil</i> is attempting to put a casino in an impoverished area of Montreal.</p>	
James Hagglund	<p>Shared that lotteries to support athletes are increasing, and that they originated in 1976 as a means to fund the Olympics.</p>	

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<b>4.0 MINUTES</b>		
<p>4.1 Minutes of the meeting of January 23/06 were approved with these changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2.0 – Take the ‘s’ off of St. Mary’s Counselling Service</li> <li>• 2.0 – “Quest for Gold” is for Canadian <b>amateur</b> athletes</li> <li>• 3.1 – Add ‘r’ to Jerry Forler</li> </ul>		
<b>4.2 BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES</b>		
ITEM	DESCRIPTION	ACTION
Letters to Bankruptcy Trustees	Susan wrote up a letter and Marion and Mary made some changes and sent it out to all of the Bankruptcy trustees in the K-W area.	
Letter to Ministry of Health re <i>Quest for Gold</i> lottery	A letter was written and sent from WRAGGI to the Ministry of Health regarding the use of a lottery to finance amateur athletes (who are in the high-risk age to develop gambling problems). Sample letter circulated. Sample letter circulated.	
<b>5.0 OUTSTANDING BUSINESS</b>		
No discussion took place.		
<b>6.0 NEW BUSINESS</b>		
ITEM	DESCRIPTION	ACTION
6.1 Update on the Laval University controlled gambling study	Susan reported that the study is having trouble getting subjects in the K-W area, as is a study being done by a professor at the University of Guelph regarding the impact of the physical environment of casinos on whether or not a person develops a gambling problem.	
6.2 <i>Discovery 2006</i> proposal	WRAGGI has not heard back regarding our proposal to present at the <i>Discovery</i> conference. Marion suggested that a small group meets to put together a tentative agenda for the presentation, in case we are accepted.	Mary, Marion, and Jerry will meet on Mar. 1/06 at 8 a.m. to discuss.
6.3 Liz Sandal (Guelph-Wellington MPP)	Liz Sandals’ office has agreed to a meeting with WRAGGI members regarding the letter that was sent to her with our recommendations.	Jerry, James, Marion, & Bertha will meet with Ms. Sandals on March 3/06. Time of visit to be reconfirmed with members

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		attending meeting.
6.4 WRAGGI website	Susan showed the group a prototype of a website that she put together using Microsoft Publisher. This can be used as a framework, however the group agreed that it would be good to involve a student in designing it so that it will be user-friendly for youth. We discussed issues regarding the involvement of volunteers, supervision, continuity, project/job description. Lindsay offered to check out whether we could put up a poster requesting a student volunteer from Conestoga College.	Lindsay to inform WRAGGI whether we can put a poster up at Conestoga College requesting a volunteer to help set up the website
6.5 WRAGGI Key Messages	Marion & Susan put together information sheets with key messages, which were handed out. Jerry suggested that we need to get references for the statistics so that we maintain our credibility.	Susan will get references for the statistics and e-mail to Marion.
6.6 Information update	WRAGGI members agreed that it is important to remain apprised of new information in the gambling field. Information would also be helpful for new WRAGGI members. Marion suggested that we invite Robert Simpson, and possibly Dr. Harold Wynne, to a meeting to update us.	Marion will invite Robert Simpson and Dr. Wynne to a WRAGGI meeting.
6.7 Gambling Forum Workshop	<p>Several ideas have been considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Forum targeting youth &amp; the school: invite 2 key school staff &amp; 2 key student leaders from each school to a presentation with an engaging speaker.</li> <li>• Link up with the Community Safety &amp; Crime Prevention Council's "In the Mind's Eye" Addictions Film Festival by offering an event that coincides with and promotes the film festival.</li> </ul> <p>Suggestion made to create a sub-committee to work on these ideas and bring them back to the larger group.</p>	Marion will check with Wayne Hobbs about being on this sub-committee, and Susan agreed to be on it also.
6.8 Update re YM/WCA Youth Gambling Program	Marion heard from Lauren Petty, who has taken over Sarah Thomas' position. Lauren	

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	has agreed to join WRAGGI.	
6.9 WRAGGI membership recruitment	Anthony contacted Greg Murdoch, the lawyer who is working on a class-action suit against the Ontario Government on behalf of problem gamblers who have lost money at casinos. Mr. Murdoch agreed to look at the WRAGGI information. Marion sent the information package to him, however we have not heard back at this time.	
<b>7.0 OLGC Update</b>		
Susan reported that her <i>Central Ontario Networking Group (CONG)</i> met with <i>OLGC</i> officials and were informed of their recent training in identifying “red flag behaviours” and how to approach a gambler who is exhibiting these signs of problem gambling.		
<b>8.0 NEXT MEETING</b>		
March 27, 2006, 2:30 – 4:30 p.m. Room 308, 99 Regina St., Waterloo, ON.		
<b>9.0 ADJOURNMENT</b>		
Meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.		