

Lottery revenues dip below state hopes

By Warren M. Hoyt
special writer

Better marketing for Michigan's state lottery is the goal of the Michigan Citizens' Task Force to Review the Lottery.

Task force chair Ron Thayer reported the group wants to increase sales, generating money for the state's education system.

The task force is evaluating all facets of lottery operations in light of revenues falling substantially below projections. It held its first public meeting to find out why and recommend solutions.

Even though lottery revenues continue to rise each year, Thayer said, the 15-member task force is concentrating on improved marketing

strategies for the state lottery.

In the last fiscal year, lottery revenues fell \$200 million short of the \$1 billion projection.

SPOKESMEN for the Associated Food Dealers of Michigan and the Michigan Merchant Council both supported the lottery in its present form.

Linda Gobler, representing the food wholesalers and dealers, supported the lottery but asked the task force to review lottery games and more grass-roots promotion.

The lottery didn't receive unanimous support, however. Allen Rice of the Michigan Interfaith Council on Alcohol Problems represented several mid-Michigan ministers who op-

posed the lottery.

"The notion of gambling is to kill the importance of the work ethic," Rice said. "What's really being promoted is greed."

And Bill Gill, president of the Muskegon branch of the NAACP, told the task force the lottery is discriminatory because machines are not placed in black-owned businesses.

Gill also said that most of the regional lottery offices are in suburbs, and there are biases in the lottery's hiring and promotional practices.

Thayer said the task force hopes to issue a final report by the end of the year that will make recommendations to Gov. James Blanchard and lottery commissioner Michael Carr.

BLANCHARD HAS asked members of his Employability Standards Task Force to define what knowl-

Lottery revenues fell \$200 million short of the \$1 billion projection. That bothers state officials, who depend on the Lottery to generate funds for the state's school system.

edge and skills workers will need to get and keep the competitive edge for future employment.

The task force was established in response to the governor's State of the State directive to "determine what basic skills an individual will need to be employable and to develop with the cooperation of the Department of Education a test to measure employability skills."

Also presented at the task force meeting was an interim report by the Cabinet Council on Human Investment addressing other human

centers throughout the state.

THE WELFARE caseload decreased again in October for the sixth consecutive month.

Some 2,750 public assistance cases were removed from the rolls after obtaining employment, according to Department of Social Services Department director C. Patrick Babcock. Here are how individual programs fared:

• Aid to Dependent Children decreased by 325 cases, or 0.2 percent, to 210,549 families. Most of the decreases were in ADC-U, a program for unemployed parents and their families, with a decrease of 248 cases, ending the month at 25,695.

• General Assistance was 460 cases lower, or 0.5 percent, at 100,430.

• Food stamps were down by 355 households, 0.1 percent, ending the month at 352,861.

Radioactive dump bill passes Senate

AP — The Michigan Senate has voted to establish regulations for a low-level radioactive waste dump in Michigan. But it killed a provision giving the Legislature final say on where it should be located.

On a 31-1 vote, senators approved one bill in a three-bill package. A second bill received the two-thirds vote needed to put the law into effect immediately upon the governor's signature.

Both bills went to Gov. James Blanchard.

A THIRD bill, which would establish a low-level radioactive waste authority, would govern the design, construction and operation of a disposal facility. It was approved 27-7 and returned to the House for final approval.

But before passage, the Senate removed a House-passed amendment giving the Legislature the final say in where the facility would be located.

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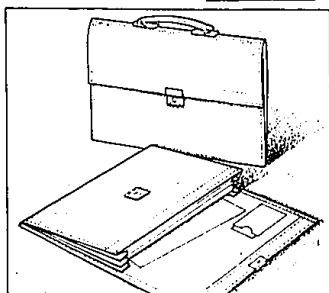
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