



St. Regis Mohawk Tribe

Chief Mark H. Garrow
Chief Randy Hart
Chief Ron LaFrance Jr.
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PRESS RELEASE

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Mohawk Tribe Makes Distinction Between Casinos

Akwesasne Territory. The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe is making clear to the public that the newly-opened casino is not part of the tribe's recognized gaming facilities. "There are only two legitimate gaming properties in Akwesasne," said Tribal Chief Mark Garrow. "Those are the Mohawk Bingo Palace and the Akwesasne Mohawk Casino. The unlicensed gaming facility cannot compare to our legal casinos in terms of safety, gaming integrity and regulatory oversight."

Recently, a private concern opened the casino in question under the auspices of a "sovereign people." Their alleged purpose is economic development and providing support to community elders. "They say that they will supply twenty percent of their revenues to community elders," remarked Tribal Chief Randy Hart. "Where will the other eighty percent go?"

The two Tribal Gaming Enterprises operate with regulatory oversight by the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Gaming Commission along with the National Indian Gaming Commission and the New York State Racing and Wagering Board. The Gaming Commission is responsible for licensing the two facilities, its employees and suppliers.

Neither the facility, its employees, gaming equipment suppliers, the operators or financiers of this new casino have undergone any background checks in accordance with the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act. Without those checks, it's not possible to determine whether any of those entities is actually eligible for a gaming license. However, the suppliers, operators and financiers of the new casino are all currently under investigation.

This casino has no oversight from a legitimate gaming commission or an audit conforming to the National Indian Gaming Commission's standards. Therefore, it's not possible to know how much money is coming in or where it's going. It's not clear who will benefit from the other eighty percent not distributed to community elders. "Who will receive that money?" asked Tribal Chief Ron LaFrance, Jr. "One-hundred percent of any and all profits from the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe's two gaming properties go to support programs and services for tribal members. I don't see how anybody could see that providing twenty percent of their revenues is a good deal. How does this benefit the Akwesasne community?"

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The casino may not be a fair deal for customers either. “The Commission can only guarantee the fairness of the games found in the Akwesasne Mohawk Casino and the Mohawk Bingo Palace,” noted Todd Papineau, Executive Director of the Tribe’s Gaming Commission. “Any patrons should ask who owns and operates the Three Feathers Casino? Can my safety be guaranteed in the building, does it meet the Tribe’s building codes? Who is the General Manager? Who is the investor behind the casino?” Any people that gamble in this facility do so at their own risk.

Neither the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe nor the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Gaming Commission have licensed nor authorized any gaming establishments other than the Akwesasne Mohawk Casino and the Mohawk Bingo Palace. Unlicensed gaming facilities jeopardize the Tribe’s ability to provide essential services to the community through gaming revenues.

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The Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Council is the duly elected and federally recognized government of the Saint Regis Mohawk People.