

SUMMARY *of* PROCEEDINGS



SELECT COMMITTEE ON GAMING

COMMITTEE MEETING INFORMATION

May 14, 2026 | 8:30 AM
Capitol Extension, W002
200 West 24th Street
Cheyenne, Wyoming

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator John Kolb, Co-chairman
Representative Jayme Lien, Co-chairman
Senator Barry Crago
Senator Troy McKeown (remote)
Representative Steve Johnson
Representative Joe Webb

COMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

None

LEGISLATIVE SERVICE OFFICE STAFF

Tamara Rivale, Legislative Counsel
Karen Vaughn, Legislative Editor/Assoc. Fiscal Analyst
Jessie Schaeffer, Research Analyst

OTHERS PRESENT AT MEETING

Please refer to [Appendix 1-02](#) to review the Select Committee Sign-in Sheet for a list of other individuals who attended the meeting.

The Committee Meeting Summary of Proceedings (meeting minutes) is prepared by the Legislative Service Office (LSO) and is the official record of the proceedings of a legislative committee meeting. This document does not represent a transcript of the meeting; it is a digest of the meeting and provides a record of official actions taken by the Committee. All meeting materials and handouts provided to the Committee by the Legislative Service Office, public officials, lobbyists, and the public are on file at the Legislative Service Office and are part of the official record of the meeting. An index of these materials is provided at the end of this document and these materials are on file at the Legislative Service Office. For more information or to review meeting materials, please contact the Legislative Service Office at (307) 777-7881 or by e-mail at lso@wyoleg.gov. The Summary of Proceedings for each legislative committee meeting can be found on the Wyoming Legislature's website at www.wyoleg.gov.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Select Committee on Gaming (Select Committee) met in Cheyenne for one day, May 14, 2026, and received testimony regarding wagering revenues and statutory distributions in Wyoming, compared to other states, reviewed the requirements for charitable gaming, and revisited prior legislation addressing problem gambling treatment.

The Select Committee requested five bill drafts and advised it would revisit prior legislation regarding the composition of the Wyoming Gaming Commission (WGC). The next Select Committee meeting is scheduled for July 30-31, 2026, in Casper.

CALL TO ORDER

Co-chairman Kolb called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. The following sections summarize the Select Committee proceedings by topic. Please refer to **Appendix 1-01** to review the Select Committee Meeting Agenda. Digital recordings are available on the Legislative YouTube site:

<https://www.youtube.com/wyominglegislature>.

Select Committee Rules

Tamara Rivale, Legislative Counsel, Legislative Service Office (LSO) directed the Select Committee to the Sample Rules (**Appendix 1-03**) and reminded the members that, as a non-statutory body created by Management Council, the Select Committee lacks authority to directly sponsor legislation and must submit bill drafts through Management Council or another standing committee for consideration. She further noted that the Select Committee operates under the previously adopted interim joint rules for the 2025 interim unless modified. There was no objection.

WYOMING GAMING - WAGERING REVENUES AND STATUTORY DISTRIBUTIONS

Nick Larramendy, Executive Director, WGC, presented **Appendix 2-01** and testified that Wyoming permits multiple forms of regulated gaming operating under defined statutory frameworks governing taxation and revenue distribution. He explained that permitted gaming includes pari-mutuel wagering, skill-based amusement games, and online sports wagering, each subject to distinct tax structures that allocate revenues to the state, local governments, and designated programs. He emphasized that these activities are subject to oversight through reporting requirements, third-party auditing, and, in certain instances, real-time monitoring to ensure compliance and transparency.

Director Larramendy further testified that the regulatory framework is intended to balance economic benefits with public protection, with the WGC serving as the primary oversight authority. He noted that unregulated gaming presents ongoing enforcement challenges, as such entities may attempt to circumvent Wyoming law through out-of-state or offshore structures, creating confusion regarding legality. While the WGC coordinates with state and federal authorities and issues enforcement actions, Director Larramendy indicated that jurisdictional limitations and technological factors constrain enforcement efforts.

In response to Select Committee questions, Director Larramendy provided clarification on the operation and revenue structure of permitted gaming, including historic horse racing systems, pari-mutuel wagering pools, and statutory distributions. He also addressed oversight practices such as machine verification, auditing protocols, and real-time monitoring mechanisms, and discussed the WGC's statutory authority and funding limitations, as well as distinctions among gaming types, including differences in taxation, promotional credits, and operator revenue.

Public Comment

At the request of the Co-chairman, Kyle Ridgeway, President, Wyoming Downs/307 Horse Racing, testified regarding live racing operations, explaining why race days were consolidated at the Evanston track.

Select Committee Directive

The Select Committee requested the following bill drafts:

- A bill draft to establish a statutory minimum (floor) percentage of revenues dedicated to live horse racing purses.
- A bill draft to create a standardized funding mechanism for problem gaming treatment, prevention, and education, applied uniformly across all authorized gaming types.
- A bill draft to address “breakage”, including potential limits on allowable breakage and redirecting those funds from operator profit to designated public or gaming-related purposes.

Also, while not requested as a formal bill draft request, the Select Committee agreed to revisit House Bill 138 (2025) concerning the establishment of a professional gaming commission at a future meeting.

OTHER STATES' REVENUE STRUCTURE

Jessie Schaeffer, Research Analyst, LSO, presented [Appendix 6-01](#). She testified that other states employ a wide range of gaming revenue structures and tax models that vary based on the types of gaming authorized, with significant differences in tax rates, revenue distribution formulas, and regulatory approaches. She noted that states such as Kentucky and Virginia utilize pari-mutuel wagering systems similar to Wyoming's, but differ in taxation levels, allocation methodologies, and treatment of breakage, while jurisdictions with online sports wagering and iGaming implement tax regimes ranging from relatively low rates to competitive or tiered structures. Ms. Schaeffer further testified that gaming revenues are commonly directed to state and local governments, economic development initiatives, regulatory functions, and responsible gaming programs.

Select Committee Directive

The Select Committee requested a bill draft to adopt statutory language clarifying and reinforcing the illegality of unregulated gaming activities.

CHARITABLE GAMING

Ms. Rivale reviewed the statutes regarding charitable gaming. See [Appendix 7-01](#). She testified that Wyoming's charitable gaming framework is limited and largely defined through statutory exemptions to the general prohibition on gambling. She explained that permitted activities include bingo, pull tabs, calcuttas, and raffles, each subject to differing statutory requirements governing eligible operators and the allocation of proceeds to charitable purposes. Ms. Rivale further testified that recent statutory changes to raffles require that 100 percent of net proceeds, after payment of costs, supplies, and winnings, be used for charitable purposes; however, she identified potential ambiguities, including that the term “costs,” could allow proceeds to be largely consumed before reaching a charitable use.

Director Larramendy testified that charitable gaming, particularly raffles, presents enforcement challenges because such activities are not subject to the same licensure and regulatory framework as other forms of gaming, requiring the WGC to evaluate legality under statutory and judicial criteria, including consideration, chance, prize, and equal probability. He explained that newer fundraising models, such as progressive “Queen of Hearts” games, often fall outside these criteria by incorporating secondary games and varying probabilities. Director Larramendy further expressed concerns regarding limited oversight,

inconsistent reporting, and potential misuse of funds, and indicated that clearer statutory guardrails may be necessary to align charitable gaming practices with legislative intent.

Ms. Rivale and Director Larramendy responded to Select Committee questions regarding statutory definitions, eligibility requirements, and interpretive ambiguities, as well as the processes and standards used by the WGC to evaluate the legality of raffle-based activities.

Public Comment

Brian Grzegorzczuk, Cheyenne resident, provided public comment.

Select Committee Directive

The Select Committee requested a bill draft to amend the gambling exemption for charitable raffles to direct a minimum proportion of the proceeds to charitable purposes and provide the WGC with rulemaking authority. The Select Committee also requested an evaluation of potential statutory or regulatory approaches to clarify the legality of progressive raffle-style games.

RESPONSIBLE GAMING

Review 2026 HB0171-Funds for problem gaming treatment-amendments

Ms. Rivale reviewed 2026 HB0171. See [Appendix 9-01](#). She testified that existing state responsible and problem gaming efforts in Wyoming are funded through limited, statutorily defined revenue streams, from online sports wagering and lottery allocations. She explained that the sports wagering allocation is distributed by the Department of Health to counties for prevention, treatment, and education related to problematic gambling behavior, but noted that the relatively small amounts available to individual counties was raised as an issue in prior Select Committee meetings as limiting the effectiveness of certain local efforts.

Director Larramendy testified that problem gaming is a growing concern requiring both expanded funding and improved public education, and that current funding levels and distribution methods may restrict the effectiveness of services across the state. He explained that a centralized or pooled funding approach could improve consistency and access to services, including the ability to partner with specialized providers for counseling and treatment. Director Larramendy also emphasized the importance of increasing public awareness of legal gaming and available assistance resources, noting that while the WGC supports outreach and referral efforts, treatment services must be delivered by qualified health professionals.

Ms. Rivale and Director Larramendy responded to Select Committee questions regarding the adequacy and structure of current funding mechanisms, including distribution to counties, program effectiveness, and the potential benefits of a centralized funding model. They also addressed inquiries concerning the appropriate administering entities, current service delivery practices, and the need for enhanced coordination, public education, and access to treatment resources to better address gambling-related harms.

Public Comment

Angie VanHouten, Wyoming Department of Health, Community Health Section Chief, provided public comment.

Select Committee Directive

The Select Committee asked staff to revise the requested bill draft on problem gaming, adding a statewide pooled funding model directed to the WGC and requested that the WGC be given the authority to contract with qualified organizations that offer prevention and treatment services, including counties.

PUBLIC FORUM

There was no testimony from the public or the Select Committee on this topic.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Senator John Kolb adjourned the meeting at 3:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Co-chairman John Kolb

Committee Meeting Materials Index

Index Number	Agenda Item	Document Description	Document Provider
1-01		Agenda	Legislative Service Office
1-02		Sign-In Sheet	Legislative Service Office
1-01	Call to Order	Sample Rules	LSO
2-01	Wyoming Gaming - Wagering Revenues and Statutory Distributions	WGC Presentation: Definitions, Distribution Percentages, Auditing & Betting Process	WGC
6-01	Other States' Revenue Structure	Short Report: Gaming Revenue Distribution and Tax Rates in Other States	LSO
7-01	Charitable Gaming	W.S. 6-7-101	LSO
7-02	Charitable Gaming	Fact Sheet: ND Charitable Gaming	LSO
9-01	Responsible Gaming	2026 HB0171	LSO