SUMMARY *of* PROCEEDINGS

SELECT COMMITTEE ON GAMING

COMMITTEE MEETING INFORMATION

October 5-6, 2026 | 8:30 AM
Western Wyoming Community College, Wellness Center Rooms A&B
2500 College Drive
Rock Springs, Wyoming

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator John Kolb, Co-chairman
Representative Jayme Lien, Co-chairman
Senator Barry Crago
Senator Troy McKeown
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 the Committee Sign-in Sheet
for a list of other individuals who attended the meeting. **(Appendix 1-02)**

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 Rock Springs on October 5 and 6, 2026. The Select Committee received testimony and considered legislation concerning problem gambling prevention and treatment, gaming background checks for licensure, online casinos and sweepstakes, pari-mutuel wagering, skill-based amusement games, and charitable raffles and drawings. It also reviewed gaming revenues and research concerning progressive raffles in other states.

The Select Committee voted to forward the following bill drafts to Management Council for sponsorship consideration:

- 27LSO-0201, Gaming-background checks, and
- 27LSO-0098, Online casinos and sweepstakes prohibited, as amended, to address online sweepstakes.

A request to draft legislation establishing a gaming moratorium and study failed on a voice vote.

CALL TO ORDER (OCTOBER 5, 2026)

Co-chairman Kolb called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m. The following sections summarize the Committee proceedings by topic. Please refer to Committee Meeting Agenda. **(Appendix 1-01)**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Select Committee unanimously approved the minutes of its July 30, 2026 meeting as drafted. **(Appendix 1-03)**

PROBLEM GAMBLING PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

Jessie Schaeffer, Research Analyst, Legislative Service Office (LSO), reviewed research concerning gaming revenue distributions, problem gambling prevention activities, and treatment utilization. **(Appendix 2-01)** She described the statutory $300,000 distribution from online sports wagering revenues to the Wyoming Department of Health (WDH), county allocations based on adult population, and the Wyoming Lottery Corporation's statutory distribution of up to $200,000 in unclaimed prize money for problem gambling activities. She also reviewed distributions from historical horse racing (HHR), skill-based amusement games, and the lottery revenues to local governments.

Ragen Latham, Senior Administrator, Behavioral Health Division; Dani Sullivan, Behavioral Health Division; and Angie Van Houten, Community Health Section Chief, described treatment provided through contracted behavioral health centers serving all 23 counties, the treatment of gambling concerns alongside other conditions, access to financial assistance services, and county prevention activities. WDH reported $72,246 was allocated but not claimed by counties from online sports wagering revenues. The presenters distinguished allocations that had not been claimed from funds that were accepted by counties but not yet expended.

Robin Medina, Chief Operations Officer, Wyoming Lottery Corporation (WyoLotto); Matt Kaufman, outside legal counsel; and Jessie Dafoe, consultant, appeared for WyoLotto. Mr. Kaufman explained the unclaimed prize fund, prize payments, net proceeds, and quarterly transfers of lottery proceeds to the state for local government distributions. Ms. Medina described the activities of the Wyoming Responsible Gambling Coalition for education, research, and provider certification. She reported average expenditures of approximately $100,000 annually and periodic replenishment of the responsible gambling fund.

27LSO-0096 Responsible gaming and problem gambling prevention funding

Tamara Rivale, Legislative Counsel, LSO, reviewed 27LSO-0096 Responsible gaming and problem gambling prevention funding, working draft 0.5. **(Appendix 2-02)** The bill draft would establish a responsible gaming and problem gambling account administered by WDH, retain investment earnings in the account, and require legislative appropriation before funds could be expended. It would redirect specified state gaming revenue distributions to the account and provide for an annual transfer of a portion of the unclaimed lottery prize money. Based on prior revenue figures, the account was estimated to receive approximately $1.5 million annually. The draft did not include an initial appropriation.

Nick Larramendy, Executive Director, Wyoming Gaming Commission (WGC), testified regarding centralizing the funding under WDH and suggested combining the existing sports wagering revenue and unclaimed lottery prize money as a narrow alternative. He also discussed public education concerning legal gaming and stated that the WGC could expand those efforts if funding were available.

The Select Committee discussed county utilization data, existing unspent funds, the proposed revenue amounts, and county needs. The Select Committee took no final action on the bill draft on October 5 and resumed consideration on October 6. The bill failed by a vote of 1 aye and 5 noes, with Senator Crago voting in favor.

WYOMING GAMING COMMISSION STRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS

27LSO-0201 Gaming background checks

Ms. Rivale reviewed 27LSO-0201 Gaming background checks, working draft 0.4, which would require applicants for permits and licenses to submit fingerprints with only their initial applications and require resubmission of fingerprints upon renewal only if requested by the WGC. **(Appendix 4-01)**

Director Larramendy discussed current statutory fingerprinting requirements for annual licenses and permits. He reported that fingerprint-processing costs exceed the fees collected. He explained that the bill draft would reduce repetitive submissions while preserving initial screening and provide the WGC the authority to request additional fingerprints when warranted.

The Select Committee discussed the effect of a change in license category on fingerprinting requirements and the discretion afforded to the WGC. By a roll call vote of 6 ayes and 0 noes, the Select Committee approved 27LSO-0201 for favorable recommendation to Management Council.

ONLINE CASINOS AND SWEEPSTAKES

Director Larramendy presented videos demonstrating certain types of online social casino games and dual-currency sweepstakes gaming models. He explained the use of entertainment coins without redeemable value and sweepstakes coins redeemable for money and described alternative methods of free entry. He also provided information concerning complaints about unpaid winnings and closed accounts, offshore operators, and the use of Wyoming business registrations. The Select Committee discussed age verification, geolocation, gaming on tribal lands, and the relationship between gambling statutes and consumer protection laws.

27LSO-0098 Online casinos and sweepstakes prohibited

Ms. Rivale reviewed 27LSO-0098 Online casinos and sweepstakes prohibited, working draft 0.2. The bill draft would clarify that laws governing promotional advertising of prize do not authorize online social casino games and sweepstakes. She explained it would make operating the covered online games and

sweepstakes or knowingly providing related services in Wyoming a felony by including the conduct within the definition of "professional gambling." **(Appendix 6-01)**

The following individuals provided public comment:

- Affie Ellis, representing Bally's,
- Bill Gantz, representing VGW, and
- Sarah Filosa, representing the Sports Betting Alliance.

By voice vote, the Select Committee adopted amendments to strike "casino" wherever it appeared in the bill, strike "dual currency", and add "virtual currency" in the list of currencies included in the definition of "representative of value."

By a roll call vote of 6 ayes and 0 noes, the Select Committee approved 27LSO-0098, as amended, for favorable recommendation to Management Council. At the close of the meeting, the amended short title was changed to "27LSO-0098 Online sweepstakes prohibited".

27LSO-0200 Online sweepstakes authorized

Ms. Rivale reviewed 27LSO-0200 Online sweepstakes authorized, working draft 0.3, which would authorize qualifying online sweepstakes under the consumer protection statutes and exempt compliant activity from the definition of gambling. **(Appendix 6-02)** She explained that the draft would not establish WGC licensing or other regulatory requirements, but that existing consumer protection remedies would apply.

The following individuals provided public comment:

- Jonathan Downing, on behalf of VGW
- Lloyd Melnick, representing VGW
- Bill Gantz, representing VGW
- Affie Ellis, representing Bally's

The bill draft was not moved.

MEETING RECESS

There being no further business for the day, Co-chairman Kolb adjourned the meeting at 4:58 pm.

CALL TO ORDER (OCTOBER 6, 2026)

Co-chairman Lien called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m.

WYOMING GAMING REVENUE

Director Larramendy reviewed calendar year 2025 gaming revenues and distributions. He reported approximately $2.7 billion in wagering across regulated activities and projected more than $3 billion in 2026. HHR accounted for approximately $2.49 billion in handle, with distributions to the breeders' award fund, WGC, the Legislative Stabilization Reserve Account (LSRA), counties, and municipalities. He also summarized revenues from live racing, advance deposit wagering, simulcasting, skill-based amusement games, and online sports wagering. **(Appendix 12-03)**

The Select Committee discussed the costs of regulating live horse racing compared with its direct revenues. Director Larramendy estimated oversight costs exceeding $1 million. In response to questions concerning

online sports wagering, he identified statutory language permitting monthly losses to be carried forward by operators and stated that a statutory change would be required to alter that provision.

PARI-MUTUEL LEGISLATION

27LSO-0054 Pari-mutuel events-horse racing purse

Ms. Rivale reviewed 27LSO-0054 Pari-mutuel events-horse racing purse, working draft 0.6, which would require permittees to contribute not less than four-tenths of one percent (0.40%) of pari-mutuel handle to fund purses for live Wyoming horse racing under their permits. Existing permits would be subject to the requirement upon renewal. **(Appendix 12-01)**

Director Larramendy testified that purse amounts are currently negotiated between operators and horsemen's associations. He stated that the proposed requirement would be generally consistent with current practice.

Ms. Ellis and Shannon Rushton, Executive Director of Racing Operations, Bally's Cheyenne Park, provided public comment. **(Appendix 17-03)**

By voice vote, the Select Committee adopted an amendment inserting "in the prior calendar year" after "events" on page 2, line 18.

The motion to advance 27LSO-0054, as amended, failed on a roll call vote of 3 ayes and 3 noes. Senators Crago and McKeown and Co-chairman Kolb voted aye; Representatives Johnson and Webb and Co-chairman Lien voted no.

Following a break, Co-chairman Lien moved to reconsider the bill. The motion was seconded and failed by a roll call vote of 3 ayes and 3 noes. Senator Crago and Co-chairmen Kolb and Lien voted aye; Senator McKeown and Representatives Johnson and Webb voted no. The bill did not advance.

27LSO-0199 Pari-mutuel wagering fees

Ms. Rivale reviewed 27LSO-0199 Pari-mutuel wagering fees, working draft 0.4, which would increase the combined HHR fees from 1.9 percent to 2 percent. She described corresponding changes to the definition of pari-mutuel wagering and the permitted takeout. **(Appendix 12-02)**

Director Larramendy explained that additional receipts would ultimately flow to the LSRA through the existing account sweep.

A motion to advance 27LSO-0199 died for lack of a second.

SKILL-BASED AMUSEMENT GAMES

27LSO-0202 Non-compliant skill-based amusement games

Ms. Rivale reviewed 27LSO-0202 Non-compliant skill-based amusement games, working draft 0.5, which would expressly authorize WGC to order noncompliant skill-based amusement games out of service immediately while deficiencies are corrected or final action is taken. **(Appendix 16-01)** The draft would provide for contested case procedures for the orders and make a conforming change for revocations and suspensions.

Director Larramendy discussed WGC enforcement for skill-based amusement games involving missing or expired decals, games exceeding statutory wager limits, and games moved without proper notices. He explained that temporary shutdowns were a less intrusive alternative to removal from Wyoming or seizure in a criminal case. He stated that WGC sought express statutory authority for temporary out of service orders.

The Select Committee discussed decal replacement, operator responsibilities, grace periods, existing rules, and whether statutory changes were necessary.

Katharine Wilkinson and Jonathan Downing, representing Cowboy Skill and Pace-O-Matic, provided public comment.

The bill draft was not moved.

CHARITABLE RAFFLES AND DRAWINGS

Research on progressive raffles

Ms. Schaeffer reviewed research concerning the authorization and regulation of progressive raffles in Colorado, Illinois, Michigan, Nebraska, and New York. She described the applicable regulatory entities, eligible organizations, licensing requirements, game restrictions, prize limits, and thresholds for licensing exemptions**. (Appendix 17-01)**

The Select Committee discussed Queen of Hearts and other progressive raffle formats, local approval, licensing procedures, and the potential effects of large progressive raffles on smaller charitable organizations. In response to questions, Ms. Schaeffer explained that the research addressed statutes and rules generally. Co-chairman Kolb emphasized that the pending bill draft on charitable raffles would not authorize progressive raffles.

27LSO-0093 Charitable raffles and drawings

Ms. Rivale reviewed 27LSO-0093 Charitable raffles and drawings, working draft 0.4, which was limited to revising the existing exemption for charitable raffles and drawings. **(Appendix 17-02)** The draft would require that net proceeds used for charitable purposes equal at least 50 percent of gross receipts and would require cancellation and refunds if receipts were insufficient to satisfy that requirement. She also presented optional staff-comment language defining "drawing" requested by a member of the committee.

Director Larramendy testified concerning the potential effects of the legislation.

Paul Unti, representing the Office Saloon in Gillette, provided public comment.

By voice vote, the Select Committee adopted an amendment incorporating the definition of "drawing" proposed in the staff comment on page 3, lines 5 through 10.

The Select Committee discussed the proposed charitable minimum and its potential effect on expenses associated with 50-50 raffles. The motion to advance 27LSO-0093, as amended, failed on a roll call vote of 3 ayes and 3 noes. Senator Crago and Co-chairmen Kolb and Lien voted aye; Senator McKeown and Representatives Johnson and Webb voted no.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Co-chairman Lien adjourned the meeting at 2:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Representative Jayme Lien

Committee Meeting Materials Index

Index Number	Agenda Item	Document Description	Document Provider
1-01		Agenda	Legislative Service Office (LSO)
1-02		Sign-In Sheet	LSO
1-03	Call to Order	Meeting Minutes, July 30	LSO
2-01	Problem Gambling Prevention and Treatment	Research Memo: Problem Gambling Funding and Activities	LSO
2-02	Problem Gambling Prevention and Treatment	27LSO-0096 v0.5 Responsible gaming and problem gambling prevention funding.	LSO
4-01	Wyoming Gaming Commission Structure and Operations	27LSO-0201 v0.4 Gaming-background checks.	LSO
6-01	Online Casinos and Sweepstakes	27LSO-0098 v0.2 Online casinos and sweepstakes prohibited.	LSO
6-02	Online Casinos and Sweepstakes	27LSO-0200 v0.3 Online sweepstakes authorized.	LSO
12-01	Parimutuel Legislation	27LSO-0054 v0.6 Pari-mutuel events-horse racing purse.	LSO
12-02	Parimutuel Legislation	27LSO-0199 v0.4 Pari-mutuel wagering fees.	LSO
12-03	Parimutuel Legislation	WGC 2025 Annual Report	LSO
16-01	Skill Based Amusement Gaming	27LSO-0202 v0.5 Non-compliant skill-based amusement games.	LSO

17-01	Charitable Raffles and Drawings	Research Memo: Authorized Progressive Raffles in Other States	LSO
17-02	Charitable Raffles and Drawings	27LSO-0093 v0.4 Charitable raffles and drawings.	LSO
17-03	Charitable Raffles and Drawings	Public Comment	Affie Ellis