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## Hold hearing before hiring lottery firm

**SCRANTON TIMES-TRIBUNE Editorial:** ..The administration wants to convert the lottery to private management. Private companies are accountable to their stockholders rather than Pennsylvania citizens...

Camelot Global Service PA LLC, a British company, was the sole bidder to respond to the administration's request for proposals to operate the

lottery. Its proposal said it would generate \$34 billion in profits for the lottery over 20 years. Part of that would come from online keno games, which would establish 24-hour-a-day gambling, outside casinos, for the benefit of the lottery.

That, in itself, constitutes such a vast expansion of gambling that it should require legislative hearings, regardless of what the law says about the administration's authority...

## County Commissioners should practice 'benign neglect'

The Lancaster County Convention Center Authority projects a deficit of \$1,500,000 in 2013, and that is without setting aside a reserve for renovation and replacements which would amount to say another \$1,000,000. On August 22, 2012, Commissioner Scott Martin suggested a comprehensive plan towards solvency for the Lancaster Convention Center.

The Martin Plan was summarized as follows by a contributor to *NewsLanc*:

**1) PDCVB: They agree to live without the 20% of the bed tax that they are currently living without and are unlikely to get back. If future tax proceeds got really good (unlikely), there might be certain triggers that would kick in and get them some money.**

**2) LCCCA: Reduce expenses \$35K/year.**

**3) City: Throws in \$100K annually OR guarantees some portion of the remaining debt.**

**4) PSP: Increases F&B royalty from 5% to 12%.**

**5) Well Fargo: Reduce letter of credit fee by 60 basic points [0.006] from 1/1/'13 for the term of the agreement (presumably his 5-year agreement).**

**NET PROCEEDS: \$1.7 million annually.**

So far, each of the above participants has renounced or failed to accept the recommendation. Moreover, the Lancaster Newspapers, a partner with S. Dale High's company as equitable owner of the adjoining Marriott Hotel, has also opposed the proposal.

Yet each, including the Lancaster Newspapers, played a disgraceful role in ramming through the project despite the ongoing objection of the then sitting County Commissioners and 78% of the public (per a [Fox 43 poll](#)). Moreover, they blatantly disregarded the accurate projections of the Commissioner sponsored [PKF feasibility study](#) and its advice to downsize the project or find a different use for the site.

Each is unwilling to share in any sacrifice and instead requests that the County Commissioners increase the Hotel Room Sales Tax, thus irresponsibly further shifting the burden onto countywide hotel owners who, for the vast majority, do not derive benefits from the Convention Center /

Marriott Hotel white elephant. In fact, the Project has displaced a large amount of traditional business from Rt. 30 East.

Chairman Scott Martin courageously stuck his neck out by proposing a well thought through, balanced plan whereby the parties of interest in the Convention Center would make proportionate sacrifices to overcome the \$1,500,000 deficit and help get the Convention Center through the next five years.

Given the rejection of the Martin Plan by the parties, there is but one sensible future role for commissioners Scott Martin, Dennis Stuckey and Craig Martin to pursue: 'Benign neglect.'

**Major convention center events book two or three years in advance and are not interested in**

**contracting for venues that do not have sufficient funds for proper maintenance if indeed they will continue to be in business. And as the Convention Center goes, so goes the Marriott Hotel!**

Sure, the County is on the hook for a partial guarantee of Convention Center debt. But that only will occur after the Convention Center operations are first bled dry.

Let the parties who foisted the Convention Center Project on us deal with its financial problems, or, more colloquially, 'stew in their own juice.' If they want to go over the April debt refinancing cliff, let them. Each has a lot to lose. They'll figure something out

## **How gerrymandering helped GOP keep control of House**

**PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE:** ...since the GOP not only flipped the House in 2010 but totally controlled 21 state governments, including Pennsylvania's, it allowed the party to master post-census congressional redistricting around the country. On Nov. 6, Democrats won the popular vote by 500,000 votes nationally but took just 201 of the 435 U.S. House seats. In Pennsylvania, Republicans took hold of 13 of 18 congressional seats while being outpaced by 75,000 total votes. Mr. Obama won 53 percent of the state's vote, but Democratic candidates won 28 percent of the seats.

**"Pennsylvania is arguably the most distorted map in the country in terms of comparing the vote share and the seats won," said Nicholas Goedert, a researcher at Washington University in St. Louis who focuses on redistricting issues.**

The results led Democrats such as state Sen. Daylin Leach of Montgomery County to complain that the state's districts were excessively manipulated by the

GOP and the ability to gerrymander should be replaced next decade with nonpartisan methods of redrawing district lines...

**INTELLIGENCER JOURNAL / NEW ERA: Editorial headline: "Burma Save"**

**WATCHDOG:** *Very funny title, but you have to be 70 or older to understand the pun.*

*Before the Interstate Highway System, funny series of road side signs used to be grouped along the highways with the last one identifying the sponsor as "Burma Shave."*

*Example: "Every shaver / Now can snore / Six more minutes / Than before / By using / Burma-Shave"*

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