

MGM Springfield reports continued success in diversity hiring

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SPRINGFIELD -- MGM Springfield, preparing to open its casino on Aug. 24, presented its latest quarterly report on Thursday, including statistics showing that it continues to exceed its goals for diversity hiring and contracting for the \$960 million construction project.

The report, for the three months ending March 31, was shared with the Massachusetts Gaming Commission during a meeting in Boston.

Commission member Gayle Cameron praised the latest report, saying it continues past trends.

"You are consistently good with your diversity numbers," Cameron said. "It's always encouraging to see."

Statistics for the various subcontractors working on the project show that 21.43 percent of the workforce are minorities compared with the project goal of at least 15.3 percent, said Brian Packer, MGM Springfield's vice president of construction and development.

In addition, 8.86 percent of the workforce are women, compared with the goal of 6.9 percent, and 9.63 percent are veterans compared with the goal of 8 percent, Packer said.

Regarding construction and design commitments, 21.7 percent have gone to women-owned businesses, as compared with the project goal of 10 percent, Packer said.

Further, 7.9 percent of the commitments have gone to minority-owned businesses, compared with the goal of 5 percent, and 6.7 percent of the commitments have gone to veteran-owned businesses, as compared with the goal of 2 percent, he said.

MGM Springfield listed 109 companies that have done construction work on the casino, and 42 companies that have done design and consulting work. Of the construction companies, 79 are from Massachusetts.

MGM Springfield President Michael Mathis told the Gaming Commission that hiring efforts for casino operations are going well.

The company invited 700 job seekers to the MassMutual Center on May 8-9 for the first two of four mass-hiring events, with additional events scheduled in June.

Mathis said there is a strong focus on hiring of Springfield residents for casino jobs, with a goal of at least 35 percent local hiring.

He said the hiring process is "exciting times," as the the filling of 3,000 jobs gives a sense of what MGM is trying to do to promote economic development and is "changing lives."