



August 28, 2018

*Via First Class Mail and Email*

Chairman Robert Martin  
Morongo Band of Mission Indians  
12700 Pumarra Road  
Banning, CA 92220

**Re: Review of Financing Documents for Morongo Band of Mission Indians**

Dear Chairman Martin:

This letter responds to your July 31, 2018 and August 9, 2018 requests for the National Indian Gaming Commission's Office of General Counsel to review financing documents between the Morongo Band of Mission Indians (Borrower), U.S. Bank National Association (Collateral Trustee) and Barclays Capital Inc. (Placement Agent/Initial Purchaser). Specifically, you have asked for my opinion whether the documents are management contracts requiring the NIGC Chair's approval under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act. You also asked for my opinion whether the financing documents violate IGRA's requirement that the Tribe have the sole proprietary interest in its gaming activity.

In my review, I considered the following submissions (collectively, "the Financing Documents") all of which are unexecuted, but were represented to be in substantially final form:

- Note Purchase Agreement ("CHI 69249650v16" in bottom left corner);
- Collateral Trust Agreement ("4135-7607-4518.8" in bottom left corner);
- Security Agreement ("4823-3662-6540.11" in bottom left corner);
- Indenture ("CHI 69221262v6" and "4154-4879-2083.13" in bottom left corner);
- Deposit Account Control Agreement ("4827-6112-2158.9" in bottom left corner); and
- Purchase Agreement ("4124-4270-5942.5" in bottom left corner)

The Financing Documents contain terms similar to other agreements the Office of General Counsel has already reviewed and analyzed, which are available on the NIGC's website. Applying the same analysis here, it is my opinion that the Financing Documents are not management contracts and do not require the approval of the NIGC Chair. It is also my opinion that they do not violate IGRA's sole proprietary interest requirement.

It is my understanding that the drafts are represented to be in substantially final form, and if the Financing Documents change in any material way prior to closing or are inconsistent with

assumptions made herein, this opinion shall not apply. Further, this opinion is limited to the Financing Documents listed above. This opinion does not include or extend to any other agreements not submitted for review.

Please note that it is my intent that this letter be released to the public through the NIGC's website. If you have any objection to this disclosure, please provide a written statement explaining the grounds for the objection and highlighting the information that you believe should be withheld.<sup>1</sup> If you object on the grounds that the information qualifies as confidential commercial information subject to withholding under Exemption Four of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA),<sup>2</sup> please be advised that the information was voluntarily submitted and, as such, that any withholding should be analyzed in accordance with the standard set forth in *Critical Mass Energy Project v. NRC*.<sup>3</sup> Any claim of confidentiality should also be supported with "a statement or certification by an officer or authorized representative of the submitter."<sup>4</sup> Please submit any written objection to FOIASubmitterReply@nigc.gov **within thirty (30) days of the date of this letter**. After this time elapses, the letter will be made public and objections will no longer be considered.<sup>5</sup> If you need any additional guidance regarding potential grounds for withholding, please see the United States Department of Justice's Guide to the Freedom of Information Act at <http://www.justice.gov/oip/dojguide-freedom-information-act-0>.

If you have any questions, please contact NIGC Legal Fellow Melissa Thevenot at (202) 632-0294 or by email at [melissa\\_thevenot@nigc.gov](mailto:melissa_thevenot@nigc.gov).

Sincerely,



Michael Hoenig  
General Counsel

Cc: April C. Wilson, Legal Assistant, [awilson@morongo-nsn.gov](mailto:awilson@morongo-nsn.gov)  
Kimberly Cluff, In-House General Counsel, [kcluff@morongo-nsn.gov](mailto:kcluff@morongo-nsn.gov)  
Tony Hughes, Barclays Capital Inc., [tony.hughes@barclays.com](mailto:tony.hughes@barclays.com)  
Naomi J. Barnes, Kutak Rock LLP, [naomi.barnes@kutakrock.com](mailto:naomi.barnes@kutakrock.com)

---

<sup>1</sup> 25 C.F.R. § 517.7(c).

<sup>2</sup> 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(4).

<sup>3</sup> 975 F.2d 871 (D.C. Cir. 1992).

<sup>4</sup> 25 C.F.R. § 517.7(c).

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*