

**SPECIAL MEETING
GENESEE COUNTY LEGISLATURE
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2024 AT 3:00 PM
OLD COURT HOUSE, 7 MAIN ST. BATAVIA, NY
LEGISLATIVE CHAMBERS**

The Genesee County Legislature met in a special meeting on Thursday, November 14, 2024 at 3:00 p.m. in the Old Court House in the Legislative Chambers, 7 Main Street, Batavia, New York. Legislature Chair Rochelle Stein called the meeting to order at 3:00 P.M.

Clerk of the Legislature announced roll call to establish a quorum with 8 in attendance and 1 absence (Legislator Torrey).

In attendance: Clerk of the Legislature Lisa Casey, County Attorney Mark Boylan, County Manager Matt Landers, City of Batavia Manager Rachael Tabelski, Council President Jankowski, Council Member Briggs, McGinnis, Richmond and Bialkowski. Western Regional Off Track Betting (WROTB) President and CEO Byron Brown, Chief of Staff Steven Casey, Director of Communications Michael DeGeorge, WROTB Board Member Chuck Zambito, Joanne Beck with the Batavian, Brian Quinn and Mark Gutman from The Daily News, Alecia Kaus from Video News Service and Mike Petinella.

The newly hired president and CEO of WROTB/Batavia Downs, Mr. Byron Brown met with the Genesee County Legislature and members of City of Batavia Council on November 14, 2024, where he demonstrated his preparedness and commitment to the community. Legislative Chairwoman Stein acknowledged Mr. Brown for his familiarity with key facts and figures. She raised concerns about the salaries of the new leadership team, which amount to \$615,000, exceeding the annual revenue from video lottery terminal (VLT) money for Genesee County. This issue will continue to be discussed.

Mr. Brown, who has an extensive background in public service, including terms as Buffalo's mayor and state senator, emphasized the importance of Batavia Downs' revenue to 17 local municipalities. Since its establishment in 1974, the facility has contributed over \$260 million, with more than \$13 million going to Genesee County. Mr. Brown expressed his commitment to growing these revenues and protecting the 430 local jobs at Batavia Downs.

Mr. Brown also addressed concerns about public safety, particularly in areas around the track, and assured legislators that safety would be a priority. He highlighted his history of supporting law enforcement and pledged close collaboration with security teams and local authorities. Additionally, he discussed potential improvements, such as a hotel expansion and measures to ensure concerts comply with city noise ordinances.

Another key issue was VLT revenue, where Mr. Brown acknowledged that Batavia Downs is not currently at "parity" with other properties, and he plans to advocate for more equitable treatment at the state level. He emphasized the importance of maintaining good relationships with lawmakers to secure necessary changes.

City of Batavia Council members, Eugene Jankowski Jr. and Bob Bialkowski expressed concerns about VLT distribution and its financial impact on the city. Mr. Brown assured them he would work to address these challenges and continue to advocate for the county's interests. Overall, the meeting highlighted Byron Brown's thorough preparation and plans for the future of Batavia Downs, with a focus on community engagement, fiscal responsibility, and public safety.

Chair Stein adjourned the meeting at 3:50 p.m.