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Shore Group to Push For Legal Gambling

By S. WILLIAM WHITE
Of The Bulletin Staff

Atlantic City — A local group of business, civic and political leaders intends to "push vigorously" for legalized casino-type gambling in this resort, according to Meyer I. Segal, former president of Ventnor City Council.

He said the group will hold a public forum to discuss the question soon after the new year begins.

Legalized gambling has been talked about here for many years. Segal said his group has had the matter under study for the last several months and has held several meetings on the subject. The last meeting was held last week and was attended by some 20 persons.

Others Interested

Along with Segal, who is a local furniture company executive, others who have publicly expressed interest in the gambling operations are Maxwell Goldberg, coowner of Howard Johnson Hotel, and Arnold Orsatti, local restaurant owner and publisher of a Philadelphia Italian-American newspaper.

Orsatti said the matter has been discussed with the state attorney general.

The group was informed the following steps must be taken: the state legislature and governor must approve and a state-wide referendum must be held. If the voters approve, the Atlantic City commissioners could then authorize the casino-type operations.

Similar to Las Vegas

Segal said the casinos would be operated similar to the way the ones in Las Vegas are run. In Las Vegas there are roulette, dice and blackjack games, along with slot machines.

He said the gambling would help relieve Atlantic County taxpayers and would provide revenue for additional educational facilities.

A percentage of the money would go to the county as well as to the state. The operations

would be controlled by a state gambling commission.

Segal said he is hopeful the matter will come before the Legislature next year but it "would be presumptuous" to set a target date now.

Issue Has Been Discussed

The issue has been discussed with state and local political leaders, he said, "but I do not feel I should disclose their names."

"They were very favorably inclined," he added.

John Siracusa, Jr., president of the Greater Atlantic City Chamber of Commerce, said the executive committee of this group will discuss the gambling issue shortly. The committee will decide whether it will be brought before the board of directors at their next meeting Dec. 18, he said. There are 1,000 members in the chamber group.

The Atlantic City and the New Jersey Hotel-Motel Associations are also expected to study the matter.

Brick Twp. Man Gets War Citation

Island Heights— Lt. Col. Robert V. Keller, a 17-year Marine Corps veteran, has been awarded the Legion of Merit for meritorious combat service in Vietnam.

Keller, a father of five, now stationed in Quantico, Va., is the son of Mrs. Katherine Keller, of 50 Neil av., Brick Township. His wife is the former Mary Ann Hartnett, here.

He received the award Friday for "exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service as commanding officer of the 3d Combined Action Group of the 3d Marine Amphibious Force in Vietnam from August, 1967, through August, 1968."

Keller also has been awarded a Purple Heart and a Navy Commendation medal.