# BEFORE THE

## CALIFORNIA GAMBLING CONTROL COMMISSION

In the Matter of the Application for a Key Employee License Regarding:

TOM WILLIS BOWLING, JR.

CGCC Case No. CGCC-2018-0125-6A BGC Case No. BGC-HQ2018-00011SL

### **DECISION AND ORDER**

Applicant.

Hearing Date: November 8, 2018 Time: 10:00 a.m.

This matter was heard by the California Gambling Control Commission (Commission) pursuant to Business and Professions Code sections 19870 and 19871 and Title 4, California Code of Regulations (CCR) section 12060(b), in Sacramento, California, on November 8, 2018.

Paras Modha, Deputy Attorney General, State of California, represented complainant Stephanie Shimazu, Chief of the Bureau of Gambling Control (Bureau), Department of Justice, State of California.

Tom Willis Bowling, JR. was present and represented himself during the hearing.

During the administrative hearing, Presiding Officer Jason Pope took official notice of the following: (1) Notice of Evidentiary Hearing and attachments; (2) the Bureau's Statement of Reasons; (3) Applicant's Notice of Defense; (4) the Commission's Notice of Rescheduled Hearing; and (5) the Conclusion of Prehearing Conference Letter.

During the administrative hearing, Presiding Officer Jason Pope accepted into evidence the following exhibits offered by the Bureau:

(1) Disclosure letter to Applicant dated August 29, 2018; Statement to Respondent dated August 29, 2018; Statement of Reasons dated August 29, 2018; Notice of Hearing, without attachments, dated April 11, 2018; copy of Bus. & Prof. Code, §§ 19870 & 19871; Copy of Cal. Code. Regs., tit. 4, § 12060; Certificate of Service dated August 29, 2018; Notice of Defense, signed February 9, 2018; E-mail dated September 21, 2018, and letter dated September 19, 2018, from Applicant withdrawing application; Withdrawal of Designated Agent Parrinello dated

1	(24)	David Tom v. S&S Gaming (Case No. VC046384) case file, Bates Nos. 0904-
2	2064.	
3		During the administrative hearing, Presiding Officer Jason Pope accepted into
4	evidence the following exhibits offered by Applicant:	
5	(A)	Nelson Rose summary;
6	(B)	Nelson Rose Wikipedia results;
7	(C)	Nelson Rose summary;
8	(D)	Statement of Jody Wang;
9	(E)	Subpoena requesting testimony from Stephanie Shimazu on November 8, and 9,
10	2018 before the Commission issued by Applicant;	
11	(F)	October 16, 2018, disclosures by Applicant to Paras Modha;
12	(G)	Summary of Applicant's charitable giving, community service, and volunteer
13	work, and supporting documents;	
14	(H)	Personal Reference Letters from (1) Paul Chilleo, (2) Leo Chu, (3) Will Espin, (3)
15	Taro Ito, (4) Nelson Rose, and (5) Gretchen Von Helms;	
16	(I)	Misc. Documents: (1) May 6, 2010 Letter from San Jose Police Department
17	confirming Applicant's key employee license application was withdrawn without prejudice; (2)	
18	October 15, 2018 statement by Applicant regarding conversation with Richard Teng; (3) March 6,	
19	1997 correspondence from the Assembly of California Legislature, Committee on Government	
20	Organizations to Applicant;	
21	(J)	Articles on Effect of Age and Memory: (1) Memory & Aging (2) Age-Related
22	Memory Los	s; What's Normal, What's Not, and When to Seek Help;
23	(K) C	October 24, 2018 email from Applicant to Paras Modha disclosing witness Bill
24	Vanderberg and October 24, 2018 email from Taro Ito;	
25	(L) October 28, 2018, Emailed statement by James Preston;	
26	(M) October 30, 2018 statement by Ronnie Blackwell;	
27	(N) Reference letter by Julianna Smith;	
28		

Background Investigation Report to the Commission recommending Applicant's Application be denied on the basis that he failed to provide information and provided misleading information to the Bureau.

- 7. On or about January 10, 2017, Applicant's interim key employee license was cancelled by the Commission pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 4, section 12354, subdivision (e)(5).
- 8. On January 25, 2018, the Commission referred consideration of Applicant's Application to an evidentiary hearing to be held under the provisions of California Code of Regulations, title 4, section 12060.
- 9. On February 12, 2018, the Commission received Applicant's Notice of Defense, dated February 9, 2018.
- 10. On August 30, 2018, the Commission received the Bureau's Statement of Reasons, which alleged four causes for denial: (1) pattern of unsuitable decisions as a key employee at Club Caribe; (2) making misleading statements to the Bureau; (3) failure to disclose prior employment; and (4) material misrepresentation regarding prior ownership of entities.

### Fraudulent Check Cashing by Patron at Club Caribe

- 11. At the hearing, the Bureau admitted evidence that between November 2004 and May 2005, while Applicant was the general manager of Club Caribe, he allowed Ruolon "Jenny" Huang to cash multiple cashiers and third-party personal checks issued by David Tom, totaling \$532,000, for purposes of gambling at Club Caribe. Ms. Huang's check cashing activity resulted in a criminal investigation, criminal charges against Ms. Huang, and the filing of a lawsuit alleging fraud by Club Caribe, Ms. Huang, and Applicant.
- 12. The Bureau's Statement of Reasons alleges that Applicant made misleading statements to the Bureau relating to Jenny Huang's check cashing activities at Club Caribe Casino. First, Applicant allegedly misrepresented to the Bureau the amount of the checks cashed by stating that the cashier's checks totaled *over* \$200,000, rather than stating the actual amount of \$532,000.
- 13. The second alleged misrepresentation was that Applicant told the Bureau that he contacted David Tom, the maker of the checks, prior to allowing one of the checks to be cashed.

However, during the course of the aforementioned civil fraud lawsuit, it was considered an undisputed fact that Applicant did not contact David Tom prior to allowing Ms. Huang to cash the checks.

- 14. The Bureau admitted evidence that The Department of Justice, Division of Gambling Control (DGC), investigated the incident in 2005 to determine whether Applicant was involved with the fraud scheme that was perpetrated against Mr. Tom. The DGC Investigation Report concluded that Jenny Huang was the person responsible for defrauding Mr. Tom and that Applicant did not appear to have any knowledge regarding the fraud scheme. The investigation also found that the casino had filled out Cash Transaction Reports as required by law in relation to the transactions.
- 15. Applicant disclosed the lawsuit, *David Tom, by and through his guardian ad litem,*Dennis Tom v. S&S Gaming, Inc. dba Club Caribe Casino, Ruolon "Jenny Huang, Tom Bowling,

  Los Angeles County Superior Court Case No. VC046384, on his Application and provided the

  Bureau with a copy of the settlement agreement.
- 16. Applicant testified that the lawsuit was settled by the parties with no admission of guilt by defendants.
- 17. Applicant testified that prior to cashing the third party checks issued to Club Caribe by David Tom on behalf of Ms. Huang, he contacted the issuing bank to ensure that the checks were legitimate.
  - 18. Applicant testified that he did not believe Jenny Huang had a gambling problem.
- 19. Applicant testified that Ms. Huang was young and attractive, and he assumed that Mr. Tom was her "wealthy uncle" and provided her with funds to gamble. Applicant further testified that on one occasion, he contacted Mr. Tom by phone to confirm that he wanted Club Caribe to accept the check and issue the funds to Ms. Huang for gambling at Club Caribe.
- 20. Applicant admitted a witness statement by Jody Wang stating that she was present at Club Caribe when Applicant spoke to David Tom on the phone.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Applicant testified that the term "wealthy uncle" in his mind is similar to the term "sugar daddy."

- 21. Applicant testified that during the course of the lawsuit, he did not recall that he had made a phone call to David Tom. However, after the litigation was resolved, he recalled making the phone call. Applicant testified that if he had recalled making the call during the litigation, it would have been helpful to his case and he regretted that he had not recalled it at the time.
- 22. Applicant testified that he told the Bureau that Ms. Huang cashed over \$200,000 in checks because he could not recall the precise total because the incident had occurred so long ago.
- 23. The Commission finds Applicant's testimony that he did not recall the phone conversation with David Tom during the lawsuit, but later recalled it in relation to his key employee application, to be credible.
- 24. Further, the Commission finds that Applicant's statement that Jenny Huang cashed checks in an amount "over \$200,000" to be a truthful statement. Additionally, Applicant's conduct of disclosing the litigation and settlement agreement further support his position that he was not attempting to mislead the Bureau regarding the amount of money at issue in the case.

### Unapproved Video Arcade Machines at Club Caribe

- 25. On or about March 9, 2005, Applicant, as the general manager of Club Caribe, entered into a "Location Agreement" with Golden State Amusement Company for the purpose of allowing the casino to offer cash prizes to its customers for playing "coin-operated" devices that may violate Penal Code sections 337J, 330b, and/or 330.
- 26. According to a DGC Investigative Report, on May 2, 2006, DGC agents conducted an unannounced site inspection of Club Caribe. During the inspection it was determined that Club Caribe was using three unapproved video arcade machines to offer \$50 high score contests to patrons. Club Caribe did not have Bureau permission to operate these games. During the inspection, the Bureau learned that Applicant had authorized the use of the video arcade machines, but that he was no longer an employee of the casino as of March 23, 2006.
- 27. According to the DGC Investigative Report, on May 2, 2006, the DGC investigator contacted Applicant by phone. Applicant told the investigator that he believed that the games were permissible because they were games of skill. However, the DGC Investigative Report

discussed that the games played as part of the \$50 contest were more likely games of chance, including games that simulated card games, such as Pairs and Triple 11's.

- 28. On July 13, 2006, the DGC determined that the video arcade machine "could not be classified as a slot machine as defined in the penal code. The machine was returned to Club Caribe and the club manager was admonished that payment of winnings by the bar inside the casino may violate state law precluding house-banked games inside cardrooms and place Club Caribe's gambling license in jeopardy." According to the DGC report, the case was closed.
- 29. Applicant testified that the DGC found that the machines were not slot machines and returned them to Club Caribe. Applicant testified that he does not know if Club Caribe continued to offer cash prizes for the arcade games because he left for another job.
- 30. Applicant testified that the video arcade machines were used to play a variety of games. He testified that the machines featured video games similar to Pong, Tetris, or other games that you would find in an arcade or pizza place.
- 31. Applicant testified that he did not seek Bureau approval for use of the video arcade machines at Club Caribe and indicated in his testimony that he did not think that he was required to.
- 32. The Commission is concerned by Applicant's testimony on this issue, which forms the basis for the conditions this order places on his license. The games at issue were not approved by the Bureau and the cardroom should not have paid out cash prizes on the games. Additionally, Applicant's testimony regarding the practice of the house awarding cash prizes for play on arcade machines did not demonstrate that he perceived any wrongdoing on his behalf in relation to this incident or that he would do anything different if confronted with a similar situation in the future.

#### Hollywood Park Discrimination Lawsuit

33. The Bureau admitted evidence that while Applicant was employed as the Vice President of Hollywood Park Casinos, the cardroom was found by a jury to have engaged in discriminatory employment practices at various times between April of 1997 through December of 1999, in the case of *Bill Vanderberg v. Hollywood Park, Inc., et al.* (Super. Ct. L.A. County,

2000, No. BC222811).

The evidence admitted regarding this lawsuit, was insufficient for the Commission to establish whether Applicant discriminated against Hollywood Park employees in the course of his work as a key employee.

#### Failure to Disclose Prior Employment with Club Caribe

- 34. The Bureau alleges that Applicant failed to disclose his employment with Club Caribe as the general manager from February of 2003 to February of 2006 and as a consultant from March 2006 to November 2006 on his 2016 Application.
- 35. The Bureau asked Applicant to explain why he did not disclose his employment as a general manager and as a consultant at Club Caribe on his Application. Applicant responded to the Bureau on August 10, 2014, stating that regarding his employment as a general manager, it was a mistake to omit this information and he apologized. Regarding his consultant work for Club Caribe, Applicant responded that he did not recall this work "to the best of my memory."
- 36. Applicant testified that he thought the general manager position was outside the 10-year period when he filled out the 2016 Application, but he was off by a few months. The Bureau Report confirmed that Applicant's employment as the general manager was only two months from being outside the specified 10-year period.
- 37. Regarding his brief work as consultant for Club Caribe, Applicant testified that he could not recall this work and he did not think the Bureau's findings were accurate until he consulted his own tax records and saw that he was issued a 1099 from Club Caribe in 2006. Applicant testified that during this time period he worked at Bay 101, but he must have provided some consulting to Club Caribe, possibly by phone.
- 38. Applicant testified that when he retired he purged many of his older records and therefore when he decided to return to work, he had to fill the key employee application out by memory. Applicant testified that he explained to the Bureau on multiple occasions that he did not have the benefit of his records to use in filling out the Application.
  - 39. Applicant disclosed his employment as a general manager with Club Caribe in his 2003

and 2004 key employee license applications and referenced the position on his 2016 Application in portions other than the employment history section, including in sections 6 and 7 (litigation and other licensing information).

40. The Commission finds that Applicant's testimony regarding his reasons for not disclosing his prior employment and consulting work at Club Caribe on his most recent application was credible. Further, the fact that he previously disclosed this employment and still referenced the employment with Club Caribe in other portions of the 2016 Application indicates that he was not attempting to mislead the Bureau.

### Misrepresentation of Ownership Structure of Cudahy Gaming, Inc.

- 41. Between January 2003 to February 2006, Applicant was the president and held 20 percent ownership interest in Cudahy Gaming, Inc. (Cudahy) a wholly owned subsidiary of Casino Services, Inc. (Casino Services).
- 42. In Applicant's 2003 key employee license application (to be a key employee at Club Caribe Casino) and his 2004 application for a state gambling license (to be a shareholder of Club Caribe Casino), Applicant stated that he owned 20 percent of the shares of Casino Services and Cudahy, and identified John Schipani as his business partner and 80 percent shareholder of both entities.
- 43. However, on Applicant's 2016 Application, he indicated that Game Source, LLP was the owner of the other 80 percent of Casino Services. The Bureau wrote to Applicant to inquire about the discrepancy.
- 44. On or about February 15, 2017, Applicant responded to the Bureau stating that Gaming Source, LLP was the owner of 80 percent of the shares of both Cudahy and Casino Services, and that John Schipani never had an ownership interest in Cudahy or Casino Services.
- 45. Applicant testified that without the benefit of his older records, he had simply forgotten that John Schipani was his partner in Cudahy and Casino Services. Applicant testified that he has not interacted with John Shipani since 2004, and that was for a brief 3-4 month period.
  - 46. Applicant testified that he had disclosed his affiliation with Mr. Shipani on prior

applications and did not intend to mislead the Bureau.

47. The Commission finds that Applicant's testimony regarding his reasons for not accurately disclosing the ownership structure of Cudahy to be credible and does not warrant denial of his Application.

# Applicant's Character

- 48. James Roy McKee testified that Applicant assisted him when he was the General Manager of Seven Mile Casino. Mr. McKee testified that when he began his tenure at Seven Mile Casino, the cardroom had recently been raided and shut down by the Bureau.
- 49. Mr. McKee testified that in a very short time, Applicant created a culture of compliance that is still present at Seven Mile Casino today. Mr. McKee testified that Applicant is "Mr. Compliance" and is an honest person.
- 50. Applicant admitted a letter from the Executive Director of the California Council on Problem Gambling stating that Applicant served on the Board as a member in good standing for a number of years and made a number of personal contributions to the Council before resigning in 2004.
- 51. Applicant admitted multiple additional character references that attest to the fact that Applicant is dependable and that he is generally honest and trustworthy and viewed by others who have managed or currently manage cardrooms as an asset to the industry.
- 52. Applicant testified that he was previously the president of the board of directors of a Catholic school in Inglewood, California. Applicant testified that he volunteered many hours of his time and made financial contributions to the school and assisted the school with becoming financially stable.
- 53. Applicant testified that he also volunteered a significant amount of time as a member of the Board of Directors of the California Council on Problem Gambling and as a member of the Little Hoover Subcommittee on Gambling in California.
- 54. Applicant testified that has worked in the gaming industry since approximately 1972 and has never been disciplined by regulators or charged with a crime.

- 55. Applicant testified that he was not currently employed as a key employee or seeking out a position, but he wants to "clear" his name and maintain a good reputation in the industry.
- 56. Applicant was cooperative with the Bureau and timely responded to multiple requests for information and documents during the course of the Bureau's investigation.
- 57. All documentary and testimonial evidence submitted by the parties that is not specifically addressed in this Decision and Order was considered but not used by the Commission in making its determination on Applicant's Application.
  - 58. The matter was submitted for Commission consideration on November 8, 2018.

#### LEGAL CONCLUSIONS

- 1. Division 1.5 of the Business and Professions Code, the provisions of which govern the denial of licenses on various grounds, does not apply to licensure decisions made by the Commission under the Gambling Control Act. Business and Professions Code section 476(a).
- 2. Public trust and confidence can only be maintained by strict and comprehensive regulation of all persons, locations, practices, associations, and activities related to the operation of lawful gambling establishments and the manufacture and distribution of permissible gambling equipment. Business and Professions Code section 19801(h).
- 3. At an evidentiary hearing pursuant to Business and Professions Code sections 19870 and 19871 and Title 4, CCR section 12060(b), the burden of proof rests with the applicant to prove his or her qualifications to receive any license under the Gambling Control Act. Title 4, CCR section 12060(i). Business and Professions Code section 19856(a).
- 4. An application to receive a license constitutes a request for a determination of the applicant's general character, integrity, and ability to participate in, engage in, or be associated with, controlled gambling. Business and Professions Code section 19856(b).
- 5. In reviewing an application for any license, the Commission shall consider whether issuance of the license is inimical to public health, safety, or welfare, and whether issuance of the license will undermine public trust that the gambling operations with respect to which the license would be issued are free from criminal and dishonest elements and would be conducted honestly.

which must be based upon either newly discovered evidence or legal authorities that 1 could not reasonably have been presented before the Commission's issuance of the decision or at the hearing on the matter, or upon other good cause which the 2 Commission may decide, in its sole discretion, merits reconsideration. 3 Business and Professions Code section 19870, subdivision (e) provides: 4 A decision of the commission denying a license or approval, or imposing any condition or restriction on the grant of a license or approval may be reviewed by 5 petition pursuant to Section 1085 of the Code of Civil Procedure. Section 1094.5 of the Code of Civil Procedure shall not apply to any judicial proceeding described in 6 the foregoing sentence, and the court may grant the petition only if the court finds that the action of the commission was arbitrary and capricious, or that the action 7 exceeded the commission's jurisdiction. 8 Title 4, CCR section 12066, subsection (c) provides: 9 A decision of the Commission denying an application or imposing conditions on license shall be subject to judicial review as provided in Business and Professions Code section 10 19870, subdivision (e). Neither the right to petition for judicial review nor the time for filing the petition shall be affected by failure to seek reconsideration. 11 12 // 13 // 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 15

Decision and Order, CGCC Case No: CGCC-2018-0125-6A

#### **ORDER**

- 1. Tom Willis Bowling Jr.'s Application for a Key Employee License is GRANTED with the following conditions:
- a. Applicant must attend a training that is taught or organized by the Bureau of Gambling Control within six months of the effective date of this Decision and Order. If Applicant cannot find such a training, he may attend another training that is approved by the Bureau.
- b. Applicant shall submit to the Bureau copies of any employment or consulting agreements he enters into with gambling entities within 30 days of finalizing the agreement.

Dated: 111 19

Signature: Jim Evans, Chairman

Dated: 1/11/2019

Signature: Paula LaBrie, Commissioner

Dated: 1 11 19 Signature: Gareth Lacy, Commissioner