

Band council kills deal to bring gaming here

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want a different venue. These machines are controlled by wide area network that allows them to be placed in smaller venues like the bingo hall," he said.

Membertou, one of the most successful First Nations in Canada is already using the machines. "They brought in gaming and brought in \$8 to \$9 million a year. It's a small community. They got a conference centre, brand new hotel, building a double rink arena, all from gaming. This could be a real benefit to our community to meet infrastructure needs we have now. We have five bridges that got to be fixed right now but no government money to do it."

He said he wanted to see them go in the bingo hall and eventually the old bingo hall as an add on to developing a

conference centre.

He said local businesses would be involved in taking machines after being licensed by a revamped gaming commission with a percentage of the funds generated returned back to the community as a whole. He said Techlink wanted to build the machines at Six Nations.

But he says he is finished. "It's up to council if they want to salvage this. I am not going to break my neck anymore. I have had it. I'm done."

"They (council) say they want to do stuff, but it upsets me when we are talking sovereignty but then they come up with 'we better ask province if we can do it'."

Jon Xidos, CEO of Techlink Entertainment told Turtle Island News he was disappointed the deal didn't go through.

"It's a little disappointing.

We had worked out a project council approved of and then turned it down."

He said Techlink Entertainment are specialists in wide area network. Working with a central system connected to machines placed in a number of smaller establishments, such as bingo halls, restaurants, convenience stores. "It's spreading the money around. Casinos have a tendency to cannibalize all small business in an area."

He said the plan was to take Six Nations as a partner, have the chief's wife go to First Nations across Canada with Six Nations getting a percentage of the business.

"Our idea was to find a partner to work with and develop across the country. So why not partner with the largest First Nation and most well known."

He has toured Six Nations three times, and made a

presentation to the band council.

"We realize there was some sensitivity around the fact that First Nations get revenue from the OLG, but that's a case of Ontario paying First Nations bread crumbs to keep them from getting into this business," he said.

He said casino days "are kinda over. There's been a drop in revenue with this new generation. They are not casino bent. They are on the internet, on their tablets at home, and that's where we wanted to take First Nations."

He said if Ontario determines there is illegal gaming occurring, "they have 90 days to rectify the situation. So we proposed a trial period of 90 days, at no risk, no conditions on the machines and at 90 days they can see how much money they have

made and decide what they want to do."

He said he met Pam Montour while touring the bingo hall during a recent trip and hired her.

He said she was to work on other First Nations.

"It was my mistake. I told her to call up the bingo hall and find out if they had cleaned out the room so we could do a test."

He said he was not engaged in any secret deal.

"The band council agreed to the exploration but after the presentation we were told they signed the resolution and a month later agreed to the trial. I think it's in the minutes."

But councillor Helen Miller said council did not receive any minutes until Monday, months after the original resolution in March and there was a question of interpretation over the resolution.

"The chief said he thought we were giving him the go ahead."

The plan had targeted July for a full trial to begin and run 90 days.

District Four Councillor Wray Maracle said he could not support the plan. "I told the chief, with his wife involved, it would appear to the community as a kickback and therefore I cannot support it."

He said band council only learned of the deal last week. "We didn't find out until meeting with economic developer last week."

He said it was clear there was no approval. "It came down to council had to approve the plan."

He said, "I think it would have put the OFNLP in jeopardy and would have hurt us immediately. The community would not have been happy."