

Fmr. Snoqualmie gaming commissioner calls casino operation 'illegal'

Written by Administrator
Thursday, 16 January 2014 15:37 -

by JOHN LANGELER / KING 5 News

[Bio](#)

| [Email](#)

| Follow: @jlanglerKING5
KING5.com

Posted on January 15, 2014 at 10:47 PM

Updated today at 6:33 AM

SNOQUALMIE -- William Papazian, the former chairman of the Snoqualmie Gaming Commission, is suing three casino executives and two tribal council members for ousting fellow commissioners and replacing the entity responsible for independent oversight of gambling operations with themselves.

The litigation was filed in U.S. Federal Court last Friday.

The Snoqualmie Tribe, which is not specifically named in the lawsuit, denied Papazian's claims and said it planned to help defend the accused.

Papazian chaired the Snoqualmie Gaming Commission for five years. He resigned November 27, 2013 as other employees with the body were being fired, he alleged.

The commission is required by federal law and through a gaming compact, or agreement, the tribe has with U.S. and state authorities. It is tasked to handle background checks of employees, ensure protocol is followed and keep an eye on casino floor operations. It is supposed to be, "independent" and "separate...from that of the Gaming Facility or Tribal Government," according to the compact.

Papazian alleges he and his fellow commission members and employees were removed and replaced by the Snoqualmie Tribal Council so it could "run an illegal, unregulated gambling operation".

Furthermore, he accuses the defendants of racketeering, money laundering and fraud.

Fmr. Snoqualmie gaming commissioner calls casino operation 'illegal'

Written by Administrator

Thursday, 16 January 2014 15:37 -

Papazian, who lives in Arizona, declined to comment.

The Washington State Gambling Commission confirmed Wednesday it was told by the Snoqualmie Tribe its council was taking "interim control" of its own gaming commission, and that it had no immediate concerns.

A spokesperson with the National Indian Gaming Commission, which approves all gaming compacts, would not confirm or deny if it was investigating the Snoqualmie Casino.

The tribe would not say who is on its gaming commission now or when a new one would be selected.

In a statement, the tribe wrote, "It is disappointing to know that our former employee, Mr. Papazian, has chosen to file a baseless civil complaint. Mr. Papazian's allegations are completely false and without merit. The Snoqualmie Tribe will vigorously defend this case and support the named defendants. This complaint will not disrupt the workings of Tribal Government or Casino operations. We will continue to work hard to help our people."

Read more http://news.google.com/news/url?sa=t&fd=R&usg=AFQjCNHQ1L38zJnOCTb9wN_20lqRW-4P4Q&url=http://www.king5.com/news/local/Fmr-Snoqualmie-Gam-240403751.html