

## 815 Entertainment to purchase Giovanni's for temporary Hard Rock Casino site

Written by Administrator  
Monday, 26 April 2021 22:18 -

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ROCKFORD (WREX) -- 815 Entertainment, the group behind bringing a Hard Rock Casino to Rockford, will purchase Giovanni's Restaurant and Convention Center to renovate the space for a temporary casino location, once approved.

Last week, the Illinois Gaming Board denied an application for a casino supplier's license after Giovanni's attempted to withdraw its application a few days prior. Per Illinois Gaming Law, applicants cannot withdraw without IGB approval.

Administrator of the Illinois Gaming Board, Marcus Fruchter, said staff recommended the denial of the supplier's license "based on conduct and associations that would jeopardize the integrity of gaming and would discredit or tend to discredit the state and Illinois gaming." However, Administrator Fruchter did not elaborate further in Wednesday's meeting.

The denial triggered a clause in the lease and ownership agreements that allows 815 Entertainment to acquire the property and the Castrogiovannis' stake in the company, Terence Dunleavy, attorney for the company, told 13 WREX's media partners at the Rockford Register Star. 13 WREX has reached out to Dunleavy for comment, but we have not heard back. Details of the acquisition have not been released.

Dunleavy goes on to tell the Register Star this will not affect the timeline for the casino process.

"We are aware that the current owners of the temporary casino site will be selling the location to existing investors. We do not anticipate that this change in ownership will slow down the casino process," Rockford Mayor Tom McNamara said in a statement to 13 WREX.

In February, the Illinois Gaming Board unanimously approved a preliminary suitability study for the Hard Rock Casino, a major step in the process.

If approved by the gaming board, the plan would be to have a temporary casino open inside Giovanni's with 736 slots, a snack bar, a casino bar and Legacy Restaurant, which is already

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there. Plans released by Hard Rock show that it would be open for 18 to 24 months while construction on the Hard Rock Casino is underway.

Owner, Joe Castrogiovanni, says he will work with Hard Rock on the project after he decided to remove himself and his wife from the casino licensing process.

*"I have decided to remove myself and my wife from the IGB licensing process and work with the Hard Rock folks to facilitate their realization of the project, knowing they will put forth a wonderful product for future employees and customers. The city of Rockford deserves nothing but the best, and we will continue to proudly support this project and all that it will bring to our region." - Joe Castrogiovanni, Owner/Giovanni's*

**Read more** <https://wrex.com/2021/04/26/815-entertainment-to-purchase-giovanis-for-temporary-hard-rock-casino-site/>