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Casino consultants' report contains sensible surprises

DEL POINTE SHOULD STAY

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There were some surprises and one obvious conclusion in the recent report to the Sports and Video Lottery Commission by the Louisiana consulting firm TMG. It will now be up to the commission, and, ultimately, the General Assembly, to decide which of the recommendations make sense for Delaware.

The obvious conclusion that certainly goes without saying is that adding new casinos in Delaware will eat into the profit margins of the three existing racinos at Harrington, Dover and Stanton. But there is no suggestion by the consultants that new competition will put any of the three out of business or damage them financially to the point of causing major downsizing or layoffs.

To the contrary, the consultants recommended adding a maximum of two new gambling venues, no less and no more. And that makes sense.

One of the surprises was that TMG suggests neither of the two new establishments be required to have horse racing. That also makes sense.

Despite the revenue supplied to the horse-racing industry by the current racinos, horse racing nationwide is not growing. Maryland is looking at losing some of its racetracks. Besides, little in the way of crossover betting goes on between horse-racing patrons and slot machine players.

Another surprise was the table games proposed for Delaware venues were not considered in the revenue projections. That should be factored in.

And a third unexpected recommendation was that besides a Wilmington-area casino, the second should be in southwest Sussex County.

We think there's been too much effort at the planned Del Pointe casino in Millsboro to drop that as a new site.
