**November Meeting Minutes Review**

On Wednesday, November 15th, 2023, the Maryland State Athletic Commission meeting was called to order by Chairman David Norman at 3:02 p.m.  Present were the following:  Chairman David Norman; Commissioner Carl Wilson; Commissioner Dr. Kristi Hall, Commissioner James “Binky” Jones, Commissioner Brian Boles, John Dove, Commission for O&P, Eric London, Assistant Attorney General and Counsel; Matthew McKinney, Director of Strategic Initiatives, Olga Escobar, Administrative Officer, Jason Curtis, Administrative Assistant, and Executive Director Nino Ovial.  Members of the public in attendance were Mr. Sharmba Mitchell, Mr. Ratioender Melo, and Mr. Thomas Skonzo

Meeting was called to order by Chairman David J. Norman at 3:02 pm.

Approval of Commission Minutes

Minutes from the September and October meeting were approved unanimously, with Commissioner Jones making a motion to approve the minutes that were seconded by Commissioner Wilson.

Chairman’s Report

Chairman David J. Norman remarked to the Commission that the recent ABC training for referees and judges held in Baltimore on November 4th was a huge success and that Executive Director Ovial deserved credit for such a fine event.

Executive Directors Report

Executive Director Nino Ovial followed-up on Chairman David J. Norman’s remarks about the ABC training by stating that unofficially, most of the participants passed the exams.

Nino Ovial led the Commission through potential regulatory changes to COMAR 09.14.04.02 and .03, which would allow the Senior Physician and Chief Neurologist to determine the medical documentation for nonresident contestants.  COMAR 09.14.04.10 proposed change was to modify the medical suspension from 42 days to 60 days for someone who was poorly conditioned.  Finally, COMAR 09.14.04.12 proposed change was to modify the number of rounds for a female championship from 8 to 10 rounds.

 A motion to approve COMAR 09.14.04.02 was made by Commissioner Boles, was seconded by Commissioner Wilson and was unanimously approved by the Commission.

A motion to approve COMAR 09.14.04.03 was made by Commissioner Wilson, was seconded by Commissioner Jones and was unanimously approved by the Commission.

A motion to approve COMAR 09.14.04.10 was made by Commissioner Wilson, was seconded by Commissioner Jones and was unanimously approved by the Commission.

A motion to approve COMAR 09.14.04.12 was made by Commissioner Wilson, was seconded by Commissioner Jones and was unanimously approved by the Commission.

Review of Commission-Sanctioned Events

Executive Director Ovial advised the Commission about the wrestling events in the previous month.  Those events included the following:

ACW Wrestling, October 20, Hagerstown

ACW Wrestling, October 21, Bel-Air

CyNation Promotions, Boxing, October 21, Frederick (Cancelled)

AWA Wrestling, October 28, Waldorf

CZW Wrestling, November 5, Havre De Grace

MCW Wrestling, November 11, Joppa

EWA Wrestling, November 11, Havre De Grace (Cancelled)

Upcoming Events

Executive Director Nino Ovial led the Commission in a discussion of upcoming events, which included the following:

MCW Wrestling, November 17th, Perryville (Cancelled)

MCW Wrestling, November 18th, Ridgley

ACW Wrestling, November 26th, Glen Burnie

EWA Wrestling, December 1st, Pulaski Highway

MCW Wrestling, December 2nd, Joppa

CZW Wrestling, December 3rd, Harve de Grace

AWA Wrestling, December 9th, Waldorf

Ponytail Promotions Boxing, December 9th, Baltimore

MCW Wrestling, December 9th, Frederick

EWA Wrestling, December 15th, Halethorpe

A motion to approve for the upcoming MCW events on November 18th, December 2nd, and December 9th was made by Commissioner Wilson and was seconded by Commissioner Jones. The events were unanimously approved by the Commission.

A motion to approve for the upcoming ACW event on November 26th was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Wilson. The event was unanimously approved by the Commission.

A motion to approve for the upcoming EWA event on December 1st and December 15th was made by Commissioner Wilson and seconded by Commissioner Jones. The events were unanimously approved by the Commission.

A motion to approve the upcoming CZW event on December 3rd was made by Commissioner Wilson and seconded by Commissioner Jones. The event was unanimously approved by the Commission.

A motion to approve the upcoming AWA event on December 9th was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Wilson. The event was unanimously approved by the Commission.

A motion to approve the upcoming Ponytail Promotion Boxing event was made by Commissioner Jones and seconded by Commissioner Wilson. This event was unanimously approved by the Commission.

During this discussion, Executive Director Nino Ovial stated the safety concerns and the requirements for the Ponytail event to take place. Chairman David J. Norman suggested increasing the minimum-security presence to 20 individuals based on the estimate of 500 individuals attending the event, while also suggested the promoter to get in contact with local police to increase safety in the arena.

Public Comments

At 3:37pm The CEO of Bare Knuckle Fight Club, BKFC, Mr. Thomas Sconzo gave a presentation on potentially bringing Bare Knuckle Fighting to Maryland. This sport is not regulated by the Commission and would require a change in the Statute.

Mr. Sconzo discussed fighter safety by outlining rules that included shorter fights, more doctors, and stricter medial requirements than other bare-knuckle organizations.  Mr. Sconzo discussed that drug testing requirements will be in accordance with state rules.  Chairman Norman and Counsel to the Commission, Eric London, advised Mr. Sconzo that he will need to meet with state legislators and delegates to get Bare Knuckle Fight Club approved in Maryland.  Chairman Norman advised that the Commission had no authority over Bare Knuckle fighting, as it is not one of the combative sports that the Commission currently regulates.

New Business

Commissioner Jones stated his plans to attend the District of Columbia’s Commission meeting and hopes to set-up on-site MMA referee training in partnership with Fernando Yamasaki’s gym.  Executive Director Nino Ovialstated that he plans to have a second round of ABC training scheduled in Baltimore in April of next year.

Adjournment:

Chairman David J. Normancalls for adjournment at roughly 4:15 pm that was approved by Commission Jones and seconded by Commission Wilson in which the Commission unanimously approved.