

# **MARYLAND STATE ATHLETIC COMMISSION**

## **MINUTES - WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 24, 2016**

On Wednesday, August 24, 2016, the Maryland State Athletic Commission meeting was called to order by Chairman Arnold “Arnie” Dansicker at 2:09 p.m.. Present were the following: Chairman Dansicker; Commissioner Ben Alperstein; Commissioner Malone; Commissioner David Norman; Patrick Pannella, Executive Director; Eric London, Counsel; and Dreama Anderson, Administrative Specialist. Not present: Commissioner Lenny Moore.

### **APPROVAL OF JULY 20, 2016 COMMISSION MINUTES**

The July 20, 2016 Minutes of the Maryland State Athletic Commission, which were previously distributed to all Commission members for review, were discussed.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Norman, seconded by Chairman Dansicker, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the July 20, 2016 Minutes of the Commission.

### **CONTRACT BETWEEN PROMOTER AND BOXER**

Chairman Dansicker led a Commission discussion in regard to the “Contract Between Promoter and Boxer” required by the Commission for boxers competing in the State of Maryland. The Commission referenced the fact that it does not recognize the document’s validity until, and unless, both parties have signed the document.

Commissioner Norman noted that the Commission has insisted over the years on receiving a written contract so there would be no question as to proving the validity of an oral contract arranged between a boxer and promoter.

### **APPROVAL OF PROFESSIONAL BOXING EVENTS**

Executive Director Pannella led a Commission discussion in regard to the professional wrestling events currently scheduled to be held in the State of

Maryland.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Malone, seconded by Commissioner Alperstein, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the following professional wrestling events being promoted by Shawstyle Productions, LLC:

Professional Boxing Event  
Saturday, November 12, 2016 - 6:00 p.m. Starting Time  
The Clarence “Du” Burns Arena  
1301 South Ellwood Avenue - Baltimore, Maryland  
Promoter: Shawstyle Productions, LLC, advertising as  
Shawstyle Productions; and

Professional Boxing Event  
Saturday, March 25, 2017 - 6:00 p.m. Starting Time  
The Clarence “Du” Burns Arena  
1301 South Ellwood Avenue - Baltimore, Maryland  
Promoter: Shawstyle Productions, LLC, advertising as  
Shawstyle Productions

## **APPROVAL OF PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING EVENTS**

Executive Director Pannella led a Commission discussion in regard to the professional wrestling events currently scheduled to be held in the State of Maryland.

Mr. Pannella reported that licensed promoter James E. “Jim” Hardwick has requested a Commission sanction of a wrestling event to be held outdoors in the side parking lot of the Putty Hill Shopping Center next to McAvoy’s Sports Bar and Grill in Parkville, Maryland on September 2, 2016. Mr. Pannella and Commission Chief Inspector David Arbogast visited the site to conduct a “walk through” meeting of the planned wrestling event, meeting with both Mr. Hardwick and the owner of McAvoy’s Restaurant to discuss: (1) the promoter’s security plan detailing the amount of, and type of, security representatives who will be hired by the promoter to work; (2) matters relating to the ring and the ring enclosure area; and (3) the location for conducting physical exams and inspector interviews of the

participating wrestlers and referees.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Norman, seconded by Commissioner Alperstein, contingent upon James E. “Jim” Hardwick submitting a security plan which is approved by the Executive Director and submitting evidence of a policy of liability insurance for the shopping center, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the following professional wrestling event being promoted by Mr. Hardwick:

Professional Wrestling Event  
Friday, September 2, 2017 - 7:30 p.m. Starting Time  
Putty Hill Shopping Center - McAvoy’s Restaurant - Outdoors  
2501 Putty Hill Avenue - Parkville, Maryland  
Promoter: James E. “Jim” Hardwick,  
advertising as Eastern Wrestling Alliance (EWA).

Upon a motion by Commissioner Malone, seconded by Commissioner Alperstein, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the following professional wrestling event being promoted by Event Services, Inc., A Wholly-Owned Subsidiary of World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc.:

Professional Wrestling Event  
Monday, October 8, 2016 - 7:30 p.m. Starting Time  
Aberdeen Proving Grounds Federal Credit Union Arena  
(Harford Community College Arena)  
401 Thomas Run Road - Bel Air, Maryland  
Promoter: Event Services, Inc., A Wholly-Owned Subsidiary of  
World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc. (WWE).

Upon a motion by Commissioner Malone, seconded by Commissioner Alperstein, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the following professional wrestling event being promoted by Dennis W. Wipprecht, Jr.:

Professional Wrestling Event  
Friday, September 30, 2016 - 7:30 p.m. Starting Time  
Joppatowne Flea Market

11063 Robinwood Drive - Joppa, Maryland  
Promoter: Dennis W. Wipprecht, Jr., advertising as  
Evolve Wrestling.

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Chairman Dansicker provided the Commission with the following report.

The Commission continues to actively meet with current promoters and potential promoters in an effort to encourage the holding of combative sports events in the State of Maryland.

While the Commission is readily available to work with promoters as much as possible in terms of approving boxing contests and MMA contests, a promoter is informed by the Commission that one key component of the Commission's approval process is having the Commission Chief Physician to review all proposed contests and to provide a medical opinion as to whether both respective contestants should be approved to compete in the contest. The Commission does not overrule the Chief Physician's medical recommendation.

Commissioner Alperstein opined that ensuring the "protection" of the contestant in such a manner is a core responsibility of the Commission.

Chairman Dansicker noted that one particular and common "red flag", which is a concern for the Commission Chief Physician when considering the approval of a contest from a medical standpoint, is when a boxer or MMA contestant has received multiple stoppages in his career which are recorded as either knockouts or technical knockouts.

## **CASE # MSAC-16-01 - MSAC VS. PATRICK RIVERA**

Executive Director Pannella provided the Commission with the following report in regard to Case # MSAC-16-01 in which licensed professional MMA contestant Patrick Rivera engaged in unruly conduct while escorting a competing MMA contestant to the cage area, and later in the hallway outside of the dressing rooms, at the "Shogun Fights 14" professional MMA event held on April 16, 2016 at The

Royal Farms Arena in Baltimore, Maryland. Based upon Mr. Rivera's actions, the Commission charged Mr. Rivera with violating COMAR 09.14.10.03(A). Given the fact that, in a telephone conversation held with Mr. Pannella, Mr. Rivera expressed remorse for his behavior, Mr. Rivera entered into a Consent Order with the Commission which required him to pay the Commission a fine in the amount of \$200.00. Mr. Rivera paid his fine to the Commission, and the Commission avoiding a hearing regarding the matter.

**COMMISSION INVESTIGATION:**  
**WRESTLING EXHIBITION EVENTS IN SOUTHERN MARYLAND**

Executive Director Pannella provided the Commission with the following report in regard to plans initiated by licensed wrestler Brandon Greene to hold a professional wrestling exhibition event, advertised on the internet as a "free show", on August 18, 2016, at St. Mary's Caring Soup Kitchen located in Lexington Park, Maryland.

The Commission received information that Mr. Greene made plans to hold a series of wrestling "exhibition" events at various locations in St. Mary's County, Maryland. Mr. Pannella contacted Mr. Greene and informed him that such wrestling activity falls under the jurisdiction of the Commission. As such, these wrestling exhibition events cannot be held until, and unless: (1) The wrestling event is promoted by a promoter who is licensed by the Commission; and (2) The wrestling event is sanctioned and regulated by the Commission.

Mr. Pannella provided Mr. Greene with the current "Maryland State Athletic Commission Policies and Procedures for a Professional Wrestling 'Practice Session' Held in the Presence of Spectators". Based on the findings of a Commission investigation, it appears that Mr. Greene's proposed wrestling exhibition events violate several requirements contained in this Commission document. Mr. Pannella advised Mr. Greene that, for all future wrestling practice sessions he may be planning, each of the Commission document's stipulations must be followed. Mr. Greene stated that he was unaware of these stipulations, but promised to adhere to them in the future.

Given the fact that the Commission received information about this wrestling activity only three days before the date of the wrestling exhibition event at St.

Mary's Caring Soup Kitchen, as well as the fact that the wrestling activity was benefitting the work of a local charity, the Commission strongly supported Mr. Greene's efforts to attempt to hold this wrestling activity.

While Mr. Greene was able to secure a licensed promoter to request Commission sanctioning, the wrestling exhibition event was ultimately cancelled due to Mr. Greene being unable to secure the services of a licensed physician on the day of the event to perform pre-bout physical exams of the participating wrestlers and referee.

Mr. Greene was fully cooperative with the Commission as this investigation was conducted and completed.

### **COMMISSION INVESTIGATION:** **MICRO WRESTLING FEDERATION WRESTLING EVENT**

Executive Director Pannella provided the Commission with the following report about plans to hold a "Micro Wrestling Federation" professional wrestling event at Headquarters Live in Salisbury, Maryland.

The Commission received information that this wrestling event was scheduled to occur on September 2, 2016. Headquarters Live indicated it was unaware that such a wrestling event came under the jurisdiction of the Commission, requiring Commission sanctioning and regulation. Headquarters Live fully cooperated with the Commission by obtaining a licensed promoter to request a Commission sanction of the wrestling event.

### **SCHEDULED COMMISSION MEETINGS**

The Commission held a discussion regarding Commission meetings scheduled to be held through Calendar Year 2016. Chairman Dansicker reminded the Commission of its meetings scheduled for the remainder of Calendar Year 2016 on the following dates and times in the Third Floor Conference Room, 500 North Calvert Street, in Baltimore:

Thursday, October 27, 2016 at 2:00 p.m.;

Wednesday, November 16, 2016 at 2:00 p.m.; and  
Wednesday, December 21, 2016 at 2:00 p.m..

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Upon a motion by Commissioner Norman, and seconded by Commissioner Alperstein, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to adjourn the meeting at 3:00 p.m..

**Patrick Pannella**  
**Executive Director**