

MARYLAND STATE ATHLETIC COMMISSION

MINUTES - WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 2016

On Wednesday, April 27, 2016, the Maryland State Athletic Commission meeting was called to order by Chairman Arnie Dansicker at 2:22 p.m.. Present were the following: Commissioner Dansicker; Commissioner Ben Alperstein; Commissioner Sean Malone; Commissioner Lenny Moore; Commissioner David Norman; Patrick Pannella, Executive Director; and Susan Cherry, Acting Counsel and Chief of Litigation.

PASSING OF ALAN N. “GOLDY” GOLDSTEIN

The Commission held a moment of silence in honor of former boxing writer and *Baltimore Sun* sports columnist Alan N. “Goldy” Goldstein, who passed away on February 29, 2016.

Executive Director Pannella provided the Commission with the following report. Mr. Goldstein actively covered professional boxing in the Baltimore area for many years, and was well-respected in the Maryland boxing community for his interest, expertise and efforts. He maintained friendships with many people working in the local boxing industry, including legendary Baltimore boxing trainer Mack Lewis. Mr. Goldstein was the author of several books, including “*A Fistful of Sugar: The Sugar Ray Leonard Story*” and “*Muhammad Ali: The Story of a Boxing Legend*”. He was the co-author of “*12 Rounds With Oscar De La Hoya: An Illustrated Tribute to Boxing’s Brightest Star*”.

Chairman Dansicker called Mr. Goldstein “a true gentleman” who maintained a ring presence at professional boxing events sanctioned and regulated by the Commission over a long period of time.

The Commission extended its condolences to the Goldstein family.

APPOINTMENT OF COMMISSIONER DAVID J. NORMAN

Chairman Dansicker announced the Governor Larry Hogan recently appointed

David J. Norman of Baltimore City to the Commission to serve a full six-year term.

Chairman Dansicker called Commissioner Norman a “true professional” and noted that, given his distinguished tenure as a Commission member in the past, Commissioner Norman will be bringing a tremendous amount of experience and knowledge as he resumes his position as a Commissioner.

Executive Director Pannella noted that Commissioner Norman made many valuable contributions to the Commission during his first period of time as a Commission member, including, but not limited to: (1) overseeing the legalization of MMA in the State of Maryland in his former position as Chairman; and (2) forging strong and productive ties with several foreign embassies located in Washington, D.C. to contribute to the economic climate of Maryland.

Commissioner Norman stated that he had heard “great things” about the Commission’s accomplishments in recent years and was happy to be back with the Commission in the capacity of a Commission member.

The Commission welcomed Commissioner Norman back to the Commission.

DENNIS W. WIPPRECHT, JR.
RENEWAL OF PROMOTER’S LICENSE

Executive Director Pannella provided the Commission with the following report. Dennis W. Wipprecht, Jr. recently renewed his promoter’s license with the Commission as a promoter of professional wrestling events in the State of Maryland. Mr. Wipprecht advertises the majority of the wrestling events which he promotes as “Maryland Championship Wrestling (MCW)” shows. Chairman Dansicker and Mr. Pannella interviewed Mr. Wipprecht as a condition of license renewal. They reviewed the license application and corresponding documentation submitted by Mr. Wipprecht, and were satisfied that this applicant complies with the Commission’s licensing requirements.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Norman, and seconded by Commissioner Alperstein, the Commission voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the license renewal of Dennis W. Wipprecht, Jr. as a promoter.

JAMES E. “JIM” HARDWICK, JR.
RENEWAL OF PROMOTER’S LICENSE

Executive Director Pannella provided the Commission with the following report. James E. “Jim” Hardwick, Jr. recently renewed his promoter’s license with the Commission as a promoter of professional wrestling events in the State of Maryland. Mr. Hardwick advertises the majority of the wrestling events which he promotes as “Eastern Wrestling Alliance (EWA)” shows. Commissioner Alperstein and Mr. Pannella interviewed Mr. Hardwick as a condition of license renewal. They reviewed the license application and corresponding documentation submitted by Mr. Hardwick, and were satisfied that this applicant complies with the Commission’s licensing requirements.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Alperstein, and seconded by Commissioner Norman, the Commission voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the license renewal of James E. “Jim” Hardwick, Jr. as a promoter.

JOHN J. RALLO, III
RENEWAL OF PROMOTER’S LICENSE

Executive Director Pannella provided the Commission with the following report. John J. Rallo, III recently renewed his promoter’s license with the Commission as a promoter of professional MMA events in the State of Maryland. Mr. Rallo advertises the majority of the MMA events which he promotes as “Shogun Fights” shows. Chairman Dansicker and Mr. Pannella interviewed Mr. Rallo as a condition of license renewal. They reviewed the license application and corresponding documentation submitted by Mr. Rallo, and were satisfied that this applicant complies with the Commission’s licensing requirements.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Alperstein, and seconded by Commissioner Norman, the Commission voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the license renewal of John J. Rallo, III as a promoter.

APPROVAL/CANCELLATION

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 noted that, choosing to hold the wrestling event on a different date, promoter Dennis W. Wipprecht, Jr. cancelled the Commission-sanctioned wrestling event scheduled to be held on December 30, 2016 at Joppa Market Place in Joppa, Maryland.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Alperstein, seconded by Commissioner Norman, the Commission voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the following professional wrestling events being promoted by James “Jim” Hardwick:

Professional Wrestling Event
Friday, July 29, 2016 - 8:00 p.m. Starting Time
Tall Cedars Hall
2501 Putty Hill Avenue - Parkville, Maryland
Promoter: James “Jim” Hardwick, advertising as Eastern Wrestling Alliance (EWA); and

Professional Wrestling Event
Saturday, October 22, 2016 - 7:30 p.m. Starting Time
Tall Cedars Hall
2501 Putty Hill Avenue - Parkville, Maryland
Promoter: James “Jim” Hardwick, advertising as Eastern Wrestling Alliance (EWA).

Upon a motion by Commissioner Norman, seconded by Commissioner Alperstein, the Commission voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the following professional wrestling events being promoted by James E. “Jimmy” Morris, III:

Professional Wrestling Event
Friday, April 1, 2016 - 7:30 p.m. Starting Time
Benfield Sportscenter

1031 Benfield Boulevard - Millersville, Maryland
Promoter: James E. "Jimmy" Morris, III, advertising as
Adrenaline Championship Wrestling (ACW);
Professional Wrestling Event
Friday, May 20, 2016 - 7:00 p.m. Starting Time
The Elks Lodge
11063 Robinwood Drive - Hagerstown, Maryland
Promoter: James E. "Jimmy" Morris, III, advertising as
Adrenaline Championship Wrestling (ACW);

Professional Wrestling Event
Friday, June 10, 2016 - 7:00 p.m. Starting Time
Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 69 - "The Lodge"
2832 Frederick Road - Catonsville, Maryland
Promoter: James E. "Jimmy" Morris, III, advertising as
Adrenaline Championship Wrestling (ACW);

Professional Wrestling Event
Saturday, June 25, 2016 - 7:00 p.m. Starting Time
Denton Fire Hall
400 South 5th Street - Denton, Maryland
Promoter: James E. "Jimmy" Morris, III, advertising as
Adrenaline Championship Wrestling (ACW);

Professional Wrestling Event
Friday, July 8, 2016 - 7:00 p.m. Starting Time
The Elks Lodge
11063 Robinwood Drive - Hagerstown, Maryland
Promoter: James E. "Jimmy" Morris, III, advertising as
Adrenaline Championship Wrestling (ACW);

Professional Wrestling Event
Sunday, July 31, 2016 - 5:00 p.m. Starting Time
Sykesville Fire Hall
6680 Sykesville Road - Sykesville, Maryland
Promoter: James E. "Jimmy" Morris, III, advertising as

Adrenaline Championship Wrestling (ACW); and

Professional Wrestling Event

Saturday, August 20, 2016 - 7:00 p.m. Starting Time

Denton Fire Hall

400 South 5th Street - Denton, Maryland

Promoter: James E. "Jimmy" Morris, III, advertising as

Adrenaline Championship Wrestling (ACW);

Upon a motion by Commissioner Norman, seconded by Commissioner Alperstein, the Commission voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the following professional wrestling events being promoted by Dennis W. Wipprecht, Jr.:

Professional Wrestling Event

Friday, August 19, 2016 - 8:00 p.m. Starting Time

Joppa Market Place

1000 Joppa Farm Road - Joppa, Maryland

Promoter: Dennis W. Wipprecht, Jr., advertising as

Maryland Championship Wrestling (MCW); and

Professional Wrestling Event

Saturday, October 15, 2016 - 7:30 p.m. Starting Time

Galena Volunteer Fire Department

90 East Cross Street - Galena, Maryland

Promoter: Dennis W. Wipprecht, Jr., advertising as

Maryland Championship Wrestling (MCW).

Upon a motion by Commissioner Alperstein, seconded by Commissioner Moore, the Commission voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the following professional wrestling events being promoted by Dennis W. Wipprecht, Jr.:

Professional Wrestling Event

Friday, May 6, 2016 - 8:00 p.m. Starting Time

Joppa Market Place

1000 Joppa Farm Road - Joppa, Maryland

Promoter: Dennis W. Wipprecht, Jr., advertising as

Maryland Championship Wrestling (MCW); and

Friday, June 10, 2016 - 8:00 p.m. Starting Time

Joppa Market Place

1000 Joppa Farm Road - Joppa, Maryland

Promoter: Dennis W. Wipprecht, Jr., advertising as
Maryland Championship Wrestling (MCW);

Friday, November 5, 2016 - 8:00 p.m. Starting Time

Joppa Market Place

1000 Joppa Farm Road - Joppa, Maryland

Promoter: Dennis W. Wipprecht, Jr., advertising as
Maryland Championship Wrestling (MCW);

Friday, November 11, 2016 - 8:00 p.m. Starting Time

Unique Sports Academy

109 Post Office Road - Waldorf, Maryland

Promoter: Dennis W. Wipprecht, Jr., advertising as
Maryland Championship Wrestling (MCW); and

Friday, December 3, 2016 - 8:00 p.m. Starting Time

Joppa Market Place

1000 Joppa Farm Road - Joppa, Maryland

Promoter: Dennis W. Wipprecht, Jr., advertising as
Maryland Championship Wrestling (MCW).

SEEKING NEW POTENTIAL VENUES IN MARYLAND

Chairman Dansicker reported that Commission continues to actively seek out new potential venues in the State of Maryland for boxing events and MMA events to be held. He said that the Commission has located certain venues, passing venue information details onto promoters licensed by the Commission for their consideration.

Executive Director Pannella noted that one specific success story in this regard was the Commission's efforts in contacting The Maryland State Fairgrounds in

Timonium, Maryland -- with licensed promoter Shawstyle Productions, LLC set to hold a professional boxing event at this venue on May 14, 2016.

Chairman Dansicker noted that, recently, he has been looking to find such venues for boxing events and MMA events in Harford County in particular.

CURRENT SCHEDULE OF WRESTLING EVENTS

Executive Director Pannella provided the Commission with the current schedule of wrestling events to be held in the State of Maryland through the end of calendar year 2016. Mr. Pannella stated that 2016 will be a record, or near record, year for the Commission in terms of the number of professional wrestling events being sanctioned and regulated.

“SHOGUN FIGHTS 13” - REGULATORY CONCERNS RESOLVED

Executive Director Pannella provided the Commission with the following report in regard to certain regulatory concerns expressed by the Commission concerning the professional MMA event promoted by John J. Rallo, III, advertising as “Shogun Fights 13”, and held on October 24, 2015 at The Royal Farms Arena in Baltimore, Maryland.

These concerns included: (1) the number of people entering the cage in between MMA contests and, in particular, the Commission’s role in ensuring that the area inside the cage is secure at all times and that the surface of the cage floor remains clean and free from dirt; and (2) one particular photographer who, situated in a precarious position high above the cage apron on the outside of the fenced area, obstructed Commission representatives from viewing the MMA contests and could have fallen onto someone were he to lose his footing.

Mr. Pannella informed the Commission that, to successfully resolve these concerns, he has: (1) instructed Commission inspectors and the promoter’s security staff members to ensure that only authorized individuals be permitted to enter the cage; and (2) notified the promoter, contestants and contestants’ seconds that any member of a contestant’s entourage other than individuals licensed by the Commission or any other individual who has expressly received Commission authorization is not

allowed in the cage at any time; and (3) received assurances from the promoter that all photographers working cage side will be properly credentialed to maintain a seat on the cage apron, with the promoter understanding that the Commission will instruct the promoter's security staff members to remove all other photographers from the cage apron.

Mr. Pannella advised that he will implement and execute these administrative policies for all future Commission-sanctioned MMA events.

REVIEW OF APRIL 16, 2016 "SHOGUN FIGHTS 14" MMA EVENT

The Commission reviewed the professional MMA event promoted by John J. Rallo, III, advertising as "Shogun Fights 14", and held on April 16, 2016 at The Royal Farms Arena in Baltimore, Maryland. The professional MMA event included 13 professional MMA contests and 39 scheduled rounds of professional MMA competition.

Executive Director opined that many of the MMA contests presented were competitive. He noted that the MMA event ran very smoothly with no regulatory concerns. Mr. Pannella recognized Mr. Rallo and his staff members for working closely with Commission representatives throughout the course of the evening.

TWO MARYLAND STATE CHAMPIONSHIP BOXING CONTESTS MAY 14, 2016 PROFESSIONAL BOXING EVENT

Executive Director Pannella provided the Commission with the following report in regard to the professional boxing event being promoted by Shawstyle Productions, LLC, advertising as Shawstyle Productions, and scheduled to be held on May 14, 2016 at The Maryland State Fairgrounds in Timonium, Maryland.

The professional boxing event will feature two Maryland State Championship boxing contests.

Tyrell Samuel (14-6-1, 7 ko's) of Baltimore, Maryland will compete against Joshua Davis (10-1-0, 4 ko's) of Catonsville, Maryland in a scheduled ten-round boxing contest for the "Maryland State Junior Lightweight Title".

Travis Reeves (11-2-2, 5 ko's) of Baltimore, Maryland will compete against Larry Pryor (9-12-0, 5 ko's) of Walkersville, Maryland in a scheduled ten-round boxing contest for the "Maryland State Cruiserweight Title".

PROFESSIONAL BOXER ANDRE ESPEUT
COMPETING IN IOWA WHILE ON SUSPENSION IN MARYLAND

Executive Director Pannella provided the Commission with the following report in regard to the professional boxing contest which was held in the State of Iowa between professional boxers Andre Espeut (Professional Boxer's Federal ID # NJ 077057) and Charon Spain on April 16, 2016, in which Mr. Espeut won this boxing contest by technical knockout in the second round.

When Mr. Espeut competed in his bout versus Mr. Spain, he fought while serving an "indefinite medical suspension" imposed by the Commission on February 10, 2012. The Commission had charged Mr. Espeut with a statutory violation pursuant to Business Regulation Article §4-310(c)(2) Annotated Code of Maryland.

As a means of settling Case # MSAC-11-02 ("Maryland State Athletic Commission vs. Andre Espeut"), Mr. Espeut entered into a Consent Order with the Commission on January 24, 2012. In the Consent Order, among other stipulations, Mr. Espeut agreed to pay the Commission a \$1,500.00 fine via installment payments of \$375.00 within three days prior to each of his next four professional boxing contests. Within three days prior to competing in his bout in Iowa, Mr. Espeut was required to pay the Commission the second \$375.00 installment of the referenced fine.

The Commission notes that, in the State of Maryland and per Commission policy, any boxer who has been found guilty of violating Business Regulation Article §4-310(c)(2) Annotated Code of Maryland and who wins the boxing contest involving the referenced violation, must surrender his or her win and the boxing contest in question is officially ruled a "No Contest".

The Commission discussed this matter, with Chairman Dansicker expressing concern that a boxer who was serving an indefinite suspension in the State of Maryland was able to compete in another jurisdiction and earn a win on his record.

Upon a motion by Chairman Dansicker, and seconded by Commissioner Alperstein, the Commission voted unanimously (5-0) for the Commission to send written correspondence to the Iowa State Athletic Commission requesting that: (1) The Iowa State Athletic Commission officially rule the boxing contest between Mr. Espeut and Mr. Spain to be a "No Contest"; and (2) The Iowa State Athletic Commission notify Fight Fax, Inc., the certified boxing registry of the Association of Boxing Commissions, of its action in this regard.

DISCUSSION OF MUAY THAI

The Commission held a discussion regarding muay thai and the possibility of regulating the sport in the State of Maryland in the future.

Executive Director Pannella provided Commission members with a copy of the "Unified Rules and Guidelines for Muay Thai" report issued by the Association of Boxing Commissions.

Commission members stated their intention to review the document.

NEXT FOUR COMMISSION MEETINGS

Chairman Dansicker announced that the next four Commission meetings will be held in the Third Floor Conference Room, 500 North Calvert Street, in Baltimore on the following dates:

Wednesday, May 25, 2016 at 2:00 p.m.;
Wednesday, June 22, 2016 at 2:00 p.m.;
Wednesday, July 20, 2016 at 2:00 p.m.; and
Wednesday, August 24, 2016 at 2:00 p.m..

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Chairman Dansicker, and seconded by Commissioner Alperstein, the Commission voted unanimously (5-0) to adjourn the meeting at 3:43 p.m..

Patrick Pannella
Executive Director