

MARYLAND STATE ATHLETIC COMMISSION

MINUTES WEDNESDAY – MAY 18, 2022

On Wednesday, May 18, 2022, the Maryland State Athletic Commission meeting was called to order by Chairman David Norman at 3:00 p.m.. Present were the following: Chairman Norman; Commissioner Brian Boles; Commissioner Chuck Gast; Commissioner Lenny Moore; Commissioner David Shull; Patrick Pannella, Executive Director; Eric London, Assistant Attorney General and Counsel; and Olga Escobar, Board Specialist. This was a virtual meeting due to COVID-19 pandemic public restrictions, with all Commission members and Commission staff participating either virtually or telephonically.

APPROVAL OF COMMISSION MINUTES

Commission minutes for the Commission meeting held on March 16, 2022, previously distributed to Commission members for review, were discussed.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Boles, and seconded by Commissioner Shull, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the March 16, 2022 minutes of the Commission.

APPROVAL OF COMMISSION MINUTES

Commission minutes for the Commission meeting held on April 20, 2022, previously distributed to Commission members for review, were discussed.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Boles, and seconded by Commissioner Shull, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the April 20, 2022 minutes of the Commission.

APPROVAL OF THE RENEWAL OF PROMOTER LICENSE FOR ALL ELITE WRESTLING, LLC

Executive Director Pannella provided the Commission with the following report. All Elite Wrestling, Inc. (“AEW”) recently applied to the Commission for the

renewal of its promoter license as a promoter of professional wrestling events in the State of Maryland.

AEW has been licensed by the Commission as a promoter in the past, holding a wrestling event on November 9, 2019 in Baltimore, Maryland. After the completion of a Commission investigation concerning the introduction of blood into the ring during a match held as a part of the November 9, 2019 wrestling event, the Commission found AEW in violation of Commission regulations and, subsequently, sanctioned the promoter.

Mr. Pannella noted that AEW cooperated with the Commission's investigation of the referenced November 9, 2019 wrestling event, expressed remorse for the regulatory violations that occurred, and fully complied with the Commission sanctions received.

Commissioner Gast and Mr. Pannella recently interviewed Chris Harrington, the promoter representative for AEW, as a condition of licensure. They reviewed the license application and corresponding documentation submitted by AEW, and were satisfied that the promoter's license application for this promoter applicant complies with the Commission's licensing requirements.

Commissioner Gast reported that the matter of AEW violating Commission regulations in the past was discussed with Mr. Harrington, who advised Commissioner Gast and Mr. Pannella that corrections had been made from a production standpoint to assure that such violations would not occur at future Commission-sanctioned AEW wrestling events.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Gast, and seconded by Commissioner Shull, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the licensure of All Elite Wrestling, LLC as a promoter.

MEETING THE MINIMUM NUMBER OF REQUIRED CONTESTS AND ROUNDS FOR BOXING EVENTS

Chairman Norman led a Commission discussion in regard to occurrences of a boxing event not having the minimum number of boxing contests and a minimum number of rounds as required by Commission regulation.

Executive Director Pannella reported that promoters of Commission-sanctioned events typically achieve the required minimum number of boxing contests and rounds with regard to contracted boxing contests scheduled for a boxing event. He noted that there have been occasions, although infrequent, when the referenced required minimum has not been met due to a boxing contest or boxing contests falling out on the day of, or close to the day of, the boxing weigh-in activity for a boxing event.

Mr. Pannella explained that such boxing contests fall out for a number of reasons including, but not limited to, a boxer sustaining an injury preventing a boxer from competing and a boxer not being permitted to compete for legal reasons or family/work obligations.

Mr. Pannella explained, further, that the number of boxing events being held in surrounding states on the same date or on dates close to each other have made it more difficult for the matchmaker of a boxing event to make fights.

At Chairman Norman's recommendation, and considering the scenarios described above by Mr. Pannella, the Commission directed Mr. Pannella to remind licensed matchmakers of the importance of "locking in a sufficient number of boxing contests" early on in the matchmaking process to ensure that the required minimum number of boxing contests and rounds will be met.

APPROVAL OF PROFESSIONAL BOXING EVENTS

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

Upon a motion by Commissioner Gast, seconded by Commissioner Shull, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the following boxing events being promoted by CyNation Sports, LLC:

Saturday, July 2, 2022 - 3:00 p.m. Starting Time
Rosecroft Raceway
6336 Rosecroft Drive
Ft. Washington, Maryland

Promoter: CyNation Sports, LLC,
advertising as “CyNation Sports”; and

Saturday, September 10, 2022 - 3:00 p.m. Starting Time
Rosecroft Raceway
6336 Rosecroft Drive
Ft. Washington, Maryland
Promoter: CyNation Sports, LLC,
advertising as “CyNation Sports”.

APPROVAL OF PROFESSIONAL MMA EVENT

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

Upon a motion by Commissioner Shull, seconded by Commissioner Moore, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the following MMA event being promoted by John J. Rallo, III:

Thursday, May 4, 2023 - TBA Starting Time
Martin’s Valley Mansion
594 Cranbrook Road
Hunt Valley, Maryland
Promoter: John J. Rallo, III, advertising as
“The Jonathan Ogden Foundation Charity MMA Event”.

APPROVAL OF PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING EVENT

Executive Director Pannella led a Commission discussion concerning the professional wrestling events currently scheduled in the State of Maryland.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Boles, seconded by Commissioner Gast, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the following professional wrestling event promoted by James E. “Jim” Hardwick, advertising as “Micro Wrestling”:

Sunday, September 11, 2022 - 9:00 p.m. Starting Time

Buck's Bar and Grill
33594 Dubin Road – Princess Anne, Maryland
Promoter: James E. "Jim" Hardwick,
advertising as "Micro Wrestling".

**PROPOSED WRESTLING EVENTS TO BE HELD IN
BRYANS ROAD, MARYLAND / COMMISSION SITE VISIT**

Executive Director Pannella provided the Commission with the following report in regard to a recent request made by licensed promoter Richard K. Thompson to hold a series of wrestling events outdoors at 2664 Marshall Hall Road in Bryans Road, Maryland ("Bryans Road, Maryland property") and beginning on June 5, 2022.

The Commission corresponded via email with Mr. Thompson to seek confirmation concerning:

- (1) whether all activities related to the wrestling event are occurring entirely on the Bryans Road, Maryland property and whether all structures and apparatus related to the production of a wrestling event are situated entirely on the Bryans Road, Maryland property; and
- (2) whether the holding of a wrestling event on the Bryans Road, Maryland property would be in full compliance with all state and local laws — including, but not limited to, zoning requirements, noise restrictions, residential insurance coverage or other insurance coverage, and homeowners association restrictions (if any).

Concerning (1), research into public records conducted by the Commission indicates that the Bryans Road, Maryland property consists of a total land area of 0.83 acres and not on "approximately 6 acres" as described to the Commission.

This remains problematic for the Commission from a regulatory position as it appears that the land, or a portion of the land, where wrestling events are proposed to be held (in the open field behind the house) may not be located entirely on property owned by the entity which owns the Bryans Road, Maryland property.

To seek to gain a better knowledge of the proposed wrestling site, Mr. Pannella met Mr. Thompson on May 16, 2022 at the Bryans Road, Maryland property to conduct a "walk-thru" meeting of the property.

After visiting the property, Mr. Pannella relayed to the Commission his concerns about issues including, but not limited to:

- (1) the unkempt driveway;
- (2) the egress and ingress of cars on the driveway which may adversely affect traffic patterns on Bryans Road without the addition of proper traffic enforcement;
- (3) the apparent lack of a designated area for the parking of cars and the apparent lack of room on the property for the same;
- (4) the apparent lack of a designated area for the parking of food trucks, as it was indicated that food trucks may be present;
- (5) the two portable toilets in disrepair and blocked by a large pile of dirt;
- (6) the apparent lack of running water; and
- (7) the uneven, grassy open field which will be supporting a stable and level wrestling ring.

The Commission determined that it would be unable to grant a sanction for the holding of wrestling events at the Bryans Road, Maryland property until, and unless, it receives written confirmation from the Charles County Department of Planning and Growth Management in Charles County, Maryland affirming the approval of wrestling events being held on this property and listing any specific requirements or stipulations being imposed.

COMMISSION REVIEW OF MAY 4, 2022 “AEW DYNAMITE”
PAY-PER-VIEW PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING EVENT –
THE CHESAPEAKE EMPLOYERS INSURANCE ARENA
(UMBC EVENT CENTER)

Executive Director Pannella provided the Commission with a review of the pay-per-view professional wrestling event promoted by All Elite Wrestling, LLC (“AEW”), advertised as “AEW Dynamite”, and held on May 4, 2022 at The Chesapeake Employers Insurance Arena (UMBC Events Center) in Catonsville, Maryland.

Mr. Pannella reported that AEW’s production staff fully complied with all Commission regulations, and was very cooperative in arranging for all participating AEW wrestlers and referees to be interviewed by the attending Commission inspectors and to be examined by the attending physician in a timely manner.

REVIEW OF MAY 14, 2022 **PROFESSIONAL BOXING EVENT**

Executive Director Pannella provided the Commission with an overview of the professional boxing event promoted by Lamont Roach. Sr., advertised as “NoXcuse Promotions”, and held on May 14, 2022 at Rosecroft Raceway in Ft. Washington, Maryland.

Mr. Pannella stated that the professional boxing event included four boxing contests and 18 scheduled rounds of professional boxing competition.

Mr. Pannella noted that NoXcuse Promotions was able to provide COVID-19 rapid testing at the May 14, 2022 weigh-in activity for this boxing event for those licensees requiring such testing in compliance with the Commission’s medical and administrative protocols for COVID-19.

NEW BUSINESS

The Commission acknowledged that Sharon Sands, a professional boxing referee and professional boxing judge, was attending the Commission meeting telephonically. Chairman Norman, on behalf of the Commission, welcomed Ms. Sands.

Ms. Sands addressed the Commission. She observed that the Commission meeting was “very well-run” and added that she had no issues or concerns to discuss.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Commissioner Shull, and seconded by Commissioner Gast, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to adjourn the meeting at 3:38 p.m..

/s/ David J. Norman
Chairman

Date: September 21, 2022