

MARYLAND STATE ATHLETIC COMMISSION

MINUTES - WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2021

On Wednesday, September 15, 2021, the Maryland State Athletic Commission meeting was called to order by Chairman David Norman at 3:02 p.m.. Present were the following: Chairman Norman; Commissioner Brian Boles; Commissioner Chuck Gast; Commissioner Lenny Moore; Commissioner David Shull; Greg Morgan, Commissioner, Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing (“O&P Division”), Maryland Department of Labor (“Department of Labor”); 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 calling in telephonically or participating via Google Meet.

APPROVAL OF COMMISSION MINUTES

Commission minutes for the Commission meeting held on May 25, 2021, previously distributed to Commission members for review, were discussed.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Shull, and seconded by Commissioner Boles, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the May 25, 2021 minutes of the Commission.

Commission minutes for the Commission meeting held on June 16, 2021, previously distributed to Commission members for review, were discussed.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Shull, and seconded by Commissioner Boles, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the June 16, 2021 minutes of the Commission.

Commission minutes for the Commission meeting held on July 21, 2021, previously distributed to Commission members for review, were discussed.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Shull, and seconded by Commissioner Boles, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the July 21, 2021 minutes of the

Commission.

Commission minutes for the Commission meeting held on August 18, 2021, previously distributed to Commission members for review, were discussed.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Shull, and seconded by Commissioner Boles, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to approve the August 18, 2021 minutes of the Commission.

BBCORPORATION - ORIGINAL PROMOTER LICENSE

Executive Director Pannella provided the Commission with the following report. BBCorporation recently applied to the Commission for its original promoter license as a promoter of professional MMA events in the State of Maryland.

Brad Dalton, the promoter representative for BBCorporation, had expressed strong interest in holding MMA event on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and, in particular, Salisbury, Maryland. BBCorporation has indicated that it will conduct its MMA events advertising as “Stellar Fights”.

Commissioner Moore and Mr. Pannella interviewed Mr. Dalton as a condition of licensure for BBCorporation. They reviewed the license application and corresponding documentation submitted by BBCorporation, and were satisfied that the promoter’s application complies with the Commission’s licensing requirements.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Shull, and seconded by Commissioner Boles, the Commission voted unanimously (3-0, with Commissioner Gast not voting) to approve the licensure of BBCorporation as a promoter.

COMMISSION’S COVID-19 MEDICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROTOCOLS

The Commission held a discussion concerning its current “Medical and Administrative Protocols” relative to COVID-19.

Specifically, the Commission discussed the provision requiring licensees participating in a Commission-sanctioned event to either voluntarily show proof of

vaccination or to provide a negative COVID-19 test to the Commission on the day before, or on the day of, the event.

Commissioner Gast opined that, since the Commission is requiring that individuals who choose not to present a vaccination card to the Commission must undergo COVID-19 testing, it bears “some responsibility” to attempt to seek out medical centers which are capable of providing, and performing, COVID-19 testing in the manner prescribed.

Chairman Norman opined that the Commission must be careful not to be seen as “steering” the promoter of an event as well as the licensees participating toward a particular medical center, noting further that the Commission cannot be placed in a position of promoting certain test vendors over other test vendors.

Executive Director Pannella opined that the number of medical centers which can perform “same day” COVID-19 testing appears to be limited at this time.

The Commission instructed Mr. Pannella to inform promoters of the medical centers he has been able to locate which can perform “same day” COVID-19 testing, and advised him further to equally present all such medical centers to promoters.

APPROVAL OF PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING EVENTS

Executive Director Pannella led a Commission discussion concerning the professional wrestling events currently scheduled 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 professional wrestling event promoted by James E. “Jim” Hardwick:

Saturday, September 18, 2021 - 1:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Starting Times

“Mexican Dreams” Outdoors Event in Field Behind Patterson Park
High School Grounds

6200 East Pratt Street - Baltimore, Maryland

Promoter: James E. “Jim” Hardwick,

advertising as “Mexican Dreams”.

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

Saturday, October 16, 2021 - TBA / Afternoon Starting Time
Power Plant Live!
“Taco Festival” Outdoors Event
Power Plant Live!
34 Market Place - Baltimore, Maryland
Promoter: James E. “Jim” Hardwick,
advertising as “Taco Festival Lucha Libre”.

The Commission held a discussion concerning its current “Medical Protocols and Administrative Protocols” relative to COVID-19 and how these protocols will be implemented at a professional wrestling event scheduled to be held by Event Services, Inc. a Wholly-Owned Subsidiary of World Wrestling Entertainment, Inc. (“WWE”) on October 1, 2021 at The Royal Farms Arena in Baltimore, Maryland.

Mr. Pannella noted that WWE has agreed to fully cooperate with the Commission and to adhere to the referenced Commission protocols by ensuring that WWE “talent”, which includes participating wrestlers and referees, will either present their respective vaccination cards to the Commission for examination at the venue or provide a negative COVID-19 test to the Commission at the venue.

Mr. Pannella expounded that:

(1) WWE maintains a physician on its staff who will be responsible for overseeing the conducting of COVID-19 rapid testing of all working WWE talent in an isolated area of the venue, testing to be performed immediately upon the arrival of each wrestler or referee to the venue;

(2) Commission Board Specialist Olga Escobar will represent the Commission at the venue for the purpose of documenting that all WWE talent have either presented his or her vaccination card or tested negative for COVID-19 in the manner prescribed in (1);

(3) No WWE wrestler or referee will be permitted in the dressing room areas of the venue to prepare for the wrestling event until, and unless, he or she has either presented to the Commission his or her vaccination card or tested negative for COVID-19 in the manner prescribed in (1).

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

Friday, October 1, 2021 - 7:45 p.m. Starting Time
“WWE Friday Night Smackdown” Televised Event
The Royal Farms Arena
100 West Baltimore Street - Baltimore, Maryland.

REVIEW OF AUGUST 21, 2021
PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING EVENT

Executive Director Pannella provided the Commission with an overview of the professional wrestling event promoted by James E. “Jimmy” Morris, III, advertised as Adrenaline Championship Wrestling (“ACW”), and held outdoors on August 21, 2021 at Power Plant Live! in Baltimore, Maryland.

Mr. Pannella stated that Mr. Morris and the participating ACW wrestlers and referees fully complied with the Commission’s medical and administrative protocol requirements relative to COVID-19.

REVIEW OF SEPTEMBER 5, 2021
PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING EVENT

Executive Director Pannella provided the Commission with an overview of the professional wrestling event promoted by James E. “Jimmy” Morris, III, advertised as Adrenaline Championship Wrestling (“ACW”), and held on September 5, 2021 at Beefalo Bob’s in Pasadena, Maryland.

Mr. Pannella stated that Mr. Morris and the participating ACW wrestlers and

referees fully complied with the Commission’s medical and administrative protocol requirements relative to COVID-19.

REVIEW OF SEPTEMBER 10, 2021
PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING EVENT

Executive Director Pannella provided the Commission with an overview of the professional wrestling event promoted by James E. “Jim” Hardwick, advertised as Eastern Wrestling Alliance (“EWA”), and held on September 10, 2021 at Tall Cedars Hall in Parkville, Maryland.

Mr. Pannella noted that this was the first wrestling event promoted by Mr. Hardwick, and featuring EWA wrestlers, since the start of the pandemic

Mr. Pannella stated that Mr. Hardwick and the participating EWA wrestlers and referees fully complied with the Commission’s medical and administrative protocol requirements relative to COVID-19.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Commissioner Shull, and seconded by Commissioner Moore, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to adjourn the meeting at 3:25 p.m..

/s/ David J. Norman
Chairman

Date: October 27, 2021