

MARYLAND STATE ATHLETIC COMMISSION

MINUTES - WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 18, 2021

On Wednesday, August 18, 2021, 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 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; Olga Escobar, Board Specialist; and James E. “Jimmy” Morris, III, Licensed Promoter. Absent: Commissioner Brian Boles. This was a virtual meeting due to COVID-19 pandemic public restrictions, with all Commission members, Commission staff and guests calling in telephonically or joining via Google Meetings.

CHAIRMAN’S REPORT

Chairman Norman provided the Commission with an overview of the State of Maryland’s efforts and success in addressing the COVID-19 virus.

Chairman Norman reported that, having recently returned from a trip abroad, he observed a growing international concern about the “aerosol infection” exposure to Delta variants to COVID-19.

He noted the recent public announcement by Maryland Governor Larry Hogan that 80 percent of Maryland residents who are adults are expected to be vaccinated by Labor Day of this year.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

PASSING OF DR. SHERRY WULKAN, M.D.

AUGUST 12, 2021

The Commission held a moment of silence in honor of Dr. Sherry Wulkan, M.D., an internationally-recognized ringside physician for combative sports who passed away on August 12, 2021.

Chairman Norman stated that Dr. Wulkan, who had served for many years as a ringside physician for the New Jersey Athletic Control Board, was “one of the` most acknowledged and respected experts” in her medical field.

Executive Director Pannella stated that Dr. Wulkan played active leadership roles over the years in both the Association of Boxing Commissions and the Association of Ringside Physicians.

Mr. Pannella called Dr. Wulkan “a rock solid advocate for boxers and MMA fighters alike, but especially for the latter.”

Mr. Pannella noted that Commission Chief Physician Dr. John W. Stiller, M.D., who was a close friend and colleague of Dr. Wulkan, consulted with her on numerous occasions for the Commission concerning matters of fighter safety.

Mr. Pannella further noted that Dr. Wulkan continued to make “significant” contributions to the Commission even as recently as assisting with, and reviewing, the initial creation of the Commission’s medical and administrative protocols for COVID-19.

The Commission expressed its deepest condolences to the family of Dr. Wulkan.

MOMENT OF SILENCE
PASSING OF ANIBAL MIRAMONTES
AUGUST 13, 2021

The Commission held a moment of silence in honor of Anibal Mirimontes, a highly respected records keeper of professional boxing contests who passed away on August 12, 2021.

Executive Director Pannella stated that Mr. Miramontes was the third in a series of owners of Fight Fax, Inc., which was for many years the official records keeper company of the Association of Boxing Commissions.

Mr. Pannella noted that Mr. Miramontes was a stickler for accuracy in reporting professional boxing results, was very proactive in seeking to ensure that boxing

commissions and boxing authorities around the world were held accountable in this regard, and worked closely with the Commission.

The Commission expressed its deepest condolences to the family of Mr. Miramontes.

UPDATING COMMISSION’S “COVID-19 MEDICAL PROTOCOLS AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROTOCOLS”

The Commission held a discussion concerning the recent updating of its “COVID-19 Medical Protocols and Administrative Protocols”. Revisions include the following requirements.

For all Commission-sanctioned events, a contestant, wrestler, judge, manager, matchmaker, second, promoter or promoter representative entering either the dressing room area or the ring enclosure area of a venue will be required to provide to the Commission a negative test for COVID-19 performed on the day before, or on the day of, an event. A promoter representative is defined as any individual who works for, who is contracted by, who is a trainee of, who is affiliated with, or who is controlled or directed by the promoter and who enters any area of the venue other than the spectator seating area and public concourse. If an individual voluntarily chooses to provide to the Commission a copy of his or her vaccination card, and two weeks have passed since the individual was fully vaccinated, such a test will not be required.

Individuals who provide the vaccination card to the Commission will not be required to wear a mask.

With the exception of combative sports contestants, professional wrestlers and referees participating in their respective contests or matches, individuals who undergo the mandated COVID-19 testing will be required to wear a mask in the dressing room area or in the ring enclosure area. Individuals who undergo the mandated COVID-19 testing will also be required to utilize a separate dressing room area from individuals who provided the Commission with a copy of their vaccination card.

There are no mask requirements in the public seating area and public concourse of

the venue for either spectators attending the event or anyone who does not enter the dressing room area or the ring enclosure area.

Chairman Norman advised that the Commission will continue to monitor any additional COVID-19 restrictions which Maryland counties and Baltimore City have the authority and discretion to impose and which exceed the COVID-19 restrictions imposed by Governor Hogan through Executive Order.

The Commission, at the recommendation of Chairman Norman, agreed that it will provide all licensed promoters with at least a two week notice prior to making any additional changes to its medical and administrative protocols for COVID-19 unless a government mandate supersedes such an action.

Commissioner Morgan referenced Governor Hogan's strong commitment to encouraging Maryland citizens to get vaccinated. He noted that Governor Hogan is seeking to create as much of a sense of normalcy as possible while avoiding any capacity limitations for, or shut downs of, indoor events.

REVIEW OF JULY 24, 2021 **PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING EVENT**

Executive Director Pannella provided the Commission with an overview of the professional wrestling event promoted by Dennis W. Wipprecht, Jr., advertised as Maryland Championship Wrestling ("MCW"), and held on July 24, 2021 at the Joppa Market Place / MCW Arena in Joppa, Maryland.

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

REVIEW OF AUGUST 13, 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 August 13, 2021 at

the Seven Ten venue in Hagerstown, 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.

Mr. Pannella noted that the owner of the Seven Ten was very pleased to see the first wrestling event being held at the venue and being regulated by the Commission.

Mr. Pannella further noted that the owner complimented the Commission on its high safety standards with regard to the regulation of this wrestling event and the protection of wrestlers.

**REMARKS BY JAMES E. "JIMMY" MORRIS, III -
LICENSED PROMOTER OF
PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING EVENTS**

James E. "Jimmy" Morris, III, who is licensed by the Commission as a promoter and who holds professional wrestling events in communities throughout the State of Maryland, addressed the Commission under "New Business" on the Commission meeting agenda.

Mr. Morris referenced the language contained in the Commission's "COVID-19 Medical Protocols and Administrative Protocols". He opined that the medical requirements for wrestlers and referees participating in a wrestling event as currently written "are very fair".

Chairman Norman informed Mr. Morris that the Commission was not considering making any changes to the Commission protocols at this time.

Chairman Norman reaffirmed that, while the Commission "is taking a watchful stance" in monitoring the ongoing fluid nature of the virus and its potential variants, it will endeavor to provide all licensed promoters with at least a two week notice prior to making any changes to these protocols.

APPROVAL / CANCELLATION OF

PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING EVENTS

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

Executive Director Pannella announced that licensed promoter Dennis W. Wipprecht, Jr. notified the Commission in writing via e-mail that he was cancelling the following professional wrestling event:

Saturday, September 11, 2021 - 7:30 p.m. Starting Time
Joppa Market Place / MCW Arena
1000 Joppa Farm Road - Joppa, Maryland
Promoter: Dennis W. Wipprecht, Jr.,
advertising as Maryland Championship Wrestling
("MCW").

Upon a motion by Commissioner Gast, seconded by Commissioner Shull, the Commission voted unanimously (3-0) to approve the following professional wrestling event promoted by Dennis W. Wipprecht, Jr.:

Friday, September 17, 2021 - 7:30 p.m. Starting Time
Joppa Market Place / MCW Arena
1000 Joppa Farm Road - Joppa, Maryland
Promoter: Dennis W. Wipprecht, Jr.,
advertising as Maryland Championship Wrestling
("MCW").

Executive Director Pannella announced that licensed promoter James E. "Jim" Hardwick notified the Commission in writing via e-mail that he was cancelling the following professional wrestling event:

Saturday, October 23, 2021 - 7:30 p.m. Starting Time
Tall Cedars Hall
2501 Putty Hill Avenue - Parkville, Maryland
Promoter: James E. "Jim" Hardwick,
advertising as Eastern Wrestling Alliance ("EWA").

Upon a motion by Commissioner Shull, seconded by Commissioner Gast, the Commission voted unanimously (3-0) to approve the following professional wrestling event promoted by James E. “Jim” Hardwick:

Saturday, November 19, 2021 - 7:30 p.m. Starting Time
Bel Air Armory
37 North Main Street - Bel Air, Maryland
Promoter: James E. “Jim” Hardwick,
advertising as Eastern Wrestling Alliance (“EWA”).

VENUES IN CECIL COUNTY, MARYLAND

Executive Director Pannella led a Commission discussion concerning venues potentially available in Cecil County, Maryland for the holding of combative sports events and professional wrestling events.

Mr. Pannella noted that a recent discussion with an individual expressing a desire to hold professional wrestling events in the northern part of Maryland prompted him to search for venues in Cecil County for this purpose. He reported that he had located at least three banquet halls in the county which can be rented, which have a large seating capacity, and which have adequately high ceilings for the holding of wrestling events in particular.

The Commission directed Mr. Pannella to convey his findings to its licensed promoters who hold boxing events, MMA events and wrestling events.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Commissioner Shull, and seconded by Commissioner Moore, the Commission voted unanimously (3-0) to adjourn the meeting at 3:34 p.m..

/s/David J. Norman
Chairman

Date: September 15, 2021