

# MARYLAND STATE ATHLETIC COMMISSION

## MINUTES - WEDNESDAY, JULY 22, 2020

On Wednesday, July 22, 2020, 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; Olga Escobar, Board Specialist; and Joe Koff, promoter representative for Ring of Honor Wrestling Entertainment, LLC. This was a virtual meeting due to COVID-19 pandemic public restrictions, with all Commission members and Commission staff calling in telephonically.

### **COMMISSION MEDICAL PROTOCOLS AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROTOCOLS FOR COVID-19 TESTING FOR PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING EVENTS WITHOUT SPECTATORS**

The Commission presented the following progress report in regard to the Commission's efforts to create medical protocols and administrative protocols relative to COVID-19 testing for professional wrestling events being held without spectators in attendance.

Chairman Norman reported that the Commission was approached by licensed promoter Ring of Honor Wrestling Entertainment, LLC ("ROH") in June of 2020 to consider sanctioning a three-day series of ROH wrestling matches for television taping purposes without a crowd attending.

Chairman Norman noted that, after "tailoring" such protocols specifically for wrestling events without spectators, the Commission will develop and consider protocols for boxing and MMA events without spectators at a later time.

Chairman Norman commended Commission Chief Physician Dr. John W. Stiller, M.D. for his ongoing medical research involving COVID-19 tests and testing procedures.

Chairman Norman commended Executive Director Pannella for his work in reaching out to other athletic commissions to gather, and to evaluate, COVID-19 testing information.

Chairman Norman stressed the importance of investigating other professional sports to determine which COVID-19 testing protocols are being utilized and whether such protocols would be appropriate for the respective sports regulated by the Commission.

### **“PROPOSED STATEMENT OF CLAIM PURSUANT TO THE MARYLAND TORT CLAIMS ACT” RECEIVED BY THE COMMISSION**

Chairman Norman reported the following. The Commission received a “Proposed Statement of Claim Pursuant to the Maryland Tort Claims Act” from a legal entity representing the widow of professional boxer Maxim Dadashev. Following his boxing contest versus Subriel Matias which was sanctioned by the Commission and held on July 19, 2019 at The MGM National Harbor in Oxon Hill, Maryland, Mr. Dadashev was transported by ambulance to the hospital for neurosurgical intervention resulting from a traumatic brain injury. On July 23, 2019, Mr. Dadashev passed away.

### **ROH REPRESENTATIVE JOE KOFF ADDRESSES COMMISSION**

Joe Koff, promoter representative for licensed promoter Ring of Honor Wrestling Entertainment, LLC (“ROH”), addressed the Commission and expressed the following.

Observing that this was “good news for ROH”, Mr. Koff thanked the Commission for moving forward in the last month to extensively research COVID-19 testing in a concerted effort to create medical protocols and administrative protocols relative to COVID-19 testing for professional wrestling events being held without spectators in attendance.

Mr. Koff noted that the Commission as a whole has been very responsive to ROH, doing “everything that it said it would do” in regard to replying to ROH’s request to

be considered for a sanction to hold a wrestling event without a crowd in accordance with said protocols being created by the Commission.

Chairman Norman reported that the Commission's medical protocols and administrative protocols relative to COVID-19 testing for professional wrestling events being held without spectators are awaiting final approval from the Maryland Department of Labor.

Chairman Norman noted that the Commission, via Executive Director Pannella, will be working closely with ROH to coordinate with the laboratory ultimately selected by ROH to administer COVID-19 testing to ensure that the Commission-sanctioned ROH event being proposed will fully comply with Commission testing protocols.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Upon a motion by Commissioner Shull, and seconded by Commissioner Gast, the Commission voted unanimously (4-0) to adjourn the meeting at 3:24 p.m..

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