

MINUTES
South Carolina Athletic Commission
2:00 P.M., Thursday, February 23, 2006
Commission Meeting
Best Western
6099 Fain Street
Charleston, South Carolina

Robert Williams, Chairman, of Cayce, called the meeting of the S.C. Athletic Commission to order at 2:00 p.m. Other commissioners present included: George Cox, Vice Chairman, of Myrtle Beach; Clyde Jones, of Camden; Lynda Leventis-Wells, of Greenville; Paul Kennemore, of Greenwood; and Michael Tyler, of Cayce.

Staff members participating in the meeting included: Randall Bryant, Assistant Deputy Director; Sandra Dickert, Administrative Assistant; Larry Hall, Inspector; Jimmy Knotts, Inspector; Jim Kyzer, Inspector; Krystal McFadden, Administrative Specialist; and Mark Sanders, Inspector.

Members of the public attending the meeting included: Lucinda Barron, Mark Campbell and James A. Kelley.

Meeting Called to Order

Mr. Williams announced that public notice of this meeting was properly posted at the S. C. Athletic Commission office, Synergy Business Park, Kingstree Building, Room 108, The Best Western, and provided to all requesting persons, organizations, and news media in compliance with Section 30-4-80 of the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

Pledge of Allegiance

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Invocation

All present observed a minute of silent prayer.

Approval of the September 29, 2005 Meeting Minutes

MOTION

Ms. Leventis-Wells moved the Commission approve the minutes of the September 29, 2005 minutes as presented. Mr. Kennemore seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Chairman's Remarks – Robert Williams

Presentation of Plaque on behalf of Luther Bradley

Mr. Bryant spoke to Mrs. Barron and the commission regarding Luther Bradley. He noted with heavy hearts the commission asked his daughter, Lucinda Barron, appear to accept a plaque on Mr. Bradley's half. He noted Mr. Bradley had very strong opinions, was fair-minded and stood by the Commission members.

Ms. Leventis stated Mr. Bradley was truly a gentleman. She told Mrs. Barron that Mr. Bradley walked her to her car no matter where they were. She noted he was so proud of his children and would always talk about his grandchildren. She said he was truly a wonderful person.

Mr. Bryant stated Mr. Bradley went through tumultuous times with the Commission. He offered Mrs. Barron condolences on behalf of the commission

Mr. Kennemore stated Mr. Bradley had a contagious smile and had a strong handshake. He noted Mr. Bradley was a peacemaker and tried to bring unity to the Commission.

Ms. Barron stated the service was hilarious as the speakers regaled the mourners with stories of her father. She further stated she is one of five children and is one of the twins. She noted her father loved sports and the boxing commission was a new concept. She booked flights for her father to attend her son's football games. She noted the sentiments were much the same from everyone she to whom she has spoken. She said it was nice and warm hearted to see what people had to say about her father. She said her father enjoyed life and had a good life.

Mr. Tyler stated he is a new commissioner but could feel that Mr. Bradley had a spiritual presence around him.

ABC Certification

Mr. Williams stated ABC has mandated that all judges and referees be ABC certified and asked the commission members for their thoughts.

Mr. Kennemore stated this was something which should have been done long time ago. He went on to say it is tough if the official does not know what is going on. He indicated the Tough man officials should be certified as well. He said the officials should be able to look in a fighter's eye and see what is going on.

Mr. Tyler stated he recently spoke with an individual who has a handicap and could judge in an area because he is not certified. He has a disability and could not make the meeting to become certified.

Ms. Leventis stated the promoters could be put against the wall. She said some people think they can be grandfathered in; however, if the Commission is not going to grandfather officials, the members need to let everyone know. She continued by saying the official cannot use a handicap as an excuse to get out of training and the commission cannot discriminate against anyone.

Mr. Williams stated a Tough man event was held a week ago Saturday in which an individual came in with a robe and regular boxing shoes. He indicated this fighter knocked his opponent out.

The Commission determined it would not allow that fighter to participate in any future OTSB events.

Mr. Bryant stated the certification has taken effect. He went on to say he feels the Tough man events should also include certified referees.

MOTION

Mr. Tyler moved the Commission mandate that Tough man referees be ABC certified by January 2008. Ms. Leventis-Wells seconded the motion. The motion carried with a majority vote. Mr. Jones opposed the motion.

AMENDED MOTION

Mr. Tyler amended the motion to require that Tough man referees and judges become ABC certified by January 2008. Ms. Leventis-Wells seconded, carried unanimously.

Mr. Tyler stated that during a recent event in Sumter a fighter had his trainer with him and asked the Commission if his manager sit be in his corner. The Commission Representative replied negatively. The trainer moved a couple of seats down. After the fight, the fighter admitted to training for four months and stated he would be splitting his winnings with his manager.** He went on to say this fighter's license was suspended and that the individual attempted to be placed on today's agenda, however, was not allowed to appear. He indicated the individual would probably attempt to be placed on the next agenda.

Mr. George Cox arrived at this time.

Mr. Hall stated the audience cheered the commission's action when the fighter was disqualified until an investigation has been completed. He went on to say the fighter admitted to working out in the gym every day.

The Commission has to prove a fighter's disqualification by his record and qualifications.

Mr. Williams stated the manager indicated the fighter could not turn professional at this time and that the fighter is 30 years old.

Mr. Bryant stated the commission could change the requirement legislatively.

Administrator's Remarks – Randall Bryant

Mr. Bryant stated a promoter previously appealed to the commission regarding the expense of the optometry exam. He further stated he took the appeal to Optometry Board. He indicated this is an ABC required exam across the Board

Mr. Bryant stated Mr. Williams, Mr. Hall and Mr. Knotts recently attended the ABC certification training for referees and judges. He indicated ABC uses same trainers for training programs. He noted the ABC thought it would be more advantageous to have different trainer.

Mr. Hall stated Mr. Mark Campbell went to North Carolina and became certified ref. Campbell's wife is a certified judge.

Mr. Bryant stated the statistical info included an error. The statistical report indicates licenses that were issued were in 2005. He went on to say staff has been very busy and thanked the Commission members for being at the events. He continued by saying staff has had to stop a number of events and have issued two cease and desist orders and a citation.

Mr. Kyzer briefed the commission on the cease and desist order on Mitchell Sims.

Mr. Bryant stated Mitchell Sims has been a problem. He indicated there has been unscrupulous activity in the parking lot and arrests have been made. He noted staff has contacted local law enforcement and continue to talk with law enforcement; however, those officers are busy with bigger crimes taking place. He noted staff then issued a cease and desist order. He went on to say he has since received a call from Mr. Sims to allegedly receive the appropriate permits.

Mr. Bryant introduced Mark Sanders to the Commission and briefed them on Mr. Sanders' professional background.

Mr. Cox asked Mr. Bryant about Mr. Sims. Mr. Bryant stated Mr. Sims could have a crowd in the facility; however, staff could not get in the facility due to race. He indicated local law enforcement did not have anyone who could assist them in that area. He went on to say Mr. Sims has adhered to the cease and desist order.

Advisory Opinions, If Needed, Office of General Counsel
Legislative Update, If Needed, Legislative Liaison Office

There were no advisory opinions or legislative update given during this meeting.

Mr. Bryant stated he has spoken to the Commission regarding recent amendments to the engine act. He further stated the proposed legislation introduced last year was withdrawn and a clean bill has been introduced due to several changes to the amendments.

Ms. Leventis-Wells asked Mr. Bryant if the members could attend the Charleston events. Mr. Bryant stated any commissioner who would like to attend the Charleston events is welcome, although the commissioners should attend those in their area.

Mr. Cox asked Mr. Bryant about Bobby Mitchell. Mr. Kelley stated Mr. Mitchell is serving his time in a federal minimum-security facility located in Edgefield. He noted that the facility is located near a maximum-security facility. He indicated Mr. Mitchell's appeal is coming up shortly; however, he may serve seven to ten years.

Unfinished Business

Mr. Cox asked Mr. Bryant if the ABC convention was held this past year. Mr. Bryant stated the convention was held in Las Vegas in July 2005. He noted that he and Mr. Williams attended the convention. He further stated there were several new attendees at the meeting however the material was redundant. He indicated he would not be opposed to having the convention in South Carolina again. He went on to say MMA was a major player in last year's convention. He also stated that this year's convention would be held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He said that if any of the Commission members who wish to attend the meeting should let him know.

New Business

1. Statistical Report from Larry Hall

This information was given during Mr. Bryant's remarks.

2. ABC Training – Larry Hall, Jimmy Knotts, Robert Williams

Mr. Williams stated the training was beneficial and he does not see how anyone could fail the test when the trainers were giving the answers to all of the questions. He noted a judge in Mr. Kennemore's district passed the exam

Mr. Hall stated one individual from Washington was four hours late and questioned everything being presented. He went on to say the program trained the individuals on what they are to do. He noted he learned things he didn't know. He went on to say individuals don't know enough. He went on to say the officials are re-certified every two years.

Mr. Kennemore stated the ABC has videotapes available and would be excellent to use as a training source.

3. Jerry Bragg, aka APW Wrestling

Mr. Kyzer stated he spoke with Mr. Bragg who admitted to not having the appropriate licenses and permits and allowing two unlicensed fighters fight. He further stated he cited Mr. Bragg \$250. He noted Mr. Bragg indicated he would comply with the Commission's rules.

Mr. Cox asked Mr. Bryant if the Governor had appointed a physician to the Commission yet. Mr. Bryant stated history has shown that board/commission appointments are real slow. Mr. Cox stated he was just curious since the newer statute has a sense of a reform measure.

Mr. Kelley informed the Commission that one of the physicians he has attending his events, Dr. Hilliard from Charleston, attended the Association of Fight Doctors meeting.

Discussion Items

There were no discussion items for this meeting.

Public Comments

Jim Kelley recommended the Commission move to ABC certification as soon as possible. He believes it is good economics for everyone and that professionally trained individuals make a difference. He noted he is bringing in trained persons for his event tonight. He indicated age is always a problem. He further stated he would love for all of the commissioners attend his events. He applauded staff for doing their jobs. He said he just had one fighter test positive for HIV, second one. He went on to say he has had to tell two fighters they tested positive for hepatitis and he applauded South Carolina for doing the HIV testing.

Mr. Campbell thanked the Commission for the certified referee and judges training.

Executive Session

The Board entered executive to discuss disciplinary matters.

Return to Public Session to Report on Executive Session

Mr. Williams noted for the record that no motions were offered and no votes were taken during executive session.

Election of Officers

MOTION

Ms. Leventis moved the Commission keep the same slate of officers. Mr. Kennemore seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Adjournment

There being no further business to be discussed at this time, Mr. Cox made a motion, seconded by Mr. Kennemore and unanimously carried, that the meeting be adjourned.

The February 23, 2006 meeting of the SC Athletic Commission adjourned at 3:40 P.M.