

MINUTES
South Carolina Athletic Commission
10:00 A.M., June 11, 2009
Commission Meeting
Synergy Business Park
Kingstree Building
110 Centerview Drive, Conference Room 108
Columbia, South Carolina

Meeting Called to Order

Michael Tyler, Chairman, of Lexington, called the meeting of the S.C. Athletic Commission to order at 10:20 a.m. Other commissioners present included: Robert Williams, vice chairman, of Cayce; George Cox, of Myrtle Beach; and Paul Kennemore, of Greenwood.

Clyde Jones, of Camden, and Lynda Leventis-Wells, of Greenville, were not present for the meeting.

Staff members participating in the meeting included: Kristy Bell, Administrative Assistant; Randall Bryant, Assistant Deputy Director; Sandra Dickert, Administrative Assistant; Larry Hall, Inspector; and Jimmy Knotts, Inspector.

Members of the public attending the meeting included: Amos Collins, David Garrick, Sam King, Brandon Nickles, Wayne Rush, Billy Stanick, Denny Starr, and Andrew Stokes.

Mr. Tyler announced that public notice of this meeting was properly posted at the S. C. Athletic Commission office, Synergy Business Park, Kingstree Building, 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

Mr. Kennemore delivered the invocation.

Approval of January 27, 2009 Meeting Minutes

MOTION

Mr. Cox made a motion the Commission approve the minutes of the January 27, 2009 meeting. Mr. Kennemore seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Chairman's Remarks – Michael Tyler

Mr. Tyler stated the MMA has passed the legislature and is now law.

Commission's Representative's Remarks – Larry Hall

Number of Events

Mr. Hall stated two professional boxing events, a tough woman event, and five wrestling events had taken place since the last meeting.

Upcoming Events

Mr. Hall stated there would be a Tough Man event in Anderson on June 13-14. On June 20 a professional boxing event will take place at the Radisson Hotel in Columbia. Proposed

professional boxing events may occur in York on July 18, in Hilton Head on July 25, and in Columbia on August 29 and again on November 21. A WWE event is scheduled for the BiLo Center in Greenville on July 19, 2009. The professional boxing events are being promoted by Andrew Stokes.

Administrator's Remarks – Randall Bryant

Advisory Opinions, If Needed, Office of General Counsel

There were no advisory opinions given during this meeting.

Legislative Update, If Needed, Legislative Liaison Office

The legislative update was given during the chairman's remarks.

Mr. Bryant stated he would like to discuss MMA issues with the Commission in executive session.

Old Business

Mr. Cox stated the Commission discussed Lucas Rodas' fraudulent blood work. Mr. Hall stated Mr. Rodas had informed staff his blood work was in order and participated in a bout. Staff later learned Mr. Rodas' blood work was not in order and suspended his license. Mr. Rodas has paid the \$500 fine and his license has been reinstated.

New Business

1. Standards for Wrestling Promoters – Greg Price

Mr. Price did not appear during this meeting.

2. SC Wrestling Guidelines – GCW Representatives (Joseph Nickles, Joshua Chilton, Brandon Lawton)

Mr. Nickles is interested in becoming a promoter in Greenwood and asked that the Commission go over the guidelines for wrestling.

Mr. Bryant stated an annual physical is required by a physician, nurse practitioner or DO. He informed Mr. Nickles of the licensure fees and also stated he would be responsible for the cost of an inspector should an inspector have to be on site during the event. He noted the statute and regulations, as well as all of the forms, are located on the Commission's web page

Mr. Nickles stated he would be doing business as GCW.

3. Regulation of MMA

Mr. Bryant presented the members with a copy of draft regulations for MMA for their review. He asked that the members review the document for comments during the next meeting.

4. Approval of MMA Promoter's Application – Amos Collins

Amos Collins questioned the Commission as to when applications would be accepted for MMA events.

Executive Session

MOTION

Mr. Cox made a motion the Commission enter executive session to discuss MMA issues. Mr. Kennemore seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Return to Public Session

MOTION

Mr. Williams made a motion the Commission return to public session. Mr. Cox seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Mr. Tyler stated no official action was taken by the Commission during executive session.

Mr. Bryant stated he is sure there would be illegal events transpiring immediately within South Carolina and asked for the Commission's decision on handling of such events.

MOTION

Mr. Cox made a motion the Commission direct the department to seek criminal prosecution for any violation or preemptive activities involved in the conduct of mixed martial arts events until such time and after the regulations are set in place. Mr. Williams seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Mr. Bryant stated the MMA proposed regulations regarding professional and amateur MMA events, as well as the guidelines for MMA promoters, would be posted on the Commission's web page. He asked that the promoters make comments regarding the proposed regulations. He noted when the Commission's web page will also reflect when the Commission begins accepting MMA applications and would contain all mandated and useful documents.

Mr. Sam King stated three 3-minute rounds are held for an individual's first bout, followed by three 4-minute rounds for fights after the first fight. He suggested the Commission view the ISKA web site for information regarding professional and amateur MMA events. He noted there are sanctioning bodies the Commission could approve which could assist in regulating amateur events. He further stated special training is required for all referees.

Mr. Bryant stated the new statute does not distinguish between professional and amateur events.

Mr. Amos Collins does not believe the Commission should be involved in amateur events.

Mr. Sam King stated the ISKA website does contain background checks regarding the MMA fighters.

Mr. Bryant asked for the Commission's direction regarding the interpretation of Section 40-81-445, which discusses the assigning of a sanctioning body for MMA events in South Carolina.

MOTION

Mr. Cox made a motion the Commission direct the department to have oversight over amateur and professional events with the understanding there may be sanctioning bodies in which the Commission may subcontract to regulate the amateur events. Mr. Kennemore seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Mr. Bryant stated out of pocket expenses for amateur or professional MMA events will be incurred by the promoter. He further stated the Commission must develop an in-depth medical and life insurance policy regarding MMA. He said staff has researched this matter and found that Mississippi's medical insurance policy on a fighter is \$2,500 and Las Vegas insurance is \$50,000. He feels Mississippi's insurance policy is too low.

Mr. King stated most of the states which have sanctioning bodies that come in which requires a mandatory liability and medical insurance policy.

Mr. Andrew Stokes recommended the Commission not go below \$10,000.00 on insurance.

The Commission asked that MMA insurance be placed on the next agenda.

MOTION

Mr. Cox made a motion if LLR, in its discretion, prior to any scheduled wrestling event finds probable cause to believe a wrestling event may or could result in a violation of state law or Athletic Commission regulations, a representative of the department shall monitor the event and the promoter shall be responsible for all accrued expenses incurred by said inspection. Mr. Williams seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Mr. David Garrick, of War Zone, stated two inspectors took time on a Sunday where an event was being held in Columbia. He does not feel the Commission should fine a promoter if the inspector finds the event is legal. He proposed the individual who is calling in the complaint identify himself with a phone number.

Mr. Hall stated the inspectors must investigate all complaints, even if the complaint is anonymous. He was unaware of the call; however, Mr. Williams and Mr. Knotts handled that call.

Mr. Bryant stated he has instructed his staff to contact all of the Commission members when a permit has been issued.

Mr. Cox thanked Mr. Hall, Mr. Knotts, and Ms. Bell for their hard work with the events.

Public Comments

No public comments were made during this meeting.

Adjournment

MOTION

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

The June 11, 2009 meeting of the SC Athletic Commission adjourned at 12:13 p.m.

The next meeting of the S.C. Athletic Commission is scheduled for September 24, 2009.