

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, LICENSING AND REGULATION
BEFORE THE BOARD OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA ATHLETIC COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF:)
)
BOARD BUSINESS)
)
)
_____)

Given before Robin K. Reibold, Certified Verbatim Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of South Carolina, commencing at 10:06 a.m. on Tuesday, February 12, 2019, at the office of the South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation, 110 Centerview Drive, Columbia, South Carolina.

Reported by:
Robin K. Reibold

ROBIN K. REIBOLD, CVR
113 Grandview Circle
Columbia, South Carolina 29229
803.447.7868 - rkreibold@yahoo.com

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

APPEARANCES:

Committee Members Present:

William L. McCullough, Chairman

Edwin M. Estridge

James D. Vaught - via telephone

Paul. H. Kennemore - via telephone

Advising the Committee:

Robert E. Horner, Esquire

SC Department of Labor, Licensing & Regulation

Office of General Counsel

110 Centerview Drive

PO Box 11329

Columbia, SC 29211-1329

Also Present:

Eric Thompson, Board Administrator

Charlie Martin, Administrative Assistant

Renee Young, Administrative Assistant

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: This meeting is called to order.
2 Public notice of this meeting was properly
3 posted at the South Carolina Athletic
4 Commission office, Synergy Business Park,
5 Kingstree Building and on the commission
6 website and provided to all requesting persons,
7 organizations, and news media in compliance
8 with Section 30-4-80 of the South Carolina
9 Freedom of Information Act. The first thing we
10 have on the agenda today is the approval of the
11 agenda. With us right now we've got Mr. Mack
12 Estridge. And then on the line, just note if
13 you would please, gentlemen, when I say your
14 name, just say "here" for the record. Dr. Hamp
15 Kennemore, are you here?

16 DR. KENNEMORE: Here.

17 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Thank you, sir. And Dr. Dillon
18 Vaught, are you here?

19 DR. VAUGHT: Here.

20 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Excellent, thank you, sir, as
21 well. All right. So the first thing we have
22 on the agenda is the approval of the agenda
23 itself. Is there anybody, most especially on
24 the line, to whom the agenda has not yet been
25 provided?

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 COMMISSION: (No response.)

2 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Hearing nothing, I'll assume we
3 all have it. Is there a motion from board
4 members to approve the agenda?

5 DR. VAUGHT: This is Dillon, I'll make a motion to
6 approve the agenda.

7 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: All right. Thank you, Dillon.
8 We have a motion to approve. Is there a
9 second?

10 MR. ESTRIDGE: Mack Estridge will second.

11 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Thank you, Mack. All right. We
12 have a second. All in favor say aye?

13 COMMISSION: Aye.

14 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Any opposed say nay?

15 COMMISSION: (No response.)

16 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: All right. The motion is
17 approved, and the agenda is approved as well.
18 All right. The next item we have is the
19 approval of excused absences. I understand
20 that Dr. D'Andrea has some family medical
21 issues going on right now that are of
22 importance. Dr. Phillips is doing surgical-
23 related things in his cardiology thing. And
24 Ms. Pam Wright, also in the medical field,
25 can't be with us today either. Is there a

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 motion to approve those absences?

2 MR. ESTRIDGE: I will make a motion to approve those
3 absences.

4 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: All right. Thank you. Is there
5 a second?

6 DR. VAUGHT: This is Dillon. I will make a second.

7 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: All right. Thank you. All in
8 favor say aye?

9 COMMISSION: Aye.

10 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Any opposed say nay?

11 COMMISSION: (No response.)

12 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: All right. The motion is
13 approved -- passed. Thank you very much. The
14 next item we have on the agenda is the approval
15 of minutes from our board meeting on October
16 2nd and our teleconference age-waiver hearing
17 from November 15th. If board members will just
18 take a quick moment and look over those
19 minutes; and once somebody has read faster than
20 the others, if they'd like to make a motion
21 whether to approve those minutes or not, it
22 would be greatly appreciated.

23 DR. VAUGHT: You're talking about the ones in the
24 packet, right?

25 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Yes, sir. Yeah, just looking

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 for a motion to approve or not those past
2 minutes.

3 DR. VAUGHT: Got you. I read them earlier. Dillon.

4 I'll make a motion to approve the past minutes
5 from the two meetings, the October 2nd and the
6 teleconference on November 15th.

7 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Thank you, Dillon. Is there a
8 second?

9 MR. ESTRIDGE: Mack Estridge, second that.

10 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Thank you, Mack. All in favor
11 say aye?

12 COMMISSION: Aye.

13 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Any opposed say nay?

14 COMMISSION: (No response.)

15 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: And the motion has passed and
16 the approval of the minutes is approved. The
17 next item we have is Chairperson's Remarks.
18 That's me. Hooray! So with regard to
19 chairperson's remarks today, we've got a couple
20 of people speaking about some interesting
21 topics today. We're not going to be making a
22 decision on those topics as they come up with
23 regard to some specific things, the stand-up
24 quasi MMA thing that somebody wanted to
25 discuss, or at least have mentioned. And we're

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 going to talk a little bit about bare-knuckle
2 boxing. Just to say up front, our intent today
3 isn't to make a decision on those, but to gain
4 more insight on that so perhaps we can make a
5 decision at an upcoming, if not the next
6 upcoming, meeting. That being said, since I
7 have the soapbox right here, we are a small
8 board. As you can tell by looking up here,
9 there's not many people. We have a total of,
10 let's see, seven members right now? What's our
11 -- what's our -- what are we supposed to have
12 in a perfect world. Can anybody tell me?

13 MR. MARTIN: Nine.

14 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Nine. So the way it works with
15 these -- the way being on this board works -- I
16 can tell you how I personally got on. Somebody
17 in the state government reached out, like the
18 different state senators, and asked is there
19 somebody in your district that you know that
20 would like to potentially serve on this board.
21 I knew our local state senator, and he happened
22 -- he knew I had a, you know, fighting martial
23 arts background, loved that kind of stuff. He
24 reached out to me and I said, sure, I'd like to
25 do it. So that's how I personally got on the

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 board. I would say that we are lacking members
2 right now. I mean, we have -- because what you
3 have to have is a quorum. You have to have one
4 over half to be able to conduct this meeting.
5 So today, with our two who were good enough to
6 call in, and the two that are here, we just
7 made our quorum. If we didn't have that
8 quorum, and, you know, these are a lot of
9 people in -- you know, these are professionals
10 that own their own businesses and do what they
11 need to do throughout the course of the day.
12 It's not -- if there is a family emergency or
13 things, it's realistic to expect that they
14 can't always physically come to this or call
15 in. I'm saying that because if you happen to
16 know somebody or be personally interested in
17 serving on this board, consider reaching out to
18 your local congressman or senator and say, hey,
19 I understand there's some vacancies on the
20 Athletic Commission board; I'd be interested in
21 potentially serving, what do we do? That's not
22 something that we can initiate. I can't say
23 Don Steele should be on this board, let's get
24 him. It's not that way. That has to come from
25 powers beyond ourselves, if that makes sense.

Robin K. Reibold, CVR
(803)447-7868/rkreibold@yahoo.com

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 So like I say, again, if you personally
2 potentially have an interest in being on this
3 board or you know folks that you think would
4 serve well and serve the fighting community in
5 the state, reach out to your local
6 representatives, voice that, and see if they
7 can help kind of start the path to you or
8 someone you know getting up here too. Because
9 we need -- we're kind of -- I don't mean to say
10 this in a derogatory form towards the rest of
11 LLR, but if you think about it, we're kind of
12 in a way a stepchild. I mean, we're not a
13 large -- I own a real estate brokerage. The
14 Real Estate Commission is a big board. I know
15 counsel sits on this board and Nursing, and
16 what was the other one?

17 MR. HORNER: Dental.

18 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Dental. I mean, those are large
19 industries. And so, it's not that it's not
20 important to the state, it's that we need
21 people who it is important to, like yourselves,
22 to reach out so you can be a part of it. Does
23 that make sense? So I just wanted to pass that
24 on and put a bug in your ear to pass that bug
25 into other people's ear. You know, if fighting

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 -- although from a big-picture fiscal
2 perspective, maybe the Athletic Commission is a
3 small board in the LLR realm, to the people
4 that are sitting out here right now it's the
5 most important thing in your world, or one of
6 them. And so find ways to get involved and
7 push that issue. It's appreciated. Love to
8 see some of y'all up here. All right. Thus
9 ends Chairperson's Remarks. That being said,
10 the next thing we have is Administrator's
11 Remarks. Mr. Eric Thompson, what have you got
12 for us today?

13 MR. THOMPSON: All right. Thank you, Mr. Chair, board
14 members. The first thing I want to talk about
15 is we've got a couple of events that are coming
16 up. March 2nd we have an MMA event that's
17 coming up in Greenville, South Carolina. That
18 will be the 864 Production. So we have that
19 event. Also, on March 30th we have a boxing
20 event that will be here in Columbia at Jamil
21 Temple. That will be the Stokes Production.
22 So those are two events that we know of that
23 are on tap right now as far as events, upcoming
24 events. As you can see in the budget, we have
25 the December budget, which is the last quarter.

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 The beginning balance of course was \$438,570 in
2 the red. We took in a total of \$81,221.27. We
3 had direct expenditures of \$31,716.33. Leaving
4 us with a net of \$49,504.94. Which means our
5 year-to-end balance is still \$389,065.53 in the
6 red. So we're chipping at it slowly. But
7 thanks to some of the fees that we have waived
8 internally, we're able to maintain a net. So
9 that's our budget. Also, Charlie should have
10 reached out to all of the commission members.
11 We should have everybody complete their
12 statement of economic interest. That should be
13 in before March. I think that we sent an email
14 out to all the board members. So we encourage
15 everybody to make sure that they get that
16 turned in. I would like to introduce to some -
17 - we have a new administrative assistant who
18 came up, and she's partially being paid by
19 Athletic. It's Ms. Renee Young. Renee is here
20 today. This is her first meeting. She will be
21 assisting with some of the licensing practices,
22 also assisting with some of the areas of
23 Athletics, so I wanted to kind of introduce her
24 here. Normally I would give you some numbers
25 on licensing. Our internal system, because

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 we're a small board, obviously do not trigger
2 over like some of the larger boards. And so
3 those numbers would be a little bit skewed. We
4 know everybody's license ends on December 31st.
5 We have had some folks that are licensed since.
6 But those numbers that I have include all of
7 the numbers from '18 and '19, and I don't want
8 to present those to you because they would not
9 be accurate. Charlie has reached out to our IT
10 folks to make sure that we get an accurate
11 number. Hopefully by the next board meeting
12 we'll have that fixed and we should be able to
13 give you some accurate numbers on the amount of
14 licensees that we have with the various
15 licenses.

16 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Excellent.

17 MR. THOMPSON: In terms of reports, we've had an
18 uptake this year so far with a couple of issues
19 with unlicensed practicing in the wrestling
20 sport. So we've had a couple of visits that
21 we've made, some visits to a couple of shows.
22 But that's kind of been the only uptake we've
23 had. That's the only sport that we've had so
24 far this year that's been active. I would also
25 just recommend, based on some of the history,

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 that we take a look at maybe creating a task
2 force to kind of review some of our regulations
3 and statues in the near future. I think that
4 we've had a couple of questions that have come
5 up from the various sports, from MMA to boxing,
6 and we've even had some questions about Muay
7 Thai. So I think that this is a good
8 opportunity for us to take a look at maybe
9 updating or drilling down some of the
10 regulations and statues. I think a task force
11 would be the way to go. I would solicit maybe
12 some members from the industry, as well as some
13 board members or commission members, to kind of
14 take a look at those items. Aside from that,
15 that concludes my administrative remarks. And
16 we will just now get some of the updates and
17 reports from the other areas. So we'll have
18 the OIE report from Rodney Pigford.

19 MR. PIGFORD: Good morning, Mr. Chairman.

20 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Rodney, may I for one second?

21 MR. PIGFORD: Yes.

22 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: When you had mentioned upcoming
23 events, you had mentioned about MMA and you had
24 mentioned about boxing. I know -- what's going
25 on with regard to wrestling just off the top of

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 your head? You may not have numbers as far as
2 the smaller promotions, but WWE and anything
3 else that you may know?

4 MR. THOMPSON: Well, we do have WWE that's coming the
5 23rd -- the 23rd of this month will be coming
6 through Columbia.

7 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay.

8 MR. THOMPSON: I believe that before Columbia there is
9 a stop in --

10 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Charleston?

11 MR. THOMPSON: They've been to Charleston.

12 MR. STEELE: They're in Greenville the following
13 night.

14 MR. MARTIN: And Greenville the following night, yeah.
15 So Monday night -- or Sunday night will be in
16 Greenville. They've been to Charleston earlier
17 in the year.

18 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay.

19 MR. MARTIN: But that's the only two on deck for them.

20 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay.

21 MR. ESTRIDGE: I'm sorry, I don't mean to --

22 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: No, no, no, that's fine.

23 MR. ESTRIDGE: I have a quick question just because
24 I'm sure you've got it there. You mentioned
25 the MMA and the boxing, the dates on that again

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 in March?

2 MR. THOMPSON: March 2nd would be the MMA event that's
3 in Greenville at the Shrine Temple.

4 MR. ESTRIDGE: Okay.

5 MR. THOMPSON: And then March 30th would be a boxing
6 event at the Jamil Temple here in Columbia.

7 MR. ESTRIDGE: Okay.

8 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Sorry for the interruption.

9 Thank you.

10 MR. PIGFORD: No problem, sir. The OIE report for
11 today, February 12th, 2019, it reflects cases
12 received from January 1st, 2018, to February 7,
13 2019. We have one closed case, we have one do-
14 not-open case, three cases pending board
15 action, one case pending complaint analyst
16 review, and one case pending further
17 information, for a total of seven cases. On
18 the OIE report I also included on down below
19 some of the alleged allegations that the
20 complaints fall under. Was just allowing
21 unlicensed persons to practice, fraud in
22 obtaining license and unlicensed practice, and
23 then professional conduct. If there is no
24 questions pertaining to the OIE report, we can
25 proceed to the IRC report.

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: I have a question in general,
2 and it's more for my own education, as well as
3 other board members, as well as everybody else
4 that's present today. When we get this report
5 from yourself, speaking in generalities,
6 basically what happened is in one form or
7 another there has been a complaint or there has
8 been at least a suggestion of something
9 incorrect that's been reported. It doesn't
10 come to us on the board; you're basically the
11 dam between us and that complaint. We only
12 hear of that complaint if there is -- if it's
13 deemed necessary through this entity; am I
14 correct?

15 MR. PIGFORD: You are correct.

16 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: So when you give terms like
17 "it's closed" or "do not open," can you define
18 those?

19 MR. PIGFORD: I can.

20 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: What does that mean?

21 MR. PIGFORD: And I can also offer you guys a
22 presentation at one of your future board -- a
23 presentation on investigation process which
24 details how complaints come in and how we
25 handle the complaint and how we investigate it.

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 Which all ties in to your OIE report. If a
2 complaint is called in and the complaint
3 analyst -- he reviews, he or she reviews the
4 complaint and sees a couple of things. We see
5 first if we have jurisdiction. If we don't
6 have jurisdiction, then it falls in that do-
7 not-open case.

8 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay.

9 MR. PIGFORD: The second thing, we make sure that we
10 have enough evidence to proceed, that the
11 violations does fall under your practice act.
12 If that's the case, then we will go ahead and
13 proceed and say, okay, open this case, and it
14 will then be assigned to an investigator to
15 conduct the investigation.

16 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay. And just, what would be a
17 hypothetical non-real-world specific case
18 example of something that would not be under
19 our jurisdiction? Like, what's something that
20 could happen that could be complained at as a
21 do-not-open, that is --

22 MR. PIGFORD: A do-not-open case, if someone
23 complained that they went to an event and it
24 deals with refunds or money issues.

25 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay.

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 MR. PIGFORD: That could be a do-not-open case because
2 that's basically a civil issue, if someone said
3 well, I didn't get paid and I participated, I
4 went to this event and didn't get paid. Well
5 that's a civil issue, that's a money issue,
6 that's a do-not-open case.

7 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay. Okay.

8 MR. PIGFORD: And if a complaint call comes in that
9 does not fall under your practice act, that
10 will also be a do-not-open case.

11 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Excellent. Thank you for that
12 clarification.

13 MR. THOMPSON: An example of that would be any event
14 that occurs on a military institution and they
15 complain because we're the commission, thinking
16 we have jurisdiction on a federal -- which we
17 don't, that would count as one of those as
18 well.

19 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Excellent. Thank you.

20 MR. PIGFORD: And to go further, if you would like, I
21 will get with your administrator, Mr. Eric
22 Thompson, to see, at one of your future board
23 meetings, where you guys would like to hear an
24 investigative process presentation to give you
25 more details on the process, the ODC, the

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 disciplinary process as well.

2 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Understood. Thank you.

3 MR. PIGFORD: You're welcome. Moving to your IRC
4 report. This report is presented to you for
5 your approval. Today we have a total of three
6 cases I want to present to you for your
7 approval for dismissal. So at this point the
8 ODC has the case numbers and probably a little
9 -- maybe the information of who the complainant
10 was. If you'd like, if you have any questions,
11 you can ask me questions about the case, we can
12 explain, and then you guys can vote on why the
13 IRC committee decided give a dismissal.

14 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Understood. At this point is
15 there anybody on the board who has a motion
16 with regard to approving this IRC report or
17 not? Basically what we need is a motion to
18 approve or not.

19 MR. ESTRIDGE: That's what I was wondering, if we
20 (unintelligible).

21 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Stereotypically we --
22 historically we have always approved.

23 MR. ESTRIDGE: So we just -- yeah, because these -- I
24 mean, we're going with this as a -- then Mack
25 Estridge will make a move that we dismiss those

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 charges.

2 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: So we're actually -- we're
3 making a motion to -- that we approve the IRC.

4 MR. ESTRIDGE: Approve the dismissal of those charges.
5 I'm sorry.

6 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Don't be sorry. Thank you. Is
7 there a second?

8 DR. KENNEMORE: This is Hamp. I second that motion.

9 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: All right. Thank you, Hamp.

10 All in favor say aye?

11 COMMISSION: Aye.

12 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Any opposed say nay?

13 COMMISSION: (No response.)

14 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: The motion is passed and the IRC
15 report is approved.

16 MR. THOMPSON: Okay. Along those lines, since the IRC
17 report -- we dismissed those cases, there is no
18 report from the ODC, which is the Office of
19 Disciplinary Counsel. So had there been a case
20 where we had to bring it before this
21 commission, then we would have to. But because
22 we dismissed those, there is no report from the
23 ODC.

24 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Understood. Thank you.

25 MR. PIGFORD: Thank you, sir.

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Thank you for your time. I
2 believe -- so a while back we started this
3 thing where every meeting we would have what we
4 call State of the Sport, which I really enjoy.
5 So basically we -- staff is kind enough to
6 invite somebody out each time from within the
7 state's fighting community to speak on
8 different topics. We've had referees, we've
9 had fight doctors. Dr. John Lucas came. I
10 believe today we have, let's see, Mr. Robert
11 Keller, who's a wrestling promoter.

12 MR. KELLER: Yes, sir.

13 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: And we'd love to hear from you.
14 So if you would, come on up, identify yourself
15 for the record, have a seat or stand, wherever
16 you're more comfortable, and anything that you
17 have to say or share is --

18 MR. KELLER: I kind of wish your investigator wouldn't
19 have left because I've got something I'd like
20 to talk about with him.

21 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Well, share it.

22 MR. KELLER: Absolutely. My name is Robert Keller,
23 I'm a promoter with Midlands Championship
24 Wrestling based here out of Columbia. We run
25 shows in St. Matthews. We also promote with

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 other promoters throughout the state,
2 throughout North Carolina and South Carolina as
3 well. A few things that I'd like to talk
4 about: First of all, I'd like to -- where you
5 going? I didn't leave when you got here.
6 Charlie Martin has done an exceptional job over
7 previous folks that have been in that job.
8 Glenn Frick was another one that done an
9 amazing job with this, but Charlie has really
10 turned around as far as paperwork and the
11 licensing. I handle a lot of my guys, I bring
12 their stuff in, and within a couple of days
13 they've got their stuff in the mail, to where
14 in the past it was a couple of weeks we were
15 even still trying to make sure that they were
16 licensed. I just wanted to point out to the
17 board that Charlie has done an exceptional job
18 --

19 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Excellent.

20 MR. KELLER: -- getting things like that taken care
21 of, and we'd like to commend him for that. One
22 of the other things that I'd like to address is
23 how the complaints are handled. Last year, I
24 believe it was in August, someone filed an
25 online complaint, but they filed it under my

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 name. And under my former company's email
2 address. The only way I found out about this
3 is the fact that they did not present enough
4 evidence and I got a letter from the commission
5 stating that my complaint was going to be
6 closed because it did not have enough evidence.
7 Like I said though, the only problem was I
8 never filed a complaint. So what I would like
9 to present to the board is a changing of how
10 that is done. Eliminate the anonymous
11 complaints and that they either have to be made
12 in person, where they have to show an ID of who
13 they are, or if they're out of the area, you
14 fill out a form and have it notarized as we
15 have to have certain forms notarized to show
16 that that person is who they say they are.

17 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Can you pause one second?

18 MR. KELLER: Yeah, absolutely.

19 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: What's the logistical reality of
20 that?

21 MR. THOMPSON: The agency already has a policy of how
22 complaints are handled, and that would take --
23 that would probably take some act of someone
24 much higher than this commission to change
25 that.

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: So that's an LLR level thing?

2 Can we at least bring it to their -- what's up,
3 counsel?

4 MR. HORNER: It is an LLR level thing, and I think the
5 idea is of course that we'd rather -- we'd
6 rather be over-inclusive with the complaints
7 than under-inclusive so that someone doesn't
8 fear retribution. Obviously, submitting
9 complaints under somebody else's name is not
10 what's supposed to happen. But I think
11 generally the idea is to allow anonymous
12 complaints in the hopes that people aren't
13 scared off by the process and don't file them
14 for fear of retribution or something like that,
15 and some illegal practice is still going on out
16 there that we need to prevent for the safety of
17 the participants or the public. Obviously, I -
18 - typically what happens is there is someone
19 who gets interviewed as part of the initial
20 complaint process, and that's sort of where the
21 first stage of legitimacy is established. Most
22 people do leave names. They do allow contact
23 to be made. There are cases where they will
24 just submit documents and the documents speak
25 for themselves. And the complaint process

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 could take off that way without involving the
2 complainant, who may not know anymore than
3 what's in a newspaper article or something of
4 that. We can certainly discuss it with the
5 higher-ups at LLR, particularly if it becomes
6 an abusive process. I think they would look
7 into trying to streamline that or narrow that
8 and focus on who is making the complaints.
9 Generally, though, at this point I think LLR
10 feels the abuse level is very low and the
11 potential to be gained out of it is fairly high
12 and so --

13 MR. KELLER: Excuse me, may I interrupt you for just a
14 second?

15 MR. HORNER: Sure, absolutely.

16 MR. KELLER: How do you feel it's low, because nobody
17 knew that it was made -- a false complaint was
18 made in my name until I made you aware of it?
19 So how many other complaints out there are like
20 that?

21 MR. HORNER: Well, and I agree with you --

22 MR. ESTRIDGE: It was made via your email?

23 MR. KELLER: I'm sorry?

24 MR. ESTRIDGE: It was made via your email?

25 MR. KELLER: No, sir, it was not made via our email.

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 It was made through another email address, but
2 they left my email as a contact. And I knew
3 that it wasn't from one of -- myself or one of
4 my partners because we don't use that email
5 address.

6 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: It would seem, not trying to be
7 evasive --

8 MR. KELLER: No, absolutely.

9 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: -- because what you're saying is
10 -- I would be pretty jacked if that happened to
11 me, especially in my business.

12 MR. KELLER: Right.

13 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: That being said, if you're
14 looking at LLR, which oversees the nursing
15 commission, the medical --

16 MR. KELLER: Absolutely. I understand.

17 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: -- commission, it's their
18 policy. So we will -- it would seem to me just
19 as a layman that there would be some type of
20 verification process that this is real.

21 MR. THOMPSON: Well, I think it would vet out through
22 the investigation.

23 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: But in this case it didn't.

24 MR. KELLER: Well, and the thing of it, how much time
25 is wasted with your investigators looking up

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 things that are people just being petty or
2 being so-to-speak keyboard tough guys? You
3 know, there -- and it's unfortunate. I don't
4 know if it happens in other entertainment
5 businesses or fighting communities. But I also
6 own a karaoke and DJ business. Small
7 businesses, for whatever reason, are very
8 petty. Some people don't stay in their own
9 yard, so to speak. They are more -- they think
10 they are going to help themselves by trying to
11 damage other people rather than promote what is
12 good for them. If you understand what I'm
13 saying. Rather than saying, hey, this is what
14 we've got and how great we're doing, we're
15 going to tell you how bad somebody else is
16 doing to try to make ourselves look better.

17 MR. THOMPSON: Well, I can attest to that. When you
18 asked the question of how often it happens, I
19 oversee ten other boards and I can tell you in
20 the cosmetology world it happens every day. In
21 the barber world it happens every day.

22 MR. KELLER: Right. Right.

23 MR. THOMPSON: So you're not unique in your complaint.

24 MR. KELLER: So if somebody has the hair on their back
25 to write a complaint -- if they've got the hair

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 on their back to write a complaint, they should
2 be able to stand up and say, yeah, I made this
3 complaint. The constitution says I have the
4 right to face my accuser. If somebody is
5 writing a complaint about me, I should be able
6 to -- be able to say, no, this isn't what
7 happened. If I have a question about something
8 that somebody has done, I will call Charlie
9 directly and say, this is how this is seen, is
10 this what happened? Rather than --

11 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Let me --

12 MR. THOMPSON: And that's where, like the cases you
13 had just a few minutes ago that were dismissed,
14 some of what you're saying is the same thing.
15 They went through the investigative process and
16 it was determined that it either didn't happen
17 or it was --

18 MR. KELLER: And you also said your budget is in the
19 red. How much money and time could be saved by
20 not going through cases that are garbage like
21 that?

22 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Eric, let me stop for a second.

23 MR. THOMPSON: Yes.

24 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Just on -- on that point. I
25 mean, that is an LLR level thing.

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 MR. KELLER: Right.

2 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: So, once again, I'm not making
3 little of it. If it was me I'd be, like I say,
4 not happy at all about it too.

5 MR. KELLER: Right.

6 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: But do recognize that at a board
7 level, our ability to impact any change on that
8 is negligible at best.

9 MR. KELLER: Right.

10 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: We will let LLR know that this
11 is something that has been raised. And I would
12 encourage you to badger LLR about this
13 specifically. However, our intent for having -
14 - and I want to hear complaints. That's what
15 we're here for.

16 MR. KELLER: Right. Right.

17 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: But that one is one we can't do
18 much about.

19 MR. KELLER: But at least it's heard, and you can --
20 you can get --

21 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: One second, sir. Sir, one
22 second please. The reason that we've asked you
23 to come today is, respectfully, we want to hear
24 how specifically we can better impact the
25 wrestling world. The complaint world is

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 legitimate, but it's a little bit out of our
2 realm. That doesn't mean we're going to bypass
3 it when you say something. But how can we as a
4 commission better improve what we're doing in
5 your world of wrestling?

6 MR. KELLER: That brings me to my next -- next thing.

7 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay.

8 MR. KELLER: Unfortunately, we live in a world that's
9 not perfect. And it has been brought to our
10 attention that some people can't behave
11 themselves and have wound up on a sexual
12 offenders list. I'm going to recommend that
13 this board require a background check for
14 anybody getting a professional wrestling
15 license, as they do for me to have a promoters
16 license; I'm required to have a background
17 check that goes ten years. I feel that every
18 person that gets a wrestling license or is
19 involved in the wrestling business should also
20 be required to have that same background check.
21 The website is very vague as far as licensing
22 look-up. Charlie and I have discussed this in
23 the past. It gives you people's real name.
24 For the first seven years that I lived in this
25 state, I promoted wrestling events but I used

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 my -- my now ex-wife's name. She was actually
2 listed as the promoter, I wasn't, because I
3 didn't want people to know my real name, you
4 know, because of the persona that I put on in a
5 wrestling ring, you know, so. And there are a
6 lot of people out there still like that. I
7 know them under the wrestling name, I don't
8 know them by their real name. You know, I'll
9 get a license number and I'll check it with
10 Charlie, "They're good," you know, so. But
11 there are so many people out there that it's
12 hard for us at our level to be able to do
13 background checks. So I think each person
14 should be responsible for their own background
15 check. You know, if I had to check every
16 wrestler at \$25 a head, I wouldn't be able to
17 be in business.

18 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Your point is duly noted. What
19 else you got, sir?

20 MR. KELLER: That is pretty much it.

21 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: How is your promotion doing?
22 How often are you running stuff in the state?

23 MR. KELLER: We're running once a month. We're about
24 to have our third event as far as Midlands
25 Championship Wrestling.

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay.

2 MR. KELLER: And so far it seems like we're doing
3 pretty good. One of our fans is actually here
4 today. He could probably tell you more about
5 it. He's seen more of the wrestling matches
6 that we've put on than I have.

7 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Do you go -- do you go to --
8 here is a good question for you, sir. So you
9 mentioned from the get-go that you hold
10 wrestling events in South Carolina and North
11 Carolina.

12 MR. KELLER: I help with other promotions, yes, sir.

13 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: So in the logistics of managing
14 those events within the different states, is
15 there anything that you see in the nuts and
16 bolts, I'm not talking about at LLR level --

17 MR. KELLER: Right.

18 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: But in the nuts and bolts of
19 applying for licensing or how the event is
20 held, is there anything that you see in these
21 other states that they're doing in a way that
22 might better benefit if it was done here? On
23 the commission level?

24 MR. KELLER: North Carolina has no commission.

25 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay. Well, that's easy.

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 MR. KELLER: And in Georgia also the promoters are
2 required to pay a licensing fee, but there is
3 no license commission as far as wrestlers
4 having a licenses or anything like that.

5 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay.

6 MR. KELLER: The only states - Kentucky, Virginia,
7 West Virginia, Maryland -- or excuse me, West
8 Virginia doesn't. Virginia, Maryland,
9 Kentucky, South Carolina, New York, I believe
10 New Jersey, are the states that require
11 licenses.

12 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay.

13 MR. KELLER: And Philadel -- or Pennsylvania does, but
14 only for promoters, not wrestlers.

15 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay.

16 MR. STEELE: And Louisiana.

17 MR. KELLER: And Louisiana, yes, sir.

18 MR. ESTRIDGE: We're way ahead of the curve.

19 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: What's that?

20 MR. ESTRIDGE: So we'd be way ahead of the curve.

21 MR. KELLER: As far as commission, yeah, you're right
22 out in front.

23 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: And did you -- since he's back
24 in, did you want to restate all the complaints
25 you had against Charlie?

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 MR. KELLER: I have not got the first complaint about
2 Charlie Martin in the world. He's -- as I said
3 before, you know, he has been a vast
4 improvement. We won't mention the previous
5 person that did that, but she did a horrible
6 job. So we'll just leave it at that. Charlie
7 has been a ray of sunshine in this position.
8 Didn't think anybody could replace Glenn Frick,
9 but he at least smiles. Charlie at least
10 smiles.

11 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Excellent. Sir, we thank you
12 for joining us.

13 MR. KELLER: Thank you. I appreciate y'all having me,
14 and I appreciate you all hearing what I had to
15 say.

16 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Thank you. Excellent. All
17 right. So the next topic that we have on the
18 agenda with the -- with Mr. Derek Shoemake
19 leaving us for a position that he has accepted
20 with regard to his legal practice, we now have
21 a vacancy in our vice chair position. So the
22 way that is normally resolved is, I, as the
23 chair, will ask our attending, including those
24 on the line, if they have a nomination,
25 somebody that they would like to nominate for

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 vice chair. That can include themselves. So
2 someone will make a hypothetical nomination,
3 and following that there will be -- see if
4 anybody else is nominated. If there are none
5 others, we will see if there is a second on
6 that initial nomination. Then we'll all vote,
7 and that's that. So one way or another,
8 between Hamp and Dillon and Mack, are there any
9 nominations that any of you would wish to make
10 for the vacant vice chair position?

11 MR. KENNEMORE: Can we nominate Derek to come back?

12 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: We could, but I don't think that
13 much would happen with that unfortunately.
14 Derek was a great guy and it was wonderful to
15 have him, but we all must depart sometime. So
16 here we are. Apparently crickets.

17 MR. KENNEMORE: I nominate Mack Estridge.

18 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: And who was that speaking? Can
19 you identify yourself?

20 MR. KENNEMORE: This is Hamp. I nominate Mack.

21 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: All right. We have a nomination
22 for Mack. Are there any other nominations on
23 the table? Is there a second with regard to --
24 before we go any further, if there is a -- we
25 will table second. Is that a position that you

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 are willing to step into?

2 MR. ESTRIDGE: I think so, as long as you double my
3 pay.

4 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: All right. Well, zero times
5 two. Congratulations. Is there a second with
6 regard to the nomination of Mr. Mack Estridge
7 for the vice chair position of the state
8 athletic commission?

9 DR. VAUGHT: This is Dillon, I'll second it.

10 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Very well. All in --

11 MR. ESTRIDGE: It's a close call.

12 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: It is a close call. All in
13 favor say aye?

14 COMMISSION: Aye.

15 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Any opposed say nay?

16 COMMISSION: (No response.)

17 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: The motion is passed, and Mr.
18 Mack Estridge is now the vice chair of the
19 state athletic commission. Congratulations,
20 Mack.

21 MR. ESTRIDGE: Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Mack has been on the board for,
23 goodness, four years now, -ish?

24 MR. ESTRIDGE: I think so, -ish.

25 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: And has been a great asset and a

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 great person that often I will call with
2 questions about this and that and get opinions,
3 so nothing really changes on that. I
4 appreciate it. So thank you, sir. All right.
5 Great. So we've got a vice chair, yay! The
6 next thing we have to talk about is bare-
7 knuckle boxing. So -- well, I won't steal any
8 thunder from anyone who's getting ready to
9 speak, but we have Mr. Nate Shook. What
10 exactly is your relationship to this realm of
11 bare-knuckle boxing?

12 MR. SHOOK: Sir, thank you for having me.

13 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Yeah.

14 MR. SHOOK: Again, my name is Nathan Shook. I work for
15 Bare Knuckle Fighting Championships. We are
16 the first company that has promoted legal,
17 sanctioned and regulated bare-knuckle boxing
18 events. We're on our -- we just completed our
19 fourth event, and we've been in three different
20 locations. So just to talk a little bit about
21 bare-knuckle fighting --

22 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: May I interrupt for one more
23 second?

24 MR. SHOOK: Yes, sir.

25 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: For those of us that are new or

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 whatever, just so you know, Mr. Shook came and
2 presented this to us multiple times over the
3 last couple of years. There were some factors
4 we needed to consider and some other ongoing
5 things. But invited him back to come speak
6 again. I think you've got some things off the
7 ground, and maybe we'll test drive some stuff.
8 And we'd just love to hear about your growth
9 and everything you've got and what's -- not
10 just growth from a physical perspective, but
11 hurdles that you've seen, pros and cons. I
12 know you've got stuff prepared.

13 MR. SHOOK: Yes.

14 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: But really curious about seeing
15 what's happened from the idea of inception to
16 the reality and some things you've had to go
17 through, and just anything you want to share,
18 we'd love to hear it.

19 MR. SHOOK: That's great. So last time I was here it
20 was 2017. And in 2017 we had the idea. We
21 spoke with doctors and neurologists, and
22 everyone said bare-knuckle boxing is safer than
23 boxing and mixed martial arts. We had no proof
24 from our promotions because we weren't able to
25 do an event, but we had a bunch of specialists

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 and professionals that said this is a safer
2 sport. So after going through multiple states,
3 talking to them, Wyoming actually allowed us to
4 do the first ever legal, sanctioned and
5 regulated bare-knuckle boxing event in history.
6 This happened on June 2nd, 2018. We had a
7 little over 2100 people live in attendance.
8 The event was so popular that we were the
9 number two topic in Twitter in the world. So
10 the only thing that beat us out was, hockey was
11 going on at the time and they got a little bit
12 more attention. But considering everything
13 going on the world, there was so much interest
14 in it that we were number two on Twitter. So I
15 think that's pretty huge. The promoter of it
16 and the founder of Bare Knuckle Fighting
17 Championship is an MMA promoter by the name of
18 David Feldman. David's dad was a world class
19 boxing trainer. David was a professional boxer
20 himself. His brother was a professional boxer
21 as well. David promoted over 300 boxing and
22 mixed martial arts events. So he wasn't
23 unfamiliar with combat sports by any means.
24 His events have been on Fox, Fox Sports, ESPN
25 and Pay-Per-View. So not only has he done

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 local shows, but he's done larger shows. When
2 he came up with this idea, he did one fight at
3 the Ft. McDowell Indian Reservation on August
4 5th, 2011. One bout sold the arena out, 5000
5 people. It was a huge success. From then he
6 knew he had something special. Our sport is
7 different than professional boxing. First,
8 there is no gloves. It's truly -- the knuckles
9 are truly bare. The members wrap their wrists
10 and they wrap the back of their hands. That's
11 it. They use gauze and one layer of tape. And
12 it goes up to about a finger to two fingers
13 away from the top of the knuckle. Secondly,
14 our rounds are two minutes long. We do five
15 rounds. So it doesn't matter if it's a
16 championship fight or a non-championship fight,
17 every round is -- every fight is five rounds,
18 two minutes each. Our fighting platform, if
19 you've seen it, it's a 30-foot square with
20 circular ring. Our ring is custom made so,
21 without going into all the padded stuff, we
22 have four, what we call ropes; they are made
23 out of metal. The metal is covered with a
24 protective material. The second rope is hinged
25 a certain way so it can be lifted up so people

Robin K. Reibold, CVR
(803)447-7868/rkreibold@yahoo.com

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 can get in and out. The bottom rope is hinged
2 so should a fighter fall and hit the rope, it
3 gives and actually goes all the way down to the
4 mat. For our events we provide the cut men.
5 We have three cut men. We have two doctors,
6 one ringside and one in the back. Our last
7 show we just did, two weeks ago in Cancun, we
8 provided three doctors. We have one in each
9 back corner, one ringside. Three cut men, two
10 referees: Bill Clancy, world class referee in
11 boxing, Big Dan Miragliotta, world class
12 referee in MMA. We also brought in Stitch
13 Duran as one of our cut men. He's done all of
14 our events so far. One of the concerns of our
15 people is the fact that hearing about a bare
16 fist punching someone upside the head sounds
17 dangerous. But statistically speaking, the
18 force is less. When a person punches someone
19 without a glove, they typically punch less
20 hard. In a hundred years of bare-knuckle
21 boxing here in the United States there was no
22 reported fatalities. Boxing averages three to
23 four deaths a year here in the United States.
24 Nearly 15 percent of professional boxers report
25 some sort of brain trauma. I have 12 pages of

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 our -- every single fight that's ever fought
2 for us and the injury report off of it. I have
3 94 competitors. We've had two broken fingers,
4 two broken hands, one broken nose. Now, we do
5 get cuts. Everyone says, oh, well, using a
6 bare fist you're going to get cuts. We do.
7 But our fighters grease, just like other combat
8 sports. In addition to that, we have our --
9 our cut men applies the grease to the members
10 so it's applied properly. So going back to the
11 lacerations, when you have a leather glove, the
12 leather glove is a larger surface than a boxing
13 fist -- or than a closed fist, I should say.
14 With that, the leather on the glove, when it
15 makes contact with the skin, it grabs it and as
16 it goes across it and as the person falls with
17 the punch, a lot of times it twists the skin,
18 causing tears and deep lacerations. We don't
19 have that in bare-knuckle boxing. If you look
20 at all of our cuts, they're superficial.
21 They're smaller, they're thinner, and they're
22 not as deep, requiring less stitches or just a
23 suture done. And the long term effects of it
24 are a lot less than with a glove. Also --

25 DR. VAUGHT: This is Dillon.

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 MR. SHOOK: Yes.

2 DR. VAUGHT: May I just ask you a real quick question?

3 MR. SHOOK: Yes.

4 DR. VAUGHT: I don't want to distract you, I just
5 don't want to forget my question. Are there
6 any in your, I believe you said 96 fights or
7 participants, have there been any reports of
8 eye injuries?

9 MR. SHOOK: There have not.

10 DR. VAUGHT: Okay.

11 MR. SHOOK: I have every single injury report from all
12 four events, and we have not had one eye
13 injury. Recently we had a fighter who had a
14 hard weight cut, and he went to the hospital
15 afterward for -- after his fight for
16 dehydration. It was down in Mexico. We drank
17 the water. Even after reading the sheet saying
18 do not drink the water, a lot of us ended up
19 drinking the water at the hotel. But I have
20 every single injury report, and I have 12 pages
21 that I'd be more than happy to share with you.
22 We're not trying to hide anything. The thing
23 with this is, Low (ph.) Sports, I believe it
24 is, did a study showing that -- they did a
25 punch meter. When someone punched -- they took

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 a combatant sport and they had the person
2 punch, kick and knee a punch meter. With an
3 un-gloved punch he hit at 326 pounds. With a
4 glove on, he hit at 776 pounds. With a kick he
5 was up at 960 pounds. And with a knee, where
6 he got to pull the force down, it was at 1029
7 pounds. So a knee theoretically, going off the
8 stats, is three times more forceful when
9 pulling the member down and kneeing them in the
10 face compared to a bare-knuckle punch. Yes,
11 sir?

12 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Just so you know, Dillon, I'm
13 going to interject on that, I am in no way
14 necessarily advocating for this or against it
15 in any way, just making a personal opinion
16 observation: It's always been my opinion, based
17 on personal experience, that the fighting done
18 in a bare-knuckle scenario may have more visual
19 -- more visual damage, there's blood, there's
20 cuts and stuff like that, but it's much more of
21 a superficial nature than the long-term
22 pounding of a brain with a glove. Nothing
23 against traditional boxing. Any time you have
24 two bodies have different forms of impact,
25 there's going to be hazard. But, you know,

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 there's a --

2 DR. VAUGHT: Right.

3 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: -- there's a potentially
4 negative stigma associated with the concept of
5 bare-knuckle fighting, when if you look at what
6 we do in MMA, where they're throwing a bare
7 knee or a bare foot, I mean, it's really just
8 another appendage that's being utilized. And
9 so on a personal level I think it's more of a
10 stigma and appearance-based push back than it
11 is one based necessarily on tangible greater
12 damage than any other fighting sport. So
13 that's just my thought on it in general.

14 DR. VAUGHT: Right.

15 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: You know, you can lose an eye
16 with a toe. And you can -- certain knees are -
17 - knees and elbows, I mean, those are -- now
18 we're talking some pretty wicked weapons, so
19 just take that into general thought account as
20 we hear this discussion at least.

21 DR. VAUGHT: Yeah, my general -- and it could just be
22 bad timing at a -- I'm an eye doctor, and I had
23 a 12-year-old that got in a fight at school and
24 punched in the eye, and a lot of stuff detached
25 and vision is pretty much done in that eye for

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 the rest of his life. And I know these are
2 trained people and it's just -- but, you know,
3 it's hard for me to just kind of forget that
4 eye injuries happen and stuff. So I was just
5 concerned and curious as to if you had any
6 documentation of anything like that. But I'm
7 happy to hear everything you've got to say
8 about it. Thank you. This was Dillon Vaught.

9 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: And, Dillon, when I was speaking
10 -- I'm going off on a slight tangent. But when
11 I was speaking earlier about people being on
12 the board and if you think you've got something
13 to potentially add, Dillon is a perfect example
14 of that. Dillon may personally not have any
15 previous actual in-a-cage fighting experience,
16 but his knowledge as an eye doctor brings a
17 perspective that hadn't occurred to anybody
18 else sitting around this table or whatever. So
19 it's that mixed eclectic impact from different
20 people's voices that's important. So once
21 again, if you think you may want to be on this
22 board, please reach out to LLR. Sorry, Nate,
23 go ahead.

24 MR. SHOOK: No, it's fine. But just touching on that,
25 like you said, a knee to the eye -- and we've

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 talked to people. I grew up in Pennsylvania,
2 and it was not uncommon for males to get into
3 scuffles, elementary, middle school, high
4 school and whatnot. Those are untrained people
5 throwing fists, and I don't know anyone that
6 had serious injuries. Now we're taking
7 professional athletes, and we hold ourselves to
8 a higher standard. So our pro fighters that do
9 bare-knuckle, they have at least three
10 professional wins. And, at least for the first
11 four fights, they haven't been coming off
12 knockout or TKO losses. For us it's important
13 not to take the untrained person off the
14 street, like an off-the-street boxing match,
15 and put him in there, in a bare-knuckle fight.
16 We want to show this as high-level athletes
17 that are taking interest from either mixed
18 martial arts or boxing and come into this new
19 sport -- and that's what it is, it's a sport
20 that up until 1897 was the tradition. And then
21 they put gloves on so members could hit harder,
22 causing more knockouts so they didn't have
23 these 75-round fights. So we're taking these
24 high-level athletes and putting them into this
25 new sport, and it's a little bit more fast-

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 paced. So you do get a lot more punches. The
2 punches -- and when you see the fighters
3 interview, they'll say they don't hit as hard
4 as they possibly can; they hit more often and
5 with 40, 50, 60 percent. They do have more
6 cuts. I'm not going to dispute that. But
7 again, look at the cuts. They're smaller,
8 thinner, less deep. They still bleed, but not
9 nearly as bad as, like I said, a knee or a
10 forehead or a forearm to the head.

11 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Can we discuss a little bit
12 about the thought that hypothetically some
13 might view that this is a bit of a side show?
14 It's my personal impression that this has taken
15 off a good bit. You've got some big names,
16 former UFC fighters. What's the -- what's the
17 reach and public -- I mean, you mentioned your
18 turn-out when the tournament started; was that
19 a flash in the pan, or have you continued to
20 grow? What's -- talk a little bit about how
21 the public is receiving this from a volume and
22 interest perspective.

23 MR. SHOOK: So from the fighter community I have over
24 2300 professional fighters that reach out to
25 me that want to compete in this. Every single

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 event that we do, we get more UFC veterans and
2 Bellator veterans reaching out to this saying I
3 want to be a part of this new sport. Our last
4 event down in Mexico, WBF sanctioned the fight.
5 So we had -- the Latin America WBF title was on
6 the line for that event. That was between
7 Julian Lane and Leonard Garcia, two UFC
8 veterans. We've had Kendall Grove, Bec
9 Rawlings, Joe Graves, Chris "Lights Out" Lytle,
10 who was I believe like 15-1 pro boxing, and he
11 was top five, top 10 in UFC at 170 pounds. So
12 we're drawing huge names competing in this.
13 Now, from the fan standpoint, our first event,
14 number two in the world on Twitter. Not even
15 debatable. 2100 people in attendance, place
16 was sold out. Cheyenne, Wyoming, at the Ice
17 Arena. Our next event was in Biloxi. We did
18 over 3200 people, live attendance. Our first
19 show we had right around 2500, 2600 I believe.
20 I'd have to double-check numbers on that. As
21 far as worldwide reach, we had one fight
22 between Bec Rawlings and Britain Hart. Britain
23 Hart is a professional boxer, doesn't have a
24 huge names behind her except for maybe a little
25 bit locally. She fought for us when we did the

Robin K. Reibold, CVR
(803)447-7868/rkreibold@yahoo.com

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 Roy Jones-Bobby Gunn Pay-Per-View event up in
2 Delaware. She fought on the under card, so not
3 a lot of people knew of her. We posted that
4 fight. It got shared thousands of times, and
5 the last time I checked there was over eight
6 million views. One bout. Our commercials are
7 averaging 1.4, 1.6 million views when we run
8 our commercials on social media. Every time we
9 put stuff out it gets shared hundreds, if not
10 thousands, of times. We have a huge --
11 millions of people see what we're doing and
12 constantly reach out to us. We have fighters
13 from Australia, Germany, Italy, every state.
14 We bring in fighters from Hawaii. This isn't -
15 - and I'm not knocking anyone by any means, but
16 we promoted mixed martial arts here in South
17 Carolina in 2014. We had 4400 people in
18 attendance. So I believe that's the largest
19 mixed martial arts crowd for South Carolina
20 too. For that event we used a lot of local
21 fighters, and we brought some in from the
22 neighboring states. We are getting people from
23 all over the world saying please get me on one
24 of your cards. And like I said, I mean, 2200,
25 2300 applicants, professionals. So -- yes,

Robin K. Reibold, CVR
(803)447-7868/rkreibold@yahoo.com

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 sir?

2 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: You mentioned in your most
3 recent event which was in Mexico --

4 MR. SHOOK: Yes.

5 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: -- that had been sanctioned by
6 the WBF, have all of your events, or any of
7 your other events, been sanctioned by a
8 national- or international-level third party?
9 Like, your other ones -- like say for Wyoming,
10 for example, is there a third-party regulatory
11 body that's overseeing it, like the WBF?

12 MR. SHOOK: Yes. So the Bound Boxing Hall of Fame
13 oversees all of our events. So when I say WBF
14 oversaw it, they oversaw two of the fights.
15 The main and co-main fight, they sanctioned
16 those title belts.

17 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Not the entire card?

18 MR. SHOOK: Correct. Not the entire card. We had the
19 -- a commission from Mexico that was there to
20 oversee it. They brought in official and
21 things of that nature, and then we had
22 officials that were licensed in Mississippi
23 that came on up and also -- or came on down,
24 and also was part of that event. Wyoming
25 oversaw theirs. They have a mixed martial arts

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 committee. They don't have a boxing
2 regulatory, I believe. So their mixed martial
3 arts oversaw that. And then our next show,
4 April 6th, is in New Hampshire. So New
5 Hampshire will be the first ones up there doing
6 it as well.

7 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Question: Now, because this is a
8 very new thing -- well, actually it's a very
9 old thing, but it's a new thing as we relate to
10 time over the last 50 years or so. These
11 fighters and whatnot that you've brought on,
12 Kendall Grove and whatnot --

13 MR. SHOOK: Right.

14 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: -- these are, you know, big-name
15 professional MMA fighters and professional
16 boxers who are coming over to do this. Nothing
17 keeps them from continuing to also potentially
18 compete in their home sports so to speak. How
19 does or does not their performance, or lack of
20 same, impact their record in those sports? So
21 for example, if I fight in a bare-knuckle
22 boxing event and I lose, does that impact, or
23 how does it not impact, my boxing record?

24 MR. SHOOK: It's a great question. It doesn't. We're
25 it's own sport. We have a lot of similarities

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 with boxing, but we're a different sport. Five
2 rounds; boxing's four, six, eight, etcetera.
3 Two-minute rounds. We're in a round instead
4 of, you know, a square. And right now the only
5 document -- records that we have is the Bare
6 Knuckle Boxing Hall of Fame. So he comes down
7 -- Mr. Burke comes down to each of our events
8 and he documents the score cards, which is in
9 the 12-page packet. He says who the winner is,
10 who the person who didn't win is, and he
11 registers -- or I should say it's registered,
12 their injury report. So our big goal is to
13 have a website or a place where people can go
14 and look them up and check the fighters out.
15 Because right now we have the Bare Knuckle
16 Boxing Hall of Fame, who ranks everybody for
17 us, who monitors our records. But let's say
18 Kendall Grove, his last fight, he got knocked
19 out by Marcel Stamps. Marcel Stamps is 3-0 or
20 4-0, I believe, in mixed martial arts. He
21 played at University of Alabama, played in the
22 NFL. There are records. Now, one of the
23 records reflects - in mixedmartialarts.com; it
24 doesn't reflect in BoxRec - it is solely
25 maintained by the Bare Knuckle Boxing Hall of

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 Fame out of New York.

2 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: So let me just put this forward
3 for everybody's ear. I -- and I would defer to
4 future executive session conversations with
5 counsel and whatnot.

6 MR. SHOOK: Sure.

7 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Once again, we're not here to
8 decide anything today. What I -- here is my
9 personal take on it. I appreciate staff giving
10 this to me, because I looked it up earlier and
11 didn't have it. But here is as a state how we
12 define currently -- and there is no doubt that
13 our regulations need tightened up. I mean,
14 just across the board, all these things have
15 been hodgepodged together over the years as new
16 sports have evolved. However, the framework
17 for changing that is years in the making. We
18 have proposed multiple, multiple, multiple
19 changes in regulations through the results of
20 multiple task forces and things like that over
21 the four or five years I've been on the board.
22 Not a single one has yet been enacted through
23 the legislature or whatever. So while we
24 wanted to do that and make those changes and
25 are actively going to pursue that, for the

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 moment we've got to dance with who asked us to
2 the ball and work within our existing
3 framework. So that being said, here is how we
4 as a state currently define mixed martial arts.
5 I have an eye infection going on that I'm
6 getting over so it's hard for me to read. I
7 need Dillon Vaught here. Mixed martial arts
8 means " an event or exhibition, or part
9 thereof, where the contestants are compensated
10 and allowed to use any variation or combination
11 of combative sports or fighting skills, which
12 may include, but are not limited to, boxing,
13 wrestling, kickboxing, or martial arts." So I
14 would say that if over discussion and time we
15 as a state look at potentially doing something
16 like this, I believe that we as a board could
17 do so on the basis that it fits our definition
18 under mixed martial arts. Now, taking that a
19 step further, and I pulled this up earlier --
20 the thing is that it also has to have some form
21 of -- you know, since the ruling is different
22 there's lots of -- there's lots of arenas, pun
23 intended, where we have slight deviations in
24 the application of our rules as they apply to
25 what's going on. Like, you wouldn't be allowed

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 take downs, for example, in this quasi MMA
2 event should it be something that we actually
3 consider. It could hypothetically be governed
4 under MMA because it meets our definition of
5 MMA, but because you're not allowed to kick or
6 whatever, our regulations further -- this is
7 Section 40-81-445, "mixed martial events;
8 compliance with rules of professional
9 organizations and sanctioned body." This is
10 why I asked that one question. "The department
11 and commission shall require that mixed martial
12 art events comply with the rules of a
13 recognized professional organization or
14 sanctioning body." And it goes on after that.
15 So, once again, I am not an attorney and this
16 is something that we have not discussed
17 collectively, but I believe from my layman's
18 perspective that the regulations exist. That
19 should we decide to allow a trial run of
20 something like this, I think that we can.
21 However, I defer to guidance that we might
22 receive from counsel at a later time. But I
23 think it's possible, in much the same way that
24 we attempted initially, and we did several
25 trial runs of the two-person MMA, which was

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 going on at the time that we initially proposed
2 it, which is why we decided let's table this
3 and discuss it and see how you've done. You
4 did that. You went out, you did what we asked,
5 go out and try it elsewhere and see how it
6 goes. Now you're coming back to us.

7 MR. SHOOK: Sure.

8 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: So what I would propose, with
9 potential to staff, is that we consent and,
10 counsel, this may be over the course of the
11 next coming months, we look at our existing
12 regulations and see -- truly answer my - am I
13 correct, is this something that we could do?
14 And then at our upcoming board, next meeting,
15 we discuss yes or no, this is something that we
16 can do, and then following that we decide do we
17 want to. I think that's a prudent course of
18 events. Counsel, would you concur?

19 MR. HORNER: Yeah, I would agree with that.

20 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay. Nate, before we continue
21 to march.

22 MR. SHOOK: Yes, sir.

23 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Mack, Vice Chair Estridge, do
24 you have anything you wish to ask of this
25 gentleman on the topic?

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 MR. ESTRIDGE: I don't believe so. I was just looking
2 at some of his information on his website. I
3 think we're good.

4 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Excellent. Dr. Kennemore or Dr.
5 Vaught, any input or further questions from
6 y'all?

7 DR. VAUGHT: This is Dillon Vaught. As far as just a
8 safety profile, are there other organizations
9 or are we saying that you guys are the only
10 bare knuckle boxing organization?

11 MR. SHOOK: So there are -- or, I should say, have
12 been at least two others that I'm aware of. We
13 were the first that -- I call it the trifecta.
14 We were legal, regulated and sanctioned. We
15 were the first ones ever to do that. Even in
16 the 1800s they didn't have that. There have
17 been two other promotions out there. The one
18 has been in the news recently for some stuff
19 going on that people can look up for
20 themselves. And the other one is very, very
21 small. I'm not sure of his status. But no one
22 is doing it at the level that we are. And
23 that's not to knock other promotions, but our
24 events, every single one has been televised
25 live on Pay-Per-View, on TV, and on internet.

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 We've been garnering millions and millions of
2 views as far as our free stuff that we have on
3 Facebook, our teasers, our fights we've put on
4 afterward, so I feel confident in saying that
5 we are definitely the largest in the United
6 States. And our fourth show, we went abroad.
7 I'm not familiar with too many companies that
8 do that. And we already have deals lined up in
9 England, so we will be going over there this
10 year. And like I said, New Hampshire opened
11 up. We're there April 6th. So as more and
12 more commissions are seeing it and seeing that
13 the injuries are nowhere near what they were
14 thinking and seeing how popular we're getting -
15 - and we truly put a lot of money into these
16 events. Our purses are higher than the average
17 mixed martial arts or boxing purse on a local
18 level, and the revenue generated is great. Not
19 to touch on the state stuff because obviously I
20 don't know everything that goes on with the
21 revenue, but when we have televised events
22 we're paying obviously a larger -- or more
23 money in taxes than a small promotion doing 400
24 people at the local YMCA or something. And
25 that's not directed at anyone in particular by

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 any means; that's just, you know, normal facts
2 of what we pay in comparison to everybody else.

3 DR. VAUGHT: Okay. I'll just be real quick with my
4 next two questions. Did you say you were in
5 Wyoming was the other area where y'all did that
6 one fight?

7 MR. SHOOK: Yes, sir. And we're going back there June
8 1st. It was just announced.

9 DR. VAUGHT: Okay.

10 MR. SHOOK: Our very first show is Wyoming.

11 DR. VAUGHT: And the -- do you have the names of the
12 other two organizations?

13 MR. SHOOK: The one --

14 DR. VAUGHT: That do bare-knuckle boxing.

15 MR. SHOOK: The one that did the last show that was in
16 the news --

17 DR. VAUGHT: You don't have to tell me which one does
18 what, just the two names of them.

19 MR. SHOOK: All right. I believe the one is called
20 Who's Your Daddy.

21 DR. VAUGHT: Okay.

22 MR. SHOOK: And the other one I believe is WBKFF,
23 World Bare Knuckle Fighting Federation or
24 something.

25 DR. VAUGHT: WBKFF?

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 MR. SHOOK: Yes, sir.

2 DR. VAUGHT: Okay.

3 MR. SHOOK: Sir, the accepted --

4 DR. VAUGHT: Thank you. I just wanted to do a little
5 research between now and our next meeting as to
6 stuff.

7 MR. SHOOK: Yeah, and --

8 DR. VAUGHT: All right. I appreciate it. That will
9 be the end of my questions.

10 MR. SHOOK: Yes, sir. So the executive director out
11 there in Wyoming is going to be a Mr. Bryan
12 Pedersen, and then down in Mississippi is Mr.
13 John Lewis. Those are the two gentlemen that
14 oversaw their commissions, oversaw our last
15 events. And like I said, the other two bare
16 knuckle promotions, not talking down on them,
17 but I feel that we're just at a whole other
18 level with how we do our stuff. So if you look
19 up our stuff and look up theirs, it's kind of
20 night and day. And the rules are even
21 different because Wyoming allows -- it falls
22 underneath mixed martial arts. So they allowed
23 spinning back fists and things of that nature.
24 We don't allow that. We allow traditional
25 boxing, strikes to the head and to the body.

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 Yes, sir?

2 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: I think just an important point
3 on what you just said, they allow spinning back
4 fists or whatever, that's the heart of the
5 question of whether or not there is a reputable
6 third-party sanctioning entity that already
7 exists that those rules would fall under, so
8 that's the question.

9 MR. SHOOK: Yes.

10 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: So yeah, staff and counsel, if
11 we could just add that to the next agenda. And
12 once again, the next agenda won't be voting on,
13 yes, we're going to allow this or not; it's a
14 more detailed discussion of the potential
15 logistical possibility of the regulations and,
16 if it was something that we were going to
17 allow, is it possible. That's all. And then
18 we go from there. Staff, do you have a point?

19 MR. THOMPSON: I have a few questions for Nate.

20 MR. SHOOK: Yes, sir.

21 MR. THOMPSON: So you're saying y'all use your own
22 officials, or the commission provided the
23 officials? I think I heard you say something
24 about you had two guys -- I couldn't --

25 MR. SHOOK: Yes. So they are licensed within the

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 state. So Bill Clancy is a licensed referee
2 and Dan Miragliotta's a licensed referee, so
3 they're already licensed through a state. We
4 asked to continue using them right now. They
5 have been with us from the beginning. They
6 understand the sport very well. They have seen
7 it through every step, and they're both two of
8 the best in their respective sports. So that's
9 how we have been going forth for the first 40
10 bouts.

11 MR. THOMPSON: Okay. And the rules, right now is
12 there any official rules that are out there?

13 MR. SHOOK: Yes, I can provide those. Back in 2017 I
14 brought it. It's literally like 20 pages all
15 together. I'd be more than happy to email
16 that, injury reports, anything you'd like.

17 MR. THOMPSON: Okay. And licensing, do you guys have
18 to get licensed in those particular states?

19 MR. SHOOK: Yes, sir. So we carry a promotion bond
20 just like boxing and mixed martial arts. We
21 require medicals the same, fighter trio, blood
22 work, physical. Some states, you know, might
23 require a dilated eye exam, kind of depending
24 on fighter age. We do have older fighters.
25 Like I say, Chris Lytle is still a phenomenal

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 athlete. He's over the 40 thing. So, you
2 know, if fighters were required over 40 to get
3 extra medicals, we would expect the same for
4 the sport.

5 MR. THOMPSON: Okay. And the role that the commission
6 played was just basically there making sure
7 that you guys provided the medicals, had the
8 doctors and had the cut men, and those kinds of
9 things in place?

10 MR. SHOOK: Yeah, so the commission's still an
11 integral part. I mean, we could have done this
12 on a location that didn't require a commission,
13 but that's not our company goal. Our company
14 goal is to be recognized as a legitimate sport,
15 and in order to do that we need commissions on
16 board. So therefore, anything that -- weigh-
17 ins are oversaw by the commission. Medical,
18 suspensions. You know, all those things, we
19 still want to go through the commission for.
20 We don't want to run our own event and have the
21 commission just there to see it. If that was
22 the case, I could do it on a military
23 installation like that was brought up earlier
24 by someone. It could be done on certain Indian
25 reservations. We want South Carolina Athletic

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 Commission as, you know, overseeing this event
2 and brining legitimacy to it.

3 MR. THOMPSON: That's all I have.

4 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Excellent. Anything else that
5 you need to add?

6 MR. SHOOK: No, sir. Thank you all for your time. I
7 really appreciate it.

8 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay. Well, we appreciate it,
9 and congratulations on your success to date.
10 Very good.

11 MR. SHOOK: Yes, sir. April 6th, live on Pay-Per-
12 View. Thank y'all.

13 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: So as both -- Eric, you said how
14 many different boards do you serve on?

15 MR. THOMPSON: Ten.

16 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: What's that? Ten?

17 MR. THOMPSON: Ten.

18 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: And you've got three, counsel,
19 you serve over? So being both newer to the
20 commission, I just would like to ask, is this
21 confirmed as the first time either of you have
22 had the phrase utilized, "who's your daddy?"

23 MR. THOMPSON: Yeah.

24 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Welcome to the Athletic
25 Commission. There you go. Yay!

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 MR. HORNER: At least in public.

2 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: What's that?

3 MR. HORNER: At least in public.

4 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: At least in public, so. I'll
5 just stop right there in a moment of rare
6 restraint.

7 (Off the record while Mr. Shook leaves the room.)

8 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: All right. So the next item
9 that we have on the agenda is the topic of
10 professional boxing, standing eight count and
11 suspension, clarification of same. Staff, what
12 can you educate us -- I understand there is a
13 need for some clarification on this topic as we
14 as the state regulate it and what it should be,
15 so can you fill us in?

16 MR. THOMPSON: What brought this about is we've had at
17 least two boxing events here in the Columbia
18 area where the promoter have asked questions
19 about the standing eight count and the
20 instructions that were given during the rules
21 meeting. And at the last event we had the
22 rules meeting there was some instructions that
23 was given by the referee in regards to what the
24 unified rules were, and then there was some --
25 I don't want to say disagreement, but there was

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 questions concerning the no-standing eight
2 count, mandatory eight count, and so at that
3 point I felt like the commission needed to
4 provide both the promoter and the referee with
5 some clarity as to what is acceptable, what is
6 not acceptable, things of that nature. And
7 I've asked both of them to be here. They are
8 both here, the referee and that promoter. And
9 so we just need to get some clarification on
10 what is acceptable and what is not acceptable
11 in terms of eight count, standing and
12 mandatory. I think that both have a little
13 history, and I think that they can provide more
14 history than I can.

15 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Before we get to the history, is
16 our regulation specific on this topic?

17 MR. THOMPSON: This is where counsel can speak, and I
18 will yield to counsel at this point.

19 MR. HORNER: Okay. Let me find it right quick.

20 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay.

21 MR. HORNER: I marked it earlier.

22 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: One of the duties of vice chair
23 is during pauses, provide relaxing background
24 humming or singing, chanting if you would.

25 MR. ESTRIDGE: I'll spare you that.

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 MR. HORNER: So the regulation is 20-3.7, Compulsory
2 and Discretionary Eight Count. "A compulsory
3 count of eight must be taken by every boxer who
4 is knocked down by a punch, and he or she must
5 take the count whether reclining or standing."

6 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Compulsory meaning it must
7 happen?

8 MR. HORNER: It must happen.

9 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay.

10 MR. HORNER: Any time the fighter gets knocked down.

11 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay.

12 MR. HORNER: The next section, section two, "The
13 referee may declare a standing eight count at
14 any time."

15 DR. VAUGHT: Can you repeat the very first part?

16 MR. HORNER: Yes.

17 DR. VAUGHT: One more time for me. I'm sorry.

18 MR. HORNER: "A compulsory count of eight must be
19 taken by every boxer who is knocked down by a
20 punch, and he or she must take the count
21 whether reclining or standing."

22 DR. VAUGHT: Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: And then the second part, "The
24 referee," and I'm paraphrasing, "may," and I'm
25 adding these words in addition to what's

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 "must," may have a standing eight count at his
2 discretion.

3 MR. HORNER: At his discretion.

4 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: At his or her discretion. At
5 any point in the bout.

6 MR. HORNER: At any point.

7 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay. So that being said,
8 what's the question? Am I making the right
9 assumption that Mr. Don Steele and Andrew
10 Stokes are the two with the question about this
11 topic?

12 MR. STEELE: Yes. He's brought it to the attention.

13 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Both exemplary boxing --

14 MR. STEELE: He's brought it to the attention.

15 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: It's fine. I mean, there is no
16 doubt that the two of you are both the tip of
17 the spear when it comes to boxing in the state
18 of South Carolina and knowledge and everything
19 else, so -- I mean, you're both here at every
20 meeting. You both participate. You're both
21 exemplary individuals. None of this is any --
22 this is just to get clarification from the
23 state level. This is what it is. Mr. Stokes.
24 What's the question that needs verified?

25 MR. STOKES: Whether we're using unified rules or

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 we're going by regulations.

2 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay. Now, my quick reading of
3 regulations, and counsel correct me if I'm
4 wrong on this, is that the third-party rules
5 go, they win, unless there is a conflict in
6 those; and in that case, the state rules apply.
7 Am I right in my general application of this,
8 on all things?

9 MR. HORNER: Yes.

10 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay. And our state ones are
11 this (indicating). You don't know what I'm
12 pointing at, but --

13 MR. THOMPSON: Yeah. We use the unified, whatever the
14 latest version, which is the --

15 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: So we're using the unified
16 rules, but since there's a little bit of a
17 conflict, am I -- because I'm not making a --
18 I'm not making an assumption, I'm just making
19 sure I have the facts right for all of us. The
20 unified rules say one thing, and it's a little
21 bit in dispute to what our regulations say.
22 And because that dispute exists, our
23 regulations win; is that --

24 MR. HORNER: That's right.

25 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: That's right?

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 MR. HORNER: Correct.

2 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Now, I don't know who's on what
3 side of the coin, don't even care. But -- of
4 course I care, but you know what I'm saying.
5 There is no -- this is just it: In that case, I
6 would say that this -- and we're going to talk
7 about it as a board, but my snapshot opinion is
8 that it's the regulations just quoted by
9 counsel. Mr. Stokes, what's your thoughts and
10 opinions now?

11 MR. STOKES: Well, two things: I think there should
12 be, there should be a change in our
13 regulations.

14 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay.

15 MR. STOKES: So that we would come under our unified
16 rules.

17 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Agreed.

18 MR. STOKES: And I don't think that takes legislative
19 change.

20 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay.

21 MR. STOKES: That's something that might be able to be
22 voted on here today. And the second part is,
23 when he's given a briefing, when our referee is
24 giving a briefing, or whatever official is
25 giving a briefing to the soldiers, when you say

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 we're using the unified rules but I can give a
2 standing eight count anytime I want, then a lot
3 of confusion comes in with the fighters. They
4 don't know whether you're using unified or
5 we're going back -- most of them don't know
6 what the state regulations are.

7 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay.

8 MR. STOKES: We haven't used the standing eight count
9 in boxing in over 20 years.

10 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Now, define for us -- when you
11 say the standing eight count, is that the one
12 that's at the referee's discretion, or is that
13 --

14 MR. STOKES: That's at the referee's discretion.

15 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: And so --

16 MR. STOKES: Not the mandatory.

17 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: So, to your knowledge, for
18 roughly two decades that hasn't been the norm
19 in application but it's still within our
20 regulations, but it goes against the unified
21 rules? Do I have that right?

22 MR. STOKES: Yes.

23 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay. Okay.

24 MR. STOKES: Our regulations just haven't been
25 updated.

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay.

2 MR. STOKES: And we haven't had a problem, you know,
3 except for the last two years, when we started
4 doing standing eight counts again. Prior to
5 that, no one was doing standing eight counts.
6 Am I correct with that now?

7 MR. STEELE: I'm not exactly --

8 MR. STOKES: About two years ago?

9 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay. Mr. Steele, what you got
10 to add?

11 MR. STOKES: It is done -- it is done in Toughman
12 contests.

13 MR. STEELE: Right.

14 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay.

15 MR. STOKES: All the time.

16 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: And when you say "it," you're
17 meaning the standing eight count done for any
18 reason --

19 MR. STOKES: And I think that's why the rule is in
20 there.

21 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Can I just interject, and tell
22 me if I'm right on this for everybody's ear
23 again. Is the issue with regards to having a
24 potential standing eight count for any reason
25 is that it could, worst case scenario, a

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 fighter could be on the ropes and the referee
2 could interject and pause that winning
3 advantage that the other fighter has for a
4 moment? Is that the core issue?

5 MR. STOKES: Exactly.

6 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: At the same time, the referee is
7 the man in there whose is responsible for
8 everybody's safety, and he kind of needs that
9 discretion too. So I see that. But that's
10 what's at play; is that right, basically?

11 MR. STOKES: That's exactly what it is.

12 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay. What you got to add
13 there, Don?

14 MR. STEELE: Well, being a former --

15 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Do you mind identifying yourself
16 real quick?

17 MR. STEELE: Don Steele, former fighter, head referee
18 for the state. Being a former fighter, I've
19 personally been in that situation where -- I
20 call it "ghosted." And the reason I say that
21 is because there is a blank look in that
22 fighter's face. Their pupils are dilated.
23 They are unresponsive to the touch. They are
24 unresponsive to the person talking to them, and
25 they are basically out on their feet. Tommy

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 Morrison and Ray Mercer comes to mind right off
2 bat. Tommy Morrison was out in the ropes,
3 physically didn't look like he was out, but he
4 was out. Referee probably should have stopped
5 the fight about 30 punches before. The
6 discretion -- the real problem is, it's not
7 really the rule per se, but my line of thinking
8 is -- and you gave me a license for a reason,
9 my license is to protect the fighters. I'm in
10 the ring closer to them than you are, you guys
11 are, the people at ringside. I can see things
12 that you can't see, they can't see. And I get
13 close, y'all see me. I'm right in the guy's
14 face, and I'm looking for that look. It's
15 called a ghost look. If they give me that
16 ghost look, I have to step in and give them an
17 eight count to avoid someone getting killed,
18 someone getting hurt.

19 MR. STOKES: Just stop the fight. Just stop it.

20 MR. STEELE: But it's a ghost -- but you can't stop a
21 fight if their body is physically still there.

22 MR. STOKES: But you can still --

23 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Gentlemen, gentleman, let me
24 pause for a second. I want to hit on this
25 topic really quick. You mentioned don't stop

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 the fight. Within our regulations and the
2 framework of the unified rules and everything,
3 is it the referee's discretion at any point to
4 stop a fight if he feels it's unsafe?

5 MR. STOKES: Yes, absolutely.

6 MR. STEELE: Right.

7 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: You agree that that's the case?

8 MR. STOKES: I didn't say don't stop, I said --

9 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: I heard you. You said in that
10 case your opinion would be stop the fight.

11 MR. STOKES: Yes.

12 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay. Very well. Thank you.

13 Go ahead, Don, I'm sorry.

14 MR. STEELE: Well, see, my opinion in that point is
15 that I should be able to step in and give that
16 guy an eight count to see how responsive he can
17 be, to see if he -- sometimes you shake
18 yourself back awake basically is what I'm
19 saying. So let's just say that person was
20 ghosted. Let's say that person did have that
21 look in their eyes. And I go up to them and I
22 give them that eight count. They come back to,
23 they're right back in mode, ready to go. So
24 how can I legally stop a fight when the fighter
25 is looking at me and going to say whoa, whoa,

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 I'm here, you can't stop this fight. See,
2 that's where we're going to run into a lot of
3 issues, because of that unified rule.

4 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Just another moment from each of
5 you, and then I think we're probably going to
6 go into executive session to discuss this.
7 Andrew?

8 MR. STOKES: He -- I think when you see a fighter in
9 trouble as a referee you're still allowed to
10 give instructions, like, "Show me something.
11 You're not protecting yourself. If you don't
12 show me something I'm going to stop the fight."
13 Prior to that, in the locker room, you give
14 those same instructions. "If I think you're in
15 trouble I'm going to verbally tell you, show me
16 something. Protect yourself. If you don't
17 feel that you can protect yourself, or you
18 don't take a knee," because when he takes a
19 knee, they get automatic eight count, "or you
20 don't show me something, I'm going to stop the
21 fight." And I think you can give those
22 instructions during the match as well.

23 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay. Mr. Steele, anything
24 else?

25 MR. STEELE: Being a former fighter, I've actually

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 been in that situation. 1996, when I fought
2 Brian Nelson for the world heavyweight title, I
3 got knocked down three times in the fight. I
4 only remember one. With one of the best
5 referees, Steve Smoger, in the world. Steve
6 Smoger let me continue. I remember going down
7 the first time. I don't remember going down
8 the second two times when I lost the bout. I'm
9 in the dressing room thinking I won a bout, I
10 won a championship. I didn't; I got knocked
11 out. So this is where I feel that we need the
12 discretion. You gave me a license for a
13 reason. My reasoning for stepping in to give
14 someone an eight count is I think they may be
15 there and I think they deserve that chance to
16 continue if they can. But I'm going to look
17 them down good, and when I'm close to them --
18 y'all see how close I get to them. You see how
19 I talk to them. If they can't answer my
20 question, I'm not going to let them continue.
21 But I should be able to give them an
22 opportunity where -- here we are, you know,
23 tugging at both ends, so.

24 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: I see.

25 MR. STEELE: We just need clarification. That way we

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 can kind of go forward as we go.

2 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: All right. Clarification we
3 shall have. Is there a motion to go into
4 executive session for legal advice?

5 MR. ESTRIDGE: I'll make a motion that we --

6 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Excellent. Is there a second?

7 DR. KENNEMORE: This is Hamp. I second that motion.

8 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: All right. All in favor say
9 aye?

10 COMMISSION: Aye.

11 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Any opposed say nay?

12 COMMISSION: (No response.)

13 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Motion is passed. We're going
14 into executive session for legal advice, and
15 we'll call you back in when we're done.

16 (Executive session from 11:24 a.m. to 11:42 a.m.)

17 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: All right. Is there a motion
18 that we come out of executive session, where we
19 were for legal advice?

20 DR. VAUGHT: This is Dillon Vaught. I make a motion
21 that we come out of legal session -- come out
22 of legal -- oh, my gosh. I can't even talk.

23 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Executive session?

24 DR. VAUGHT: Executive session for legal advice, thank
25 you.

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Thank you. Is there a second on
2 whatever it was Dillon was trying to say?

3 MR. ESTRIDGE: I'll second whatever it was Dillon was
4 saying.

5 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: All right. I think we have a
6 second to come out of executive session, where
7 we were for legal advice. All in favor say
8 aye?

9 COMMISSION: Aye.

10 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Thank you, Hamp. Any opposed
11 say nay?

12 COMMISSION: (No response.)

13 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: All right. The motion is
14 passed, and we are now out of executive where
15 you may have heard we were for legal advice.
16 Okay. I'm just going to -- the topic right now
17 for mass discussion is at this moment over.
18 I'll tell you just the general quick thoughts.
19 Basically the topic at hand is we have, under
20 the unified rules and our existing regulations,
21 a situation now where if somebody is knocked
22 down they are permitted a standing eight count
23 or, you know, an eight count. And there is --
24 under the unified rules this doesn't exist, but
25 in the current state regulations - also at the

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 referee's discretion, at any point based off of
2 his or her discretion, they can give the
3 fighter a standing eight count to determine
4 that fighter's ability to continue. Existing
5 in both of those is the -- is the referee's
6 discretion at any point if he or she feels that
7 it is unsafe to stop the fight. So a referee
8 will always be able and encouraged that they --
9 if he or she feels that it's unsafe or in the
10 fighter's best interest to waive that fight off
11 and stop it immediately. So that being said,
12 the way our regulations are written, our
13 current -- my opinion at the moment, our
14 current regulations basically state that where
15 there is a conflict between the state
16 regulations and the third party, in this case
17 the unified rules, where there is a conflict,
18 the state rules trump that. So under the
19 current scenario, it's my opinion that that
20 needs to stand. That the referee continues to
21 have the discretion to give a standing eight
22 count despite the fact that the unified rules
23 no longer reflect that. We don't feel -- or I
24 don't feel under the current scenario we can
25 change that. However, I would like to make a

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 motion that we submit to the legislature to
2 remove the referee discretion of a standing
3 eight count to better reflect the unified
4 rules. So what that would mean is that for the
5 moment and for the time being the referee
6 discretion for a standing eight count would
7 still exist, but I'm making a motion that we
8 submit to the legislature to remove that
9 discretion for the specific reasoning of a
10 standing eight count to better reflect the
11 unified rules. And I want to also note for the
12 record that that in no way hinders, and
13 continues to encourage when that is adopted,
14 the referee's ability and strong encouragement
15 to stop a fight when they feel that the safety
16 is impacted. So my motion, I'll just repeat it
17 for a potential second, is to submit to the
18 legislature that we remove the referee's
19 discretion of the standing eight count to
20 reflect the unified rules, but until that is
21 done the state rules trump it and that referee
22 discretion will continue. Is there a second?
23 MR. ESTRIDGE: I'll second that.
24 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: All right. All in favor say
25 aye?

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 COMMISSION: Aye.

2 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Any opposed say nay?

3 COMMISSION: (No response.)

4 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: The motion has passed. And I'm
5 just going to ask really quick of counsel, can
6 you just explain in layman generic terms what's
7 going to happen with that from this point
8 forward?

9 MR. HORNER: Basically we re-draft this particular
10 regulation. We will strike through the
11 language that's currently there so that the
12 legislature understands we want that language
13 removed. I will submit it to our legislative
14 liaison. She has to run it in the State
15 Register, the newspaper that the statehouse
16 puts all of the potential regs or bills in.
17 This will happen sometime around September. It
18 could be August, September. Once that gets run
19 twice, it gets a vote on it, it gets voted up
20 or down. As long as, you know, it's generally
21 accepted as, you know, a rule in line with the
22 unified boxing rules, there shouldn't be an
23 issue with it. And then sometime around the
24 end of the year, first of next year, January,
25 it will just go through with all the other regs

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 that have been approved or okayed in advance.

2 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: And just to re-state for the
3 record, it's -- I'm speaking for myself, but I
4 believe it's the opinion of the board, that
5 that in no way should hinder fighter safety
6 because that's our first and foremost goal.
7 But it's got to be done within the framework of
8 our regulations and what's the legal and proper
9 way. And this is that vehicle. That being
10 said, if a referee is in a position where they
11 feel that that fighter's safety is in any way
12 in danger, then they should stop that fight
13 immediately. And we're not hindering that with
14 this proposed change to the regulations. With
15 that being said, yes, sir?

16 MR. THOMPSON: So I want to make sure I'm clear on
17 what we're saying. So for the rules meeting,
18 when the referee -- if it's Mr. Steele giving
19 the rules meeting, he can provide the rules as
20 it is written in the unified rules, but just he
21 has that discretion to --

22 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: And it should be mentioned that
23 under the regulations of South Carolina he does
24 have the discretion to utilize the standing
25 eight count, until or unless those regulations

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 are adopted via the legislative that counsel
2 just outlined.

3 MR. THOMPSON: Okay.

4 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: But until and unless that time,
5 our current regulations as they are written do
6 trump that. The vehicle for potentially
7 changing those is this. I -- honestly, in the
8 interest of -- you know what, heck no. Mr.
9 Steele, what you got?

10 MR. STEELE: My question is, do -- and you brought
11 this point up a couple of times today. Do
12 y'all really understand what a no-standing
13 eight count actually stands for?

14 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Yes.

15 MR. STEELE: Okay. To me, personally, and I mean this
16 is what we were taught in school when we took
17 our testing and stuff, and being involved in
18 the sport, that doesn't mean we can't give an
19 eight count. That means we can give an eight
20 count but it's just not mandatory. So that's
21 what we're taught. So, see, even if we change
22 the law, we're still -- I don't understand. I
23 need clarification from my standpoint.

24 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Clarification -- clarification
25 on the proposed is that when a fight is going

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 on, if you feel that fighter is in trouble you
2 have every ability and encouragement to stop
3 that fight. But to pause --

4 MR. STEELE: But do I have the same ability to step in
5 and give him an eight count?

6 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Under -- under what we just
7 proposed, if it's adopted, if it's adopted, no.
8 There wouldn't be a standing eight count or a
9 method, for lack of a better way to describe
10 it, to pause the fight to determine whether or
11 not to continue. It would either be stopped or
12 it would continue. Stopping is always your
13 discretion as a referee in a hypothetical
14 situation. That's encouraged. But that is if
15 it's adopted and moves forward. Under the
16 existing framework, you as a referee will
17 continue to have the ability to stop and give
18 them an count at your discretion.

19 MR. STEELE: Okay.

20 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: And that will continue until at
21 least January.

22 MR. STEELE: Okay. Got you.

23 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: And that would be to reflect --
24 right now it reflects the state regulations.
25 We're proposing that that specific item is

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 adopted to reflect the unified -- the unified
2 rules as they currently exist.

3 MR. STEELE: So under the unified rules -- and let me
4 make sure I've got this correct. Under the
5 unified rules I am not allowed to step in and
6 give a guy a standing eight count?

7 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: That would be correct.

8 MR. STEELE: Okay.

9 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: You are allowed to step in and
10 stop the fight.

11 MR. STEELE: Got you.

12 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Anybody else, comment or
13 question on the topic? Although it's --

14 COMMISSION: (No response.)

15 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Very well, okay. The next item
16 that we have on the agenda, goodness I can't
17 see, Head Referee Pre-Fight Rules Meeting.
18 Staff, what is -- what is the question?

19 MR. THOMPSON: I think we sort of culminated it all
20 together. I think some of the issue was that
21 the direction that was being given by the
22 referee was somehow in conflict with what the
23 regs and the unified rules. And I think we
24 just -- I think we just covered that.

25 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: The thing is -- I mean, all of

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 you -- and there is nobody in the state boxing
2 world that I personally have more respect for
3 than the two individuals who are sitting in
4 front of me right now. I think one of the
5 biggest problems that we have had as a
6 commission in trying to deal with all this
7 stuff and continue to move forward, looking at
8 the growth of all the combative sports while
9 simultaneously protecting fighter safety, is
10 that these regulations have been put together
11 in a, for lack of a better term, a hodgepodge
12 manner over years as different sports - bare-
13 knuckle boxing - have come in and they've tried
14 to -- MMA has tried to shoehorn in and this --
15 and they are written, it's not like -- it's not
16 like other boards. And then -- and it's often
17 something comes into conflict. And you've got
18 somebody with such an exceptional wealth of
19 experience and knowledge like Mr. Steele or Mr.
20 Stokes, who it's been done this way, and for
21 very good reasons this way, and there's very
22 good reasons for this. They are going to come
23 into conflict, and I think -- not that we
24 don't, there is often some -- some room for
25 discussion on the why and what's best. And we

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 just do the best we can to help it evolve and
2 get everybody's insight and go from there.
3 It's not always the right decision, but it's
4 our darn best attempt at it. So the rules
5 meetings, I think -- in other words, do I need
6 to ramble on anymore about rules meetings? I
7 mean --

8 MR. THOMPSON: I think we're good. I think one of the
9 issues that came up was just the fact that we
10 just need to make sure that when we're
11 presenting the rules, I think it came up that
12 we just need to be dressed, ready for work per
13 se. So that was one of the issues, I guess.

14 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Are there any topics that staff
15 or anybody else feels needs to be addressed by
16 the board with regard to rules meetings?

17 MR. THOMPSON: Nope.

18 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Anybody here in the public?

19 MR. STOKES: No, I think they've already been
20 addressed.

21 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay. Very well. Continuing to
22 march. The next topic on here is Upright Only
23 MMA Discussion Topic. This event -- a promoter
24 had asked me a question about -- here is a
25 general question. It's not something we're

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 proposing, it's a question. And anytime
2 somebody asks me a question about regulations,
3 I'll try to defer it to staff or whatever.
4 This one I thought warranted -- and I did defer
5 to staff and I thought, you know what, this is
6 something maybe we just discuss as a board and
7 get -- the question that's came up within the
8 fighting community is, you know, if somebody
9 wanted to have a promotion in the state where
10 they wore MMA gloves but they followed the
11 rules of boxing, could they? It would be like
12 a fist fighting promotion, or it would be
13 upright only. So they would -- they would
14 follow the rules of boxing, but they would wear
15 the 4-ounce or 5-ounce, you know, the 4-ounce
16 MMA gloves instead of traditional boxing
17 gloves. Well, my quick snapshot thought, which
18 I didn't want to answer this because I didn't
19 want it to be an opinion, is that it's kind of
20 in a way comparable with the question with
21 regard to bare knuckle boxing; it probably
22 could be, you know, shoehorned into our
23 existing MMA rules if that was something that
24 was proposed. But I think one would lack the
25 third-party regulatory overseeing it -- not

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 regulatory, but a third-party --

2 MR. MARTIN: Sanctioning?

3 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Thank you. Third-party
4 sanctioning, because no such thing exists. But
5 it was such an off-the-wall question that I at
6 least wanted to bring it to the board and
7 counsel and staff. So what do you think, if
8 somebody came in here and they wanted to have
9 effectively an MMA promotion that only involved
10 punching?

11 MR. HORNER: I think you could get there, like you
12 said. You could shoehorn it into the rules
13 that we have; they're pretty broad. You're
14 looking for -- sanctioning would be an issue.
15 But I think -- when I was looking generally at
16 the rules before this meeting, I mean, they are
17 broad. I mean, our authority as a commission
18 is a broad authority to really govern any
19 combat sport, any combative sport, which
20 certainly that would fall into. I think you
21 would just have to sit down with -- what
22 exactly are they asking guideline-wise and
23 rule-wise, and what exactly do our laws and our
24 regs allow them to do or not do.

25 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay. Well, I don't believe

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 that it's a topic that staff or anybody else
2 needs to put any leg work in. It's not
3 something that was -- that was proposed. It
4 was asked, and this is the proper forum to
5 address that question. So probably, but it
6 would take some homework, I believe is the end-
7 all answer on that. Any other input from staff
8 or board members on it?

9 COMMISSION: (No response.)

10 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: All right. Guess not. We've
11 discussed it. And that was the Upright Only
12 MMA discussion topic. Okay. I believe that we
13 have an age-waiver hearing with a Mr. Gilbert
14 Jacobs. Is that still going on? Mr. Gilbert
15 Jacobs is here, so I guess so. Let me look
16 through my packet here. Do we have -- those of
17 you on the phone, before we officially start
18 the age-waiver hearing, look through your
19 packet; I think at the very back is some data
20 on that. Let's just take a moment before we
21 officially start this and kind of read through
22 it. And then if you've got questions that
23 you're going to ask during the hearing, it's
24 probably a good time to pencil them in or
25 whatever.

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 DR. VAUGHT: Do you want me to tell you my questions
2 now or wait until we get --

3 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: No, just wait. I was just going
4 to give everybody a chance to kind of glance
5 through it before we --

6 DR. VAUGHT: Okay.

7 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Full disclosure, I hadn't read
8 through the whole thing yet, so. Okay. Does
9 any board member need more time to review the
10 package?

11 COMMISSION: (No response.)

12 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: I am going to mark my page with
13 a banana. Probably something else you haven't
14 heard in a previous meeting. Excellent. All
15 right. I need a -- I don't have my script.

16 MR. MARTIN: All the way at the front, sir. In the
17 pocket.

18 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Thank you.

19 MR. MARTIN: You're welcome.

20 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay.

21 (Board discussions adjourned at 11:59 a.m. for a hearing
22 per the agenda. Board discussions resumed at 12:15 p.m.)

23 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay. Put my banana in the
24 wrong spot. Another phrase never previously
25 before uttered on the record, I hope.

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 MR. ESTRIDGE: And those people who can't see that
2 really don't understand.

3 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Good Lord. All right.
4 Unfinished Business. Staff or anybody who's in
5 the know, what's the status with regard to our
6 stuff that's forwarded to the legislature,
7 kickboxing, age, etcetera? Where is that in
8 the government hierarchy?

9 MR. THOMPSON: We get weekly reports, and I haven't
10 seen it on a weekly report.

11 MR. HORNER: I haven't seen it come up yet. I checked
12 this morning just to --

13 MR. THOMPSON: We get a weekly report now, so.

14 MR. HORNER: We've gotten two weekly reports, and it
15 hasn't come through yet as to where it is.

16 MR. THOMPSON: That's one of the changes that the
17 director has started, was that now
18 administrative will receive, at least weekly,
19 on Fridays, all the bills and where they are
20 at, whether in the House, Senate, or whether
21 they are coming up. And I hadn't seen anything
22 as it relates to kickboxing.

23 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Is there any way perhaps before
24 the next meeting we could inquire of the status
25 of that stuff?

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 MR. THOMPSON: Yeah.

2 MR. HORNER: Yeah.

3 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Even if the answer is nobody
4 knows? I mean, I'm not faulting; I'm just
5 asking.

6 MR. THOMPSON: Sure.

7 MR. HORNER: Yeah.

8 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Excellent.

9 MR. THOMPSON: I will check on it.

10 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: All right. I shouldn't be -- I
11 shouldn't make the assumption that there is no
12 current need for another executive session, but
13 I'll ask. Board members, does anybody have any
14 reason for us to go into an additional
15 executive session for legal advice?

16 MR. ESTRIDGE: None that I can think of.

17 DR. VAUGHT: This is Dillon, I don't.

18 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay. Great. I wanted to
19 mention, going off on a tangent really quick,
20 but that last vote, as you noticed, it wasn't
21 unanimous. Dr. Hamp Kennemore voted no. And I
22 encourage all board members to do the same.
23 Not vote no, but to always vote your
24 conscience. This stuff doesn't need to be -- I
25 mean, we're all on here for a reason. It's to

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 vote our conscience and our thoughts. So kudos
2 to Hamp for doing exactly that, and to
3 everybody else for doing exactly that. That's
4 how it should be. You know, we don't always
5 have to be a hundred percent. Okay. Public
6 Comment. There is the public, who wants to
7 comment?

8 MR. STOKES: I just have a question for --

9 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Sure, just identify yourself
10 again.

11 MR. STOKES: Andrew Stokes, promoter. This might be
12 for counsel. When we send up that regulatory
13 change, are we going to have to have a sponsor?
14 Is that going to go in the form of a bill or
15 will we have a -- we'll have to have a sponsor?

16 MR. HORNER: Yeah.

17 MR. STOKES: And is that the hang-up with the other
18 stuff that we already have that's supposed to
19 be going through legislation?

20 MR. THOMPSON: I got sort of a history lesson on that
21 today. I think it was four years ago it went
22 through and somehow fell through the crack.
23 I'm not sure whether we did not pick up that
24 baton and move forward. But it's a possibility
25 that we just have to follow up on those. But I

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 think, as I mentioned earlier in the meeting,
2 that now is the time to kind of review and so
3 that making some additional changes or
4 additional updates that need to be made. And
5 so hopefully if we get this task force going we
6 might be able to lock most of that into this
7 new change. Not just what we discussed today,
8 but just reviewing all of those.

9 MR. HORNER: Yeah. And generally we're supposed to
10 every two years take a look at our regulations,
11 see what needs to be updated or cut or
12 rewritten. Obviously this governor is very
13 interested in removing unnecessary regulations,
14 but keeping the regulations that of course
15 protect the health of the public and the
16 licensees. And so that's a two-year mandate
17 from him. And I'm not sure where we are in the
18 process as far as what we've got up there at
19 the statehouse pending, whether that was more
20 than two years and this is our year to go
21 through everything or not. Certainly nothing
22 prevents us from going forward with the
23 regulation change that was discussed earlier
24 outside of the two years. They just want a
25 routine two year review so that if we could

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 make the regs better, if we could make the
2 boards function better, they -- you know, make
3 businesses grow, want to come into South
4 Carolina, that's sort of one of our mandates to
5 do. And honestly, since this is my second
6 board meeting, I can't tell you where this
7 particular board is in that two-year process,
8 but obviously nothing prevents us from moving
9 forward with any ideas that we have going
10 forward. We do have to get a sponsor who will
11 sponsor the bill and put it up. But that
12 hasn't really been a problem for any of the
13 boards. There are a lot of legislators that we
14 can reach out to and explain the need for the
15 change and they'll sign onto the bill.

16 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Covering a bit more history on
17 that topic, Mr. Stokes was a pivotal member of
18 our previous task force to do exactly that.
19 Going through literally every regulation word-
20 for-word and watching -- which included the age
21 that we keep coming up with. And that was, I
22 believe, probably four years that was
23 initiated. We had a sponsor, Senator Tom Davis
24 out of Beaufort, who heralded that through
25 whatever, and since then we've lost sight of

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 it. So what we're articulating is what was
2 done, and then nothing has actually happened
3 from that. And I think that may be the core of
4 his question - Is there something stopping
5 those things that we already did that addressed
6 pretty much all of this, or what happened to
7 the stuff where we kind of already did this?

8 MR. ESTRIDGE: Those ones have got moved on for vote,
9 right, in the House? But they ran out of time
10 and they never voted on --

11 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: That's the question.

12 MR. ESTRIDGE: -- it and it just kind of --

13 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: So since they ran out of time
14 and never voted on it, what happens next?
15 Because what we are saying that we need to do,
16 we've done. We did it. We did a really good
17 job, because I was on a task force too.

18 MR. THOMPSON: We can check with --

19 MR. HORNER: Yeah, with Holly.

20 MR. THOMPSON: Yeah, we can check around.

21 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Yeah, we've --

22 MR. STOKES: I think we needed one more reading in the
23 Senate. And then after all the readings were
24 done, if they didn't take action they would
25 automatically become law. But we didn't get

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 that last reading, that's my understanding. So
2 is Tom still sponsoring that bill, or do we
3 need to find somebody else to sponsor the bill?
4 We just don't know where we're hung up at. And
5 I know that LLR can't go out and basically
6 solicit --

7 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Right.

8 MR. STOKES: Right. So you need somebody from the
9 public to do that, and I have some
10 representatives that are ready to do that if we
11 need.

12 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: It would be the chair's opinion
13 that you should reach out to them. Senator Tom
14 Davis is my state senator out of Beaufort. So
15 it's way inappropriate for me to go ask him --

16 MR. STOKES: Absolutely.

17 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: -- go do this, please, could
18 you. But I really want to. So I would
19 encourage you to consider reaching out to them,
20 to just see what's happened with that and if
21 they can get started again. Because what we're
22 all saying we'd like to do is what we've done;
23 we just need somebody to kick the ball across
24 the line.

25 MR. STOKES: Some of these representatives can be

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 funny when somebody else goes to find out
2 something about a bill that they're -- that,
3 you know, they're already sponsoring. So I
4 don't want to go out there and say go find out,
5 and then Tom feel like somebody's stepping on
6 his toes or -- you know what I mean?

7 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Yeah.

8 MR. STOKES: So if that's the hang up -- can we find
9 out what the hang up is?

10 MR. HORNER: Yeah. We'll contact our LLR rep, who's
11 the liaison at the legislature and ask. We'll
12 find out.

13 MR. STOKES: Okay.

14 MR. HORNER: We'll talk to her. I'll get with her
15 this week.

16 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: And by all means feel encouraged
17 to reach out to your representatives, because
18 what they're supposed to do is in that title -
19 Representative. I'm not faulting them, but
20 they're your representatives. So if it's of
21 interest to you, which there certainly is valid
22 reason why it should be, reach out to them and
23 ask them to look into it too. We can come at
24 it from two different angles and, one way or
25 another, get some movement on this stuff.

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 Anything else? Public, commenting? Apparently
2 not. Well, in that case is there -- go ahead.

3 MR. STOKES: You did miss one thing on the agenda, the
4 suspensions?

5 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: I do not have that on my agenda,
6 or do I?

7 MR. MARTIN: It would be Number 3 under New Business.

8 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Oh, Professional Boxing,
9 Standing 8 Count and Suspensions. What did we
10 miss on that topic?

11 MR. THOMPSON: I'd like to ask too, what about the
12 suspensions?

13 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Yeah, what about them?

14 MR. STOKES: So this was just started.

15 MR. THOMPSON: Oh, okay, I got you.

16 MR. STOKES: Everybody that fought on the last card,
17 they eventually went on the suspension list -
18 winners and losers. That wasn't being done
19 previously. Although I think in this state --
20 I know in this state that you can't fight --
21 you can only fight once within a seven-day
22 period.

23 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: I personally am at a loss. Can
24 anybody shed some light on this?

25 MR. THOMPSON: I think I'm vaguely remembering what

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 he's saying. In our regulations, when a
2 fighter fights in this state there is a
3 mandatory seven-day suspension that goes to the
4 fighters, as he's alluding to, for this state.
5 And then, you know, of course --

6 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: For seven days?

7 MR. THOMPSON: Seven days.

8 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay.

9 MR. STOKES: Rest period.

10 MR. THOMPSON: Well, I think it's -- the way it reads,
11 it says suspension; I'm not sure.

12 MR. STOKES: Okay. All right.

13 MR. MARTIN: It's a mandatory rest.

14 MR. STOKES: Right.

15 MR. THOMPSON: So -- rest period. So then there's --
16 if it's a TKO or a KO, it's 60, 30, whatever.

17 And I think, if I'm understanding or
18 remembering, there was maybe some fighters that
19 wanted to fight somewhere else, and that was
20 the hold-up. Is that what we're referring to?

21 MR. STOKES: Well, the fighters, all the fighters that
22 won on that card couldn't understand why they
23 were on the suspension list. And if they're on
24 the national suspension list, they can't go
25 fight anywhere. Even if they're being

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 considered for a fight 14 days prior, the
2 commission won't even acknowledge them being
3 put on the fight card because they are under
4 suspension.

5 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: This hasn't happened with
6 previous -- I mean, could it be just a
7 potential data entry thing?

8 MR. THOMPSON: That's what I was about to ask, because
9 I couldn't remember --

10 MR. MARTIN: As far as I understand, if we suspend a
11 fighter, say -- let's use one of our rules as
12 an example: a KO is 60 days, it's a mandatory
13 suspension.

14 MR. STOKES: Right.

15 MR. MARTIN: It's my understanding that that
16 suspension was a -- of national or
17 international reporting.

18 MR. STOKES: It is.

19 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Yeah, that's my understanding
20 too.

21 MR. STOKES: That's true.

22 MR. MARTIN: But then I guess, Mr. Stokes, your
23 question is --

24 MR. STOKES: South Carolina has a mandatory seven-day
25 resting period, so that means they cannot fight

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 here again within the seven days. But other
2 states don't have those rules. So when we put
3 them on the national suspension list, they
4 can't box anywhere else because they're on the
5 national suspension list.

6 MR. THOMPSON: For the seven days.

7 MR. STOKES: Right.

8 MR. THOMPSON: Say like they won the fight for the
9 seven days.

10 MR. STOKES: Right.

11 MR. THOMPSON: So your question is, can we either not
12 put that or remove it for national but hold it
13 for South Carolina? I'm trying to make sure I
14 understand --

15 MR. STOKES: I think they should be on some internal
16 list that says that this person fought this
17 week, they can't fight again until this day.
18 So if they try to apply to fight here again, of
19 course, they can't because they are under that
20 seven-day rest period.

21 MR. MARTIN: So then my question would be -- it's
22 possible that I've put it down wrong, where
23 they are mandatory rest for seven days from a
24 fight, but it might be possible that I
25 incorrectly suspended the fighter for those

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 seven days; is that your question?

2 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: And that's reflecting on a
3 national level.

4 MR. MARTIN: Right. Is that your question?

5 MR. STOKES: Yes, yes.

6 MR. MARTIN: Okay.

7 MR. ESTRIDGE: But, so those guys would fight, and
8 within seven days go to another state to fight?

9 MR. STOKES: They potentially can because other states
10 don't have that rule. And if we're going to
11 put them on the national suspension list for
12 those seven days, I think there should be some
13 language in there. Because if you don't put
14 language in there that they're under -- it's a
15 seven-day rest period per South Carolina law,
16 you put that in there, then these other
17 commissions will know that he's not under
18 suspension for a knockout, a TKO, or some
19 medical problem; they'll know it's per South
20 Carolina law that he's on a seven-day resting
21 period.

22 MR. MARTIN: Okay.

23 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Are you also saying that while
24 somebody is in that -- being reflected on a
25 national level as a seven-day suspension or

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 whatever, that other promoters from other
2 states might not even consider them for a bout
3 beyond that time frame because they just see
4 "suspension"?

5 MR. STOKES: Absolutely.

6 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay.

7 MR. STOKES: See -- yeah, because as a promoter we
8 only see that they're under suspension.

9 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay. Well, that's
10 understandable.

11 MR. THOMPSON: So, so would it be fair to say if we
12 keep them within the regulations, we just need
13 to add that language, what he's saying as
14 regards to the rest period?

15 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Mandatory seven-day rest period
16 as per South Carolina regs.

17 MR. THOMPSON: Yeah.

18 MR. MARTIN: That would work. That's very easy for me
19 to do. I can do that.

20 MR. STOKES: I think we need to look further though
21 because it says "rest period" versus
22 "suspension"; we're putting them on the
23 national suspension list. I'd be okay with
24 that until we figure that part out. I think
25 everybody would be.

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: We may not have a specific
2 answer to completely address that, but I'm sure
3 we can come up with one. And that's a new --
4 thanks for bringing that up. I'm sure we can
5 crack that egg. Okay. Great.

6 MR. THOMPSON: That's for the winners, right?

7 MR. STOKES: For the winners.

8 MR. THOMPSON: Just for the winners. Just for the
9 winners.

10 MR. STOKES: Absolutely.

11 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Excellent. All right.

12 MR. THOMPSON: I think internally we can -- we can
13 take care of that internally.

14 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Okay. Cool. All right. I
15 think that's it. Is there anything else from
16 any other board member who needs to put input
17 on anything?

18 COMMISSION: (No response.)

19 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Thank you, Dr. Vaught and Dr.
20 Kennemore, for joining us in the course of your
21 busy day. And thank you, Mack, for accepting
22 the vice chair position and leaving your
23 business for the day to come here and do this
24 as well. And of course, staff and everybody
25 else, thank you too. With that being said, is

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

1 there a motion to adjourn?

2 MR. ESTRIDGE: I'll make a motion that we adjourn.

3 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Excellent. Is there a second?

4 MR. VAUGHT: This is Dillon, I'll make a second.

5 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Excellent. All in favor say

6 aye?

7 COMMISSION: Aye.

8 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Any opposed say nay?

9 COMMISSION: (No response.)

10 CHAIRMAN McCULLOUGH: Motion is passed, we're

11 adjourned. Thank y'all.

12 (Whereupon, the meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.)

ATHLETIC COMMISSION - 2/12/19

CERTIFICATE

I certify that the foregoing transcript, consisting of 109 pages, is a true, accurate and complete transcript of the meeting taken before me, Robin K. Reibold, the undersigned Court Reporter. This meeting before the South Carolina Athletic Commission was held on February 12, 2019, at the offices of the South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation, 110 Centerview Drive, Columbia, South Carolina.

Said meeting was reported using the method of Stenomask with backup and was transcribed by me.



March 10, 2019

ROBIN K. REIBOLD, CVR
MY COMMISSION EXPIRES: 4-28-2021