**LOUISIANA STATE**

**WRESTLING & BOXING COMMISSION**

**MINUTES**

**JANUARY 14, 2016**

**BATON ROUGE, LA.**

1. **ATTENDEES:**
ALVIN TOPHAM (A.T.)
BUDDY EMBANATO (B.E.)
JOHN GREEN, JR. (J.G.)
PATRICK MCGINITY (P.M.) - ABSENT – WORK OBLIGATIONS
DR. THOMAS FERGUSON (T.F.)
HAROLD WILLIAMS (H.W.)
BOBBY DUPRE (B.D.)

RUSSELL NAQUIN – DEP. COMMISSIONER

ADDIE FIELDS (A.F.) ACCT – ABSENT - MEDICAL

1. **MINUTES:**

ADDIE DID NOT ATTEND; REPORTS/MINUTES DEFERRED UNTIL NEXT MEETING. ADDIE IS TAKING MINUTES FROM CAPITAL VIDEO TODAY.

1. **INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:**

Amy Crosby, MMA promoter’s license, MCF Productions, LLC

Mr. Roach, promoters license boxing, represented by Mr. Roy H. Vaughn

Mr. Melvin Vernell, manager’s license

John Dwayne Reed, MMA Promoter License

Chris (?) Johnson, MMA Promoter License

1. **LICENSE RENEWALS/APPLICATIONS:**

Ms. Crosby: She applied for bond today. Wants to hold MMA events in Avondale; property owned by her father; training in MMA herself and is heavily involved in the sport. Shawn of Mid-City will be helping her as a new promoter. J.G. reviewed her financials and all is in order; license will not be approved until receipt of bond. Dr. Ferguson asks if events will be indoors or outdoors. She says both; venue is versatile. B.E. reminds her she can hold no events until bond is received. Plans mid-March event. She has reviewed the rules and J.G. advises to study carefully in time for event. Says she is very familiar with rules due to assisting in past promotions. T.F. moves to approve license pending bond; H.W. seconds; approved pending receipt of bond; all ayes.

Mr. Roach represented by his attorney Roy Vaughn, Jr., is applying for boxing promoter’s license: Mr. Roach reviews his experience in boxing events. Has been in entertainment business for 15 years; has boxer in family (Thomas Roach); Has been told not many boxing outlets for boxers and wants to provide outlets for competitors. Wants to have amateur and professional. A.T. advises we do not sanction amateur boxing events and he will have to go through one of the sanctioning bodies for amateur. Gyms usually put on amateur fights and all money goes back to the gyms for amateur training. We don’t allow pro/am boxing in LA. No amateur events where liquor is sold. After the meeting, B.E. will give him the contact numbers for USA boxing who will put him in touch with local amateur boxing gyms. Professional shows put money in the promoter’s pocket, but not amateur shows. He has never promoted a boxing match in LA. Will familiarize himself with the rules, etc., before he moves forward. A.T. advises to study the rules and regulations very carefully to ensure a profitable and safe promotion. A.T. reviews pertinent rules for him (fees, bloodwork deadlines, etc.). B.E. stresses rules are for the protection of boxer, public, himself and the state. Reviews process of collecting officials fees, etc., for show. Does not have financials with bond. Can make license contingent upon receipt of business statement. Name will be Trill Promotions, incorporated in LA. Plans to have events around Southern University. OPEN DISCUSSION ON MR. ROACH’S EXPERIENCE WITH PRIOR FIGHTS. B.E. advises to review the separation of his ‘entertainment” experience with boxing shows. J.G. stresses the importance of a good matchmaker. A.T. advises to check out boxer’s history carefully, especially for recent injuries. J.G. moves to accept application and approve license pending receipt of financials; H.W. seconds; license approved, all ayes. Presents ck for cash bond.

Melvin Vernell: Manager’s license applications: will manage boxers; will have contracts with boxers; J.G. reviews contract models; B.E. advises to review ABC model contracts on their website. J.G. reviews actions commission does or does not take where enforcement is concerned. J.G. moves to grant manager’s license; B.E. seconds; passed, all ayes.

J.G. reminds all applicants that the commission website has all rules and regulations on it for their review.

John Dwayne Reed; MMA promoter’s license for MMA: Ex-navy and LA national guard veteran, graduate of police academy; attended many events in his area and want to do 2 events a year at a minimum in the Northeast region (Monroe to Tallulah). Will hopefully use the Community Center and is in contact with school boards to use local school facilities. A.T. stresses the importance of finding trained fighters for events and that contestants are evenly matched. Mr. Reed has read the rules and regulations for MMA. J.G. reviews amateur event rules with him. B.E. reminds him of reporting results on MMA.com and reviewing contestant’s records on the website. A.T. reviews the registration process on MMA.com & amateur rules. Also check for suspensions. Does not have bond today. Plans an event for the end of March. A.T. stresses the difficulties in finding fighters that will fight in the countryside; he will need to be in contact with other promoters. J.G. reviews the documents he will need. License will be under Bonafide Promoters; no felony convictions, etc. B.E. advises him to start small, especially for that area. J.G. moves, pending receipt of bond and financial documents, to approve a MMA license; T.F. seconds; B.E. reminds this is conditional, under guidance of A.T., that he viable as a MMA promoter; approved, all ayes.

Chris (?) Johnson of Zachary - wants information on boxing promotions in BR area; has questions about elite amateur boxing: are they still amateurs? Elite MMA amateurs must still wear a headgear; boxing and mma amateurs must wear headgears in LA. Pro/Am boxing would entail 2 sets of officials, rules, etc., and would time and cost prohibitive; this commission doesn’t sanction amateur boxing fights in LA; rules/officials are the same for amateur and pro MMA. He wants to know how far apart pro boxing events can be. In order to protect promoters, we can’t have 2 local fights, in close proximity, as there won’t be enough spectators to go around; depends on size of the city. Commission decides on a case by case basis, size of area where event to be held and dates of shows compared with shows already set. J.G. advises to go the website and review the rules and regulations. He’s worked with successful promoters in the state and is fairly familiar with the rules.

A.T. has promoter licenses (wrestling) that have sent in their renewals: Mark Vaughn, Mike Beadle, David Pitre, Jr., Raymond Hough, Oren Hawkhurst, and WWE. J.G. moves to approve these MMA promoter licenses, B.E. seconded; approved, all ayes.

A.T. renewed an MMA promoter license for Vengeance Sports Entertainment. Question on whether established long term promoters, in good standing, are required to come before commission for renewals. A.T. doesn’t believe that it’s necessary for established renewals to come in person. B.E. moves that from this date forward, all established promoters wishing to renew their licenses can do so by mail/email; J.G. seconds; approved all ayes; J.G. moves to approve the renewal for Vengeance Sports; B.E. seconds; approved, all ayes.

1. **NEW BUSINESS**:

A.T. a new situation: an unsanctioned wrestling show in Oakdale. R.N. says it’s conjunction with an annual festival; had one last year; put up ring in the middle of the town; called to see what they needed to make it legal (ambulance, etc.) and decided not to comply; had the show anyway. Rhett Thibodeaux was involved in this and has been in violation of commission rules in the past. Chris Paul, David Ordogne, Cody Hernandez, Rhett Thibodeaux. Several of these fellows have been licensed in the past and know the rules. J.G. reminds the commission that this is exactly the kind of thing the commission cannot abide. Should we turn over to the State Police? B.E. advises to have Atty. Gen. send a representative to our next meeting to advise us on how to proceed. J.G. believes this is something we have to take a more immediate action against the main organizer, Chris Paul. R.N. can get contact information for Mr. Paul and Thibodeaux. Mr. Thibodeaux had been suspended for a year and came back and got renewed. We could also contact the Oakdale district attorney as it’s a statute they should be enforcing. J.G. can issue subpoenas to haul them all in and send a complaint to the D.A. up there and the state police. B.E. moves to direct J.G. to subpoena Chris Paul, Rhett Thibodeaux, Cody Hernandez and David Ordogne to appear and contact the District Atty in Allen Parish and A.T. will contact state police; B.D. seconds; passed, all ayes. This is a serious violation of the tough man statute and is a felony in this state.

A.T. has been dealing with the superdome about Wrestlemania 2018; we won’t know until next year but we’re in the running.

1. **OLD BUSINESS**:

J.G. wants to follow up on new rules proposed last March; would like to have them is some type of order; suggests we should have special meeting; put it on the agenda for next meeting to review.

B.E. says there’s a movement in the boxing/mma community about ABC. Former members of ABC are forming a new association, ACSC, an international body; will have a conference in July in New Orleans. They have asked if LA would help put on a training seminar. We’re running low on boxing officials; new organization will be big enough to train boxing & MMA and would we be willing to help sponsor. B.E. recommends we give money to new group and not ABC this year. B.E. explains that South American and Canadian members of ABC have no votes. ACSC will allow these entities as voting members. Non commission members of states can join as associate members; cannot hold office but can join the association. J.G. suggests putting off the discussion until all the numbers are in as far as members, etc. B.E. says that this would also help foreign fighters coming to U.S. be validated, informed, etc.

**7) PAST SHOWS:**

We had 4 WWE events last week; Monroe, Bossier, New Orleans and Lafayette. We collected roughly $25k in gates taxes for these 4 shows.

Boxing, Gretna, Les Bonnano; no problems; a couple of small wrestling shows; no problems; a MMA show in Shreveport at Diamond Jack’s, tv show, well attended; there was a disagreement about the judging; decisions are final and nothing commission can do except to train our officials to the best of our ability.

Justin Verdin had a good show in New Orleans, MMA; no problems; next night in Lafayette by Gill Guillory, not a good show at all; strongly feel that Gill is going to have to step up his shows if he wants to renew his license. Problem with paying vendors by Gill; J.G. recommends that if Gill wants to renew, he is required to come before the commission. A.T. talked to him after the show and warned him of the quality of the shows/problems.

Boxing show 12/12/15; all fine; MMA show at Belle of B.R., well attended, no problems. A.T. approved of boxing license of WFC.

**8) UPCOMING SHOWS:**

Charenton, boxing, Chad Broussard; received taxes already, 30th of Jan. Feb on 10th, 20, 27th, MMA 19th at Harrah’s by Impastato. 20th Lake Charles at Lake Charles civic center. 27th by Justin Verdin at Evergreen Center in Houma. B.E. moves to accept the dates; B.D. seconds; dates accepted. We’re down to a manageable amount of MMA promoters.

**9) NEXT MEETING DATE & ADJOURNMENT:**

Feb meeting 10th or 11th; 10th would be better, will advise of venue later as legislature will be in special session; 10th would be better for all.

 B.E. moves to adjourn; J.G. seconds; meeting adjourned.