**LOUISIANA STATE**

**WRESTLING & BOXING COMMISSION**

**MINUTES**

**JULY 8, 2015**

**BATON ROUGE, LA**

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

RUSSELL NAQUIN – DEP. COMMISSIONER

ADDIE FIELDS (A.F.) ACCT

1. **MINUTES:**

B.E. moves to accept minutes as written; H.W. seconded; passed, all ayes

1. **INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:**

Matt McGovern, MMA Promoter

Mr. Andry and Mr. Smith, Security of the Belle of Baton Rouge

1. **LICENSE RENEWALS/APPLICATIONS:**

Any apps for licensing? T.F. says there was an issue at Opelousas...a lady had applied for a boxing license, 53 yrs old and T.F. was sent a packet of medical information on her; abnormal EKG...T.F. determined that the EKG did not belong to her. She went to another doctor & got new EKG; she has complied with all medical requirements so from a health standpoint, she's clear. Question is, do we want to allow a 53 year old person (male or female) to have fighter's license. The "average" 53 old could not/would not be able to do that.

B.E. wonders what her abilities, stamina may be; no health reasons to keep from the ring; big question is who can she fight in her age bracket; how to well match a 53 year old? We can't keep from approving her license based on her good medical review, but we have the last approval on her matches.

1. **NEW BUSINESS**:

Belle Safety Discussion (Matt MGovern, Mr. Smith & Mr. Andry from the Belle are given copies of the June minutes to review which discussed in detail the safety concerns of the commission).

M.M.: thanks the commission for meeting and their concerns and agree that things need to change and have already put in motion new staging areas, locker rooms, no reentry, etc. (passes sketch of new arena to commissioners).

Knows there are problems with the crowd and could cause big issue; too many people in the dressing room area, multiple entrances into that area; no security at those areas. A.T. says there needs to be a system put in place to only let in authorized people into the dressing rooms. Other casinos have their own system that works; it's broken down a little and the issue with overcrowding in certain areas; the CR and corridors for fighter entries and too many people walking in with the fighters; the commission can control that and only allow the corner men and manager and not the whole gym entourage; there is no room for them; that's a safety zone for the officials, the commission and cameramen. People not identified as such do not belong there. It needs to be isolated.

Mr. Smith proposes putting security officers at each back hallway to keep unauthorized people out of the dressing rooms. Also proposes a 5' or more buffer zone; B.E. suggest that tape they use as barriers do not work; B.E. likes that they will move the locker rooms away from the ring area.

Matt suggests on the fighter entrances, let the entourages come in half way and then only the fighter & corner men go forward from there.

B.E. suggests using bicycle racks instead of the tape. A.T. reviews the types of barriers, height, etc., rental options, etc. Some even have sleeves that go over with advertising that make the barricades look really nice.

T.F. asks questions about the room divider from the new locker room and open discussion on where the entourage should stop. BE says if they get the barriers, install the security system to cut down the people in the dressing areas, he thinks the new plan as drawn is acceptable.

Mr. Andry and Mr. Smith agree that this is a good solution.

T.F. asks where the ambulance is. same place; B.E. says it’s in a good spot close to the ring now and would leave that alone. Russell brings up the glass bottles for the events; should not be allowed at least inside the barrier; most venues do not allow glass bottles in the venue at all. B.E. suggests that all drinks or beer should be poured into a soft cup at the concession stand and no one be allowed to walk around with a can or a bottle. A.T. advises they meet with their concession people at the casino about the bottle issue. R.N. says bottles at ringside are his biggest concern. Also the amount of people in the preferred seating behind the commissioners and officials; need to make sure these people understand the rules or they will be ejected; H.W. moves we accept the alteration of the venue as turned in; B.E. seconds; passed all ayes. Let's hope all will be resolved. Mr. Smith says please do not hesitate to contact him at the Belle if anything else comes up.

On Evangeline Downs Meeting/Match: P.M. would like to commend the promoter, whoever he was; the fight was really good at Evangeline Downs.

A.T. on Kickboxing: a lot of interest lately and we do not have a k-boxing sanctioning body in LA for professional k-boxing in LA, only an amateur in LA. ISKA is amateur authority in LA.

We don't have a sanctioning body in LA for k-boxing; A.T. believes we need to get someone to send us the rule/regs for k-boxing. We should have more than one sanctioning body for these events. A.T. wants permission from the commission to contact several sanctioning authorities to request their rules so we can review and potentially approve for sanctioning in LA. He has no problem with pro k-boxing in the state.

B.E. inquires as to whether these type shows still come under our jurisdiction as far as safety rules (ambulance, doctor, etc) and taxing the proceeds. A.T. says yes. They bring their own judges, refs since they have their own system of rules, but they would have to go by our state commission as far as all else, just like regular shows. B.E. wants to make sure that our workers aren't cut out of a lot of work. B.E. move to give A.T. the authority to contact whichever Pro Kickboxing Sanctioning authority; T.F. seconds; passed, all ayes. R.N. asks if that wouldn't be the same as "stand up MMA"....A..T says we can alwsays do less, we can't do more...just no ground game with MMA stand up...they can choose to use a boxing glove if they want...they kick and box, no ground wrestling.

At the ABC convention will have a presentation by IABA. They are trying to set up a professional league. FL reported the results of a professionally paid fight to Fight Fax and now they are suing to maintain their amateur status; but once you take $$ for a fight, you are a pro...but it's going to be an issue this year.

1. **OLD BUSINESS**:

BE reviews ABC convention news; all rooms full.

HEARING ON TODD MELANCON; B.E. moves to table decision on Melancon suspension until next meeting but not re-subpoena Mr. Melancon & Monceaux and advise H.W. seconds;

T.F. believes this is a blatant disregard of Melancon and Monceaux for not showing up after being subpoenaed.

P.M. has no problem in sending them another subpoena; P.M. moves to amend the motion to send new subpoenas to Melancon and Monceaux; vote to amend the motion, 1 yea, and 4 nays. Original motion stands.

On Boxing Tournament Group: they called and wanted to know how the commission felt about the deal; does anyone have an opinion on it...B.E. likes the changes they made; he hates to say yes and then something come up; they'd like to get an opinion from us on whether they should proceed in putting this thing together...

B.E. moves to contact them and tell them they have tentative approval to move forward; H.W. seconds; passed, all ayes. T.F. asks if we are privy to any contracts they should make with a TV station, etc...Yes, we are.

1. **PAST SHOWS:**

One show at the Golden Nugget in LC, MMA; Impastato show at Harrah's in NO; 26th, 27th had MMA shows.

1. **UPCOMING SHOWS:**

Nothing for A.T. for the month of July; R.N. has wrestling 17th, 18th and 19th of July and one on the 1st of August.

August will be busy before school starts. Boxing on the 8th Aug by Chad Broussard @ Evangeline Downs. Matt has show on 8/22, MMA at the Belle; have not received show date $$ yet.

1. **MEETING DATE & ADJOURNMENT:**

August meeting date: fight on Saturday the 8th at Evangeline Downs; or MMA in BR on 22nd; or the 6th at the Crowne Plaza if possible; 1 pm if possible.

B.E. moves to adjourn, T.F. seconds; all ayes. Meeting adjourned.