

**Massachusetts State Athletic Commission  
MONTHLY BOARD MEETING**

**1000 Washington Street, Boston**

**PUBLIC MINUTES**

**Date:** March 18, 2019

**Location:** Rm. 1D

**Time:** 11:00 AM

**COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Commissioner Bryan Lambert

John High, Legal Counsel & Director of External Affairs

Commissioner Paul Karger

Matthew Keigan, Executive Director of Licensing

Commissioner David Riccio

Wilfrid St-Hilaire, Compliance Officer III

Jennifer Fraga, Program Coordinator II

**MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:**

Chair Rod Walkey

**GUESTS PRESENT:**

Joe Leonard, Western Mass MMA

Frank Leonard, Western Mass MMA

Dr. Edgar Ballenas, M.D., Ringside Physician

Sam Silverman, President of the Rondell Clark Foundation

Tom Sconzo, Applicant and Representative for Bare Knuckle Fighting

Michael Polvere, Licensed Matchmaker

**Meeting called to order by Chair Rod Walkey at 11:02 AM.**

**1. Roll call**

Commissioner David Riccio

Commissioner Bryan Lambert

Commissioner Paul Karger

Wilfrid St-Hilaire, Compliance Officer

John High, Legal Counsel & Director of External Affairs

Matthew Keigan, Executive Director of Licensing

Jennifer Fraga, Program Coordinator

Wilfrid St-Hilaire, Compliance Officer

Joe Leonard, Western Mass MMA

Frank Leonard, Western Mass MMA

Due to the absence of the Chair, a motion was made by Commissioner Karger to have Commissioner Lambert act as Chair, seconded by Commissioner Riccio. Motion was passed by unanimous vote.

**2. Approval of Minutes from January 21, 2019**

A motion was made by Commissioner Karger to approve the minutes from January 21, 2019, seconded by Commissioner Riccio. Motion was passed by unanimous vote.

### **3. Application for Muay Thai Referee – Thomas Sconzo**

Applicant Tom Sconzo detailed his 48 year experience within the unarmed combat industry as a former Golden Gloves boxer and professional trainer in both Mixed Martial Arts and Muay Thai. Mr. Sconzo is licensed as a referee in multiple states including Massachusetts as a MMA Referee and has officiated over 1000 bouts. Mr. Sconzo is seeking a Referee License in Muay Thai. Commissioner Karger made a motion to approve the application, seconded by Commissioner Riccio. Motion was passed by unanimous vote.

### **4. Bare Knuckle Fighting Proposal – Thomas Sconzo**

Thomas Sconzo proposed the sport of Bare Knuckle Fighting to the board in hopes of bringing an event to Massachusetts in 2019. Mr. Sconzo presented statistics on injury and lacerations and expressed that the numbers were significantly lower than traditional boxing. Mr. Sconzo discussed hand wrapping as gloves are not worn, the rules, and the draw of fans to this exciting action packed sport. The board asked that this proposal go before the Medical Advisory Board at their next meeting.

### **5. Conference Call with Executive Director, Andy Foster – California State Athletic Commission**

- Ten Point Plan

Executive Director, Andy Foster of the California State Athletic Commission participated via telephone detailing the pros and cons of the recently adopted Ten Point Plan by the California State Athletic Commission. Mr. Foster began by expressing that the practice of weight cutting is the single biggest issue facing the sport of Mixed Martial Arts. Mr. Foster stated that the most important factor within the plan that appears to be “working in the best interest of fighter safety” is licensing by weight class. In addition to examples of extreme weight cutting seen by his commission, Mr. Foster added that by adding additional weight classes by increments of 10lbs., fighters will have more options to fight closer to their walk around weight. After discussion on these points, Mr. Foster also suggested creating a database where weights would be tracked on a 30 to 60 day watch prior to fight night. Such a system of tracking could be beneficial in catching a fighter in danger of severe dehydration or organ failure.

### **6. Update from Sub Committee on 523 CMR Regulation Review**

Matthew Keigan, Executive Director of Licensing reviewed the progress of the 523 regulation review.

- 13.02: Adjust select MMA weight classes as follows:
  - Welterweight: 155 to 165
  - Middleweight: 165 to 175
  - Super Middleweight: 175-185 (Note: new weight class).
  - Light Heavyweight: 185 to 195
  - Cruiserweight: 195-225 (Note: new weight class).
  - Heavyweight: 225-265
- 13.03: Add language from 13.04 allowing the Commission to order weigh-ins at any time (see 13.04(6))
- 13.04(2): Remove section on weight loss (current section 13.04(2))
- 13.06(1): Add language clarifying that forfeited money goes to opponent

- 14.02(2),(3): Add language banning the following: exposed zippers, nothing below knees, no knee braces, no exposed Velcro
- 14.04: Note: No changes; have Medical Advisory Board review for possible changes.
- 16.06(2): Add/clarify definitions of a TKO and KO. Possibly adopt boxing definition (see section 15.12)

#### **7. 2019 MSAC board Meetings and Upcoming Event Schedule**

The board reviewed the upcoming board meeting and event schedule.

#### **8. Matters not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance of meeting**

Michael Polvere, Licensed Matchmaker addressed the board with his concerns regarding the integrity of matchmaking and commission review of the bouts proposed by certain promoters. Mr. Polvere asked for a full investigation of the process in which bouts are approved.

Commissioner Karger made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Riccio. Motion was passed by unanimous vote. The meeting adjourned at 12:30 PM.

#### **Board Exhibits:**

Draft minutes from January 21, 2019

Application – Thomas Sconzo

Presentation Packet – Bare Knuckle Fighting

Ten Point Plan Informational Packet

2019 MSAC Board Meeting and event schedule