

**Massachusetts State Athletic Commission  
MONTHLY BOARD MEETING**

**1000 Washington Street, Boston**

**PUBLIC MINUTES**

**Date:** October 9, 2018

**Location:** Rm. DOI

**Time:** 2:00 PM

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

Commissioner Paul Karger  
Commissioner Bryan Lambert  
Commissioner Guy Licciardi

Kevin Scanlon, Chief Legal Counsel  
Natasha Belizaire, Deputy General Counsel  
Matthew Keigan, Executive Director of Licensing  
Wilfrid St-Hilaire, Compliance Officer III  
Jennifer Fraga, Program Coordinator II

**GUESTS PRESENT:**

Jim Perella, President of USA Boxing New England  
Applicant Marcel M. Varela  
Steven Taylor Heath  
Applicant Mark Visco  
Applicant Louis J. DiBella (Via telephone)  
Lindsay Tucker, IBF Representative (Via telephone)  
Billy Jo Saunders (Via telephone)

Chair Rod Walkey was not present at the meeting. Commissioner Lambert made a motion to grant Commissioner Karger as acting Chair, seconded by Commissioner Licciardi. Motion was passed by unanimous vote.

**Meeting called to order by Acting Chair Charles Borstel at 2:11 PM.**

**1. Roll call**

Commissioner Bryan Lambert  
Acting Chair, Paul Karger  
Commissioner Guy Licciardi  
Kevin Scanlon, Chief Legal Counsel  
Natasha Belizaire, Deputy General Counsel  
Matthew Keigan, Executive Director of Licensing  
Jennifer Fraga, Program Coordinator II  
Wilfrid St-Hilaire, Compliance Officer III

**2. Approval of Minutes from September 17, 2018**

Commissioner Lambert made a motion to approve the minutes from September 17, 2018, seconded by Commissioner Licciardi. Motion was passed by unanimous vote.

Item 4 was tabled and items 3 and 5 were addressed later in the meeting as the applicants were not reached via telephone. Acting Chair acknowledged the presence of Jim Perella, President of USA Boxing New England, applicant Marcel M. Varela, and Steven Taylor Heath, Legal Counsel for boxer Billy Jo Saunders.

**6. Applications for Mixed Martial Arts Referee, Muay Thai Judge and Boxing Judge – Marcel M. Varela**

Applicant Marcel M. Varela addressed the board detailing his experience in the unarmed combat industry. Mr. Varela stated that he has been a boxing referee for many years and a member of USA Boxing for the past three years as a referee and judge. In addition he is a Mixed Martial Arts Referee in New York as well as a Referee and Judge for Glory Muay Thai.

Commissioner Lambert made a motion to approve all three applications; MMA Referee, Muay Thai Judge, and Boxing Judge, seconded by Commissioner Licciardi. Motion was passed by unanimous vote.

Applicant was not present at this time to address item 7.

**8. Request for Variance from Lindsay Tucker, IBF**

- Fee Schedule for Officials for October 20, 2018

Lindsay Tucker, Representative for the International Boxing Federation (IBF) addressed the board via telephone to request a variance from 523 CMR Section 10.08 *Selection, Approval and Fees for Ring Officials*. Mr. Tucker submitted a fee schedule that differs from the regular set schedule for the three IBF sanctioned bouts on the October 20, 2018 boxing card.

1. IBF Jr. Lightweight Championship  
Referee - \$2,000.00    Each Judge - \$1,000.00
2. IBF Featherweight Eliminator for #1  
Referee - \$1,200.00    Each Judge - \$1,000.00
3. IBF/WBA Female Lightweight Championship  
Referee - \$500.00    Each Judge - \$400.00

Commissioner Lambert made a motion to grant the variance as requested, seconded by Commissioner Licciardi. Motion was passed by unanimous vote.

Item 9 was moved to the end of the agenda.

**10. Review of MSAC Applications**

The board reviewed the remaining newly revised MSAC applications; Scorekeeper, Trainer, and Deputy Commissioner. After review of each application along with its previous version, Commissioner Lambert made a motion to approve all three applications, seconded by Commissioner Licciardi. Motion was passed by unanimous vote.

Item 11 was tabled until the next meeting.

**12. Upcoming MSAC Event Schedule**

The board reviewed the upcoming event schedule through October 2018.

Item 13 was tabled until the next meeting and item 7 was addressed.

**7. Application for Deputy Commissioner – Mark Visco**

Applicant Mark Visco detailed his experience in the unarmed combat industry stating that he has been training at the Somerville Boxing Club for the last five years and has become familiar with the fighters and shows. Mr. Visco expressed his desire to serve as a Deputy Commissioner for the State Athletic Commission. Mark also attended the Deputy Commissioner Training in Milford in July of 2018.

Commissioner Lambert made a motion to approve the application, seconded by Commissioner Licciardi. Motion was passed by unanimous vote.

The applicant was reached via telephone and item 5 was addressed.

**5. Application for boxing Promoter – Louis J. DiBella**

Louis J. DiBella addressed the board via telephone to apply for his boxing promoter license as he did not renew within the one year renewal period. Mr. DiBella detailed his career in boxing all over the world as he was the Executive Director for HBO Boxing for numerous years and ran the longest running locally televised boxing series in history, Broadway Boxing.

Commissioner Lambert made a motion to approve the application, seconded by Commissioner Licciardi. Motion was passed by unanimous vote.

At this time, Kevin Scanlon, Chief Legal Counsel addressed the meeting and stated that the public portion of the meeting would close for Executive Session. Mr. Scanlon stated that the meeting would reopen to the public.

Commissioner Lambert made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Bradley. Motion was passed by unanimous vote. The meeting closed at 2:34 PM.

Executive Session closed at 2:57 PM. The meeting reopened and roll call was taken.

Commissioner Bryan Lambert  
Commissioner Guy Licciardi  
Acting Chair, Paul Karger  
Kevin Scanlon, Chief Legal Counsel  
Natasha Belizaire, Deputy General Counsel  
Matthew Keigan, Executive Director of Licensing  
Jennifer Fraga, Program Coordinator II  
Wilfrid St-Hilaire, Compliance Officer III  
Steven Taylor Heath, Legal Counsel for boxer Billy Jo Saunders

George Hasken, Reporter for Date Boston

Kevin Scanlon, Chief Legal Counsel addressed the board on the matter of boxer Billy Jo Saunders's test results that were collected by the Voluntary Anti-Doping Association (VADA) on August 30, 2018. The results detected oxilofrine in his urine specimen. Mr. Saunders is scheduled to fight on October 20, 2018 in Boston. Mr. Saunders, via telephone and Steven Taylor Heath, Legal Counsel for Mr. Saunders whom was present explained to the board that in the United Kingdom where Mr. Saunders is a licensed boxer, oxilofrine is not banned when out of competition. The agreement to participate in the VADA random testing program was between Mr. Saunders, his opponent Demetrius Andrade and the promoter and these results should not be recognized. In addition, Mr. Saunders was using a nasal spray which can result in a positive reading for this substance. Mr. Heath stated that this was an isolated test and should not have any bearing on licensure here in Massachusetts and that if this test was performed by the World Anti-Doping Association (WADA); the result would have been a false reading. Mr. Heath stated that Mr. Saunders has had recent testing by WADA and tested negative each time. Mr. Heath continued to state that this substance does not give competitive advantage to Mr. Saunders.

Natasha Belizaire, Deputy General Counsel stated to the board that 523 CMR does not distinguish what is "in" or "out-of-competition".

Commissioner Lambert stated that in his personal experience as a professional athlete that these substances do add a competitive advantage to training and competition. Commissioner Lambert also stated that Mr. Saunders agreed to this testing program and should have adhered to it. In addition, Commissioner Lambert commented that proof of negative testing by WADA has not been provided.

Mr. Saunders stated that he was a clean athlete who participated in the Olympic Games and never tested positive for any banned substances.

Commissioner Lambert made a motion in the interest of health and safety to deny the application for licensure as a professional boxer pursuant to 523 CMR 6.11 (1) and 523 CMR 20.01 (1), seconded by Commissioner Licciardi. Motion was passed by unanimous vote.

Kevin Scanlon, Chief Legal Counsel informed Mr. Saunders that he may appeal the Board's decision and will receive written documentation of this decision. Mr. Saunders addressed the board with vulgar inappropriate language in response to the decision.

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

N/A

**Board Exhibits:**

-Board packet contents

Draft minutes – September 17, 2018

Application – Christopher M. Mathews

Application – Jason H. Grenier

Application – Louis J. DiBella

Applications – Marcel M. Varela

Application – Mark Visco

Variance request from Lindsay Tucker, IBF

Draft MSAC applications

Upcoming MSAC events schedule