

**Massachusetts State Athletic Commission  
MONTHLY BOARD MEETING**

**1000 Washington Street, Boston MA 02118**

**PUBLIC MINUTES**

**Date:** March 23, 2018

**Location:** Rm. 1D

**Time:** 12:00 PM

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

Chair Rod Walkey

Commissioner Charles Borstel

Commissioner Bryan Lambert

Natasha Belizaire, Executive Director of Licensing

Kevin Scanlon, Chief Legal Counsel

Guy Licciardi, Compliance Officer III

Wilfrid St-Hilaire, Compliance Officer III

Jennifer Fraga, Program Coordinator II

**COMMISSION MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:**

Commissioner Paul Karger

Commissioner Patrick Bradley

**GUESTS PRESENT:**

Dr. Lou Durkin, M.D., Medical Advisory Board Member

Christopher Carroll, Division of Professional Licensure Chief Investigator

Melissa Kelly, Applicant for boxing time keeper

Elvis Santana, Applicant for mixed martial arts time keeper

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

Michael Polvere, Matchmaker

Ken Casey, Boxing promoter

Michael Bloom, Murphy's boxing

Dr. Kenneth Sassower, M.D., Applicant for ringside physician

Mark Porter, Boxing gym owner

**Meeting called to order by Chair Rod Walkey at 12:06 PM.**

**1. Roll call**

Rod Walkey, Chair

Charles Borstel, Commissioner Division of Professional Licensure

Bryan Lambert, Commissioner

Jennifer Fraga, Program Coordinator II

Wilfrid St-Hilaire, Compliance Officer III

Guy Licciardi, Compliance Officer III

Natasha Belizaire, Executive Director of Licensing

Kevin Scanlon, Chief Legal Counsel

Dr. Lou Durkin, M.D., Medical Advisory Board Member

Christopher Carroll, Division of Professional Licensure Chief Investigator

Melissa Kelly, Applicant for boxing time keeper

Elvis Santana, Applicant for mixed martial arts time keeper  
Dr. Edgar Ballenas, M.D., Ringside Physician  
Michael Polvere, Matchmaker  
Ken Casey, Boxing promoter  
Michael Bloom, Murphy's boxing  
Dr. Kenneth Sassower, M.D., Applicant for ringside physician  
Mark Porter, Boxing gym owner

**2. Approval of minutes from February 26, 2018**

A motion was made by Commissioner Borstel to approve the minutes from February 26, 2018, seconded by Commissioner Lambert. Motion was passed by unanimous vote.

**3. Update from the meeting of the Medical Advisory Board held on March 23, 2018 at 9:30AM re:**

- Informed Consent for Amateurs
- Pre-Fight Physicals (at weigh-in vs. fight night)
- Authorization for Release of Medical Information

*Informed Consent for Amateurs*

Board member Dr. Lou Durkin, M.D. presented on behalf of the Medical Advisory Board their recommendation on the medical requirements for all amateur unarmed combatants.

Relative to imaging; brain CT and or MRI, it is their recommendation that either the applicant does the testing or consent/waive/opt out of the testing by signing an informed consent.

Relative to the eye and EKG exams; it is their recommendation that either the applicant does the testing or consent/waive/opt out of the testing by signing an informed consent.

Relative to the blood, it is their recommendation that the blood remain a requirement. The stated reasoning is that although a fighter may want to opt out of blood testing, the risk would still remain for the opponent. However, for "minors"; under the age of 18 years old as an amateur boxer only, the blood is not a requirement.

Relative to the fit-to-fight physical, this requirement remains.

*Pre-Fight Physicals (at weigh-in vs. fight night)*

Dr. Durkin stated that the board was in favor in the name of fighter safety to perform the pre-fight medical evaluations at the weigh-in rather than on fight night. This practice would give the doctors a clear opportunity to see these fighters at their most de-hydrated state.

*Authorization for Release of Medical Information*

Dr. Durkin stated that the board reviewed the draft of the Authorization for Release of Medical Information submitted by Board Counsel. Their recommendation was to accept the draft with the change from one year to five years relative to the time limit in which these documents could be requested or shared amongst commissions due to the brain imaging and EKG five year validity as a requirement for licensure. Commissioner Lambert made a motion to accept the draft as written and to include the change from one to five years share/request limitation, seconded by Commissioner Borstel. Motion was passed by unanimous vote.

4. Application for Ringside Physician – Kenneth C. Sassower, M.D.

Applicant Dr. Kenneth Sassower detailed his trauma experience and medical resume to the board. He also shared his passion and respect for the sport of boxing dating back to this childhood. After consideration of his application and resume; Commissioner Borstel made a motion to accept the application, seconded by Commissioner Lambert. Motion was passed by unanimous vote.

5. Application for MMA Timekeeper – Elvis T. Santana

Applicant Elvis T. Santana detailed his experience in time keeping for mixed martial arts to the board as well as expressed his passion for the game. After review of his application and testimony; Commissioner Borstel made a motion to accept his application, seconded by Commissioner Lambert. Motion was passed by unanimous vote.

6. Application for Boxing Timekeeper – Melissa Kelly

Applicant Melissa Kelly addressed the board detailing her experience as a USA Boxing official and timekeeper as well as her positions as a licensed MSAC boxing judge. After discussion with Ms. Kelly; Commissioner Borstel made a motion to accept the application, seconded by Commissioner Lambert. Motion was passed by unanimous vote.

7. Draft policy on “Special Permits” pursuant to G.L. c. 147 §46

Natasha Belizaire, Director of Licensing and MSAC presented to the board a draft policy for special permitting as directed from the board at the February 26, 2018 meeting. Commissioner Borstel made a motion to accept the draft policy as written, seconded by Commissioner Lambert. Motion was passed by unanimous vote.

8. Request from Mark Porter of Fighting Chance Foundation for Variance from the following regulations:

523 CMR 6.01

523 CMR 6.02(b) – (e)

523 CMR 9.01-9.10

523 CMR 10.01, 10.03-10.07, 10.10, 10.12

523 CMR 13.01 -13.02

523 CMR 14.05

At the February 26, 2018 meeting, Mark Porter requested a variance to hold an amateur boxing event that fell outside of the USA Boxing guidelines for amateur boxing. The board asked the he put forth at this meeting specifically which regulations he wishes to vary from. The Director of Licensing and MSAC, Natasha Belizaire presented the regulations as stated. Mr. Porter further described this event as a charity event with proceeds benefiting families that have suffered from cancer. Commissioner Lambert made a motion to grant the variance as presented, seconded by Commissioner Borstel. Motion was passed by unanimous vote. Commissioner Lambert made an additional motion for the exemption of the gate tax for this event, seconded by Commissioner Borstel. Motion was passed by unanimous vote.

9. “Just cause” definition (523 CMR 10.11) – establishing guidelines and procedure for approval  
Board Counsel Kevin Scanlon gave examples of “just cause” to the board that which related to the 523 CMR 10.11 *Submission of Fight Card; Change or Substitution*. “Just cause” would be unforeseeable events such as: Illness, injury, or death  
Number of rounds drops below the minimum required  
Fighter receives and submits the incorrect medicals

Due to the nature of this agenda item and its relationship to MSAC licensing; Natasha Belizaire, Director of Licensing and MSAC detailed to the board the challenges MSAC staff face during preparation for these events as it relates to licensing and the constant communication back and forth from promotion to staff. The Director explained the current process of licensing and how the applications are turned into the office as well as the additional responsibilities of the program as a whole. The board stated that an additional listening session be scheduled in May of this year just for input on this topic from the stake holders in hopes to better cage the challenges all parties face.

Board Counsel will draft a written policy on “Just cause” and present to the board at the next meeting.

10. Update on licensing of seconds no later than seven days to a schedule event  
This item was reviewed within agenda item 9.

11. Election for Subcommittee Members

Due to scheduling subcommittee meetings; the board voted Commissioner Lambert as the alternate to Commissioner Bradley to sit as a subcommittee member.

12. Upcoming MSAC event schedule

The upcoming event schedule was presented to the board by MSAC staff for the months of April through June 2018.

13. Matters not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance of meeting

Mixed martial arts matchmaker Michael Polvere addressed the board regarding an event date that his organization applied for and was denied. The event application for the date of June 16, 2018 was denied because the date was previously applied for. MSAC staff informed Mr. Polvere that the date was taken and that a second event could not be held that same evening due to lack of staffing officials. Mr. Polvere informed the board that holding two events in one evening has been common practice in Massachusetts and asked for consideration to keep doing so. MSAC staff explained the challenges of scheduling officials with two shows on one night and the lack of working deputies to schedule. The board agreed to allow MSAC staff to determine the number of shows scheduled based on available officials and deputies.

Promoter Ken Casey requested a variance from 523 CMR 10.11 *Submission of Fight Card; Change or Substitution* for his upcoming professional televised boxing show on March 31, 2018 as his main event opponent fell out due to injury against Mark DeLuca. Mr. Casey asked that additional time for licensure be given in order to find a replacement. After consideration of this request, Commissioner Borstel made a motion to grant the variance, seconded by Commissioner Lambert. Motion was passed by unanimous vote.

A motion was made by Commissioner Borstel to close the public meeting pursuant to G.L. c.112 §65C and move to closed session, seconded by Commissioner Lambert. Motion was passed by unanimous vote.

14. Closed Session pursuant to G.L. c. 112 §65C

The meeting opened back up to the public at 1:45PM and adjourned at 1:47PM as there was no further business to discuss. Commissioner Borstel made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Lambert. Motion was passed by unanimous vote. The meeting adjourned at 1:47PM.

**Meeting Exhibits:**

Draft minutes, February 26, 2018

Draft minutes, January 29, 2018

Variance request and information packet (Fighting Chance Foundation)

MMA Timekeeper application from Elvis T. Santana

Boxing Timekeeper application from Melissa Kelly

Ringside Physician application from Dr. Kenneth C. Sassower, M.D.

Draft of special permit policy

Upcoming event schedule for March 2018