**LOUISIANA STATE**

**WRESTLING & BOXING COMMISSION**

**MINUTES**

**JULY 11, 2014**

**OPELOUSAS, LA**

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

RUSSELL NAQUIN – DEP. COMMISSIONER – ABSENT – WORK OBLIGATIONS

 ADDIE FIELDS (A.F.) ACCT

1. **MINUTES:**

B. E. moves to accept June minutes as written; T. F. seconds; passed all ayes. B.E. moves to pay June/July bills, payroll & expenses; H.W. seconds; passed, all ayes.

1. **LICENSE RENEWALS/APPLICATIONS:**

No discussion.

1. **PAST SHOWS:**

Show in Shreveport televised by Legacy LLL; 2 amateur shows, 8 pros - pretty good fights...Belle MMA in BR well attended; okay...a few small wrestling shows.

1. **UPCOMING SHOWS:**

8/23 Rich Clementi in Slidell; on the 16th, a show in Lake Charles. Bertucci has been canceled.

1. **OLD BUSINESS**:

See James Johnson section under New Business.

On Rules: T.F. has a question about minutes from last month on the rules: look over John's email on rules to review for August meeting.

1. **NEW BUSINESS**:

James Johnson situation, headgear & “elite fighters”: B.E.: he still wants to promote, etc., and we just can't let him...he's tried to go around the commission by getting sanctioned by amateur groups and is still advertising an unauthorized show. He's planning on having another show (amateur boxing). (B.E. explains online process for amateur assoc approval). There are classifications in amateur: novice, elite, etc. They do not require “elite” fighters to fight with headgears; B.E. does not agree with that. “Elite” fighters are still amateurs and should be protected as such; would like to propose a rule that in LA all amateur boxers, “elite” or otherwise, always wear headgears. B.E. reviews an advertisement that was deceitful in that it implied a pro show when it was actually an amateur show.

T.F.: what is amateur fighter rule in regards to headgear...answer: we have none. B.E. agrees with T.F. that it's safer to have headgear on amateurs. Absence of a headgear while he's learning impairs his chance to become a professional. He is definitely not in favor of amateurs fighting without headgear. A.T.: when I walk into an event, if someone has gloves on and no headgear, that is a pro show.

B.D.: we traditionally have had a "hands off" relationship with the amateur boxing; what do the other states do?

B.E: most other states (90%) require headgear for amateur boxers. The head of the amateur boxing association, USA Boxing, confirmed that other state commissions have called about the same issue.

A.T.: maybe the rule could be at our discretion?

PM: disagrees...rule or no rule.

A.T: what if we have a big tournament?

T.F.: come Olympic time, will you fight with or without headgear?

B.E: In an IBEA tournament, you will not wear a headgear in an amateur tournament; in a one night show, you must wear a headgear. Rule doesn't make sense to me. Agrees with P.M. and T.F. that headgear should be worn by amateurs, at all events, tournaments or not.

T.F.: all fighters are going to get cut; they're going to get hit hard; I'd like to see the rule promulgated.

B.D.: I'd like to see us do a little more research on this issue before that.

T.F.: what is the point of not having the headgear?

B.E.: to make it look like it's a pro show to make more money.

A.T.: the question has merit; let's discuss this with ABC at the convention with other state commissioners who oversee amateur fighters...B.E. calls Tim w/ABC and asks if the issue may come up at the convention meetings. Tim said Mike Martini is supposed to come and talk about it. If you are in a tournament that is a box-off for the Olympics, you will not wear headgear. If it is not for the Olympic trials, you must wear headgear.

Question: what does it hurt to have a headgear? Headgear may not prevent TBI, but chances are greater without a headgear.

The amateur sanctioning group determines who is "elite" by # of fights, wins, experiences, etc.

There should be a way so that when the general public walks into an event, they can distinguish whether or not a show's contestants are pro or am. Promoters sell more tickets if the public thinks it's a pro show.

A.T.: Most MMA shows are grappling so not as many direct head hits as in boxing. I don't have a problem with amateur MMA not wearing headgear. I insist, though, that promoters advertise or put on the card that it's an amateur show.

Star Johnson: B.E. advised Star Johnson that he needed to come to the next meeting about his suspension (see June minutes).

Hixon show suspensions: one fighter lost about $1000 in sponsorships because of suspensions.

A.T. got a call from a television network wanting to do a reality show and had already contacted Bellatore; wants to work with our commission and put together a show where the end product is an MMA fight. Looking to do something in January, probably in New Orleans...will probably be a series where they chose the main fighters for the main event...A.T. advised them of rules in relation to promoter and fighter licenses...they must get a promoters license themselves or use an experienced promoter in LA.

B.E proposes that several commissioners visit NV and go to one of their commission meetings for research purposes. A.T. REVIEWS HISTORY OF MMA, UFC AND NV COMMISSION.

1. **NEXT MEETING DATE & ADJOURNMENT:**

Date for next meeting; fight in BR on 16th which is a Saturday...how about 14th at the Capital?

Don't forget to review John's rule revisions for next meeting.

B.E. moves to adjourn. H.W. seconds; meeting adjourned.