

Georgia Athletic and Entertainment Commission  
 Commission Meeting  
 January 17, 2013

The Commission Meeting for the Georgia Athletic and Entertainment Commission was held on Thursday January 17, 2013, at The Sloppy Floyd Government Office Building 2 MLK Jr. Drive Atlanta, GA 30334.

<b>The following Commissioners were present:</b>	<b>Others Present:</b>
J.J. Biello- Vice Chairman Rick Thompson Ben Kiker Moses Ector Hunter Towns	Kelly Farr- Executive Director Matt Woodruff Jared Thomas Attorney General Office [Graham Barron] Mark Maske (ISKA) David Oblas Meagan Swartzlander Jon Marigliano
	Will Fisher Sterling Moore Anthony Rumanes Khun Phon Adam Sellers

**Vice Chairman Biello established** that a quorum was present and the Georgia Athletic and Entertainment Commission meeting that were scheduled to begin at 11:00 a.m. was called to order at 11:11 a.m. Vice Chairman Biello also wanted to welcome the newest member back to the board, Mr. Moses Ector.

**Motion to Approve** the commission meeting minutes from December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Commissioner Rick Thompson makes a motion to approve; Commissioner Ben Kiker seconds the motion. The commission votes 5-0 to accept the minutes.

**Motion to Approve** the commission meeting minutes from December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012 conference call. Commissioner Thompson motions to approve. Commissioner Kiker seconds the motion. Graham Barron, of the Attorney General’s office, said that since only 3 board members were at that meeting, and 2 of the 3 voted to approve the minutes, the 2 votes to approve the minutes will work. The commission votes 2-0 to approve the minutes.

**Motion to Approve** the March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013 MMA Undisputed Productions event permit for Wild Bills Night 53. Vice Chairman Biello asked Matt Woodruff if all the proper paperwork was submitted. Mr. Woodruff said that all the proper paperwork was submitted and turned in. Commissioner Hunter Towns makes a motion to approve the event; Commissioner Moses Ector seconds the motion. The commission votes 5-0 to approve.

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**Motion to Approve** Doro Inc. MMA promoter's license application. Vice Chairman Biello asks Mr. Woodruff if all the paperwork is turned in. Mr. Woodruff said that all paperwork but the application fee has been submitted. Vice Chairman said that for an application to be complete we have to have the fee turned in with the application. He makes a motion to have this moved to the February meeting. Commissioner Thompson seconds that motion. The commission votes 5-0 to move this application to the February meeting.

**Motion to Approve** James Corbett's event permit and gate fee tax be waived due to the event being for charity. Vice Chairman asks Mr. Woodruff to explain what this request is about. Mr. Woodruff explains to the board that this event proceeds are going to charity, and James Corbett has asked that his fee's be waived because of that. Kelly Farr has said that James Corbett has been around for a while, promoted many shows. Mr. Farr said that this is similar to the issue from David Oblas Toys for Tots show in December. Commissioner Towns makes a motion to approve the request to waive the fee, Commissioner Thompson seconds that motion.

**Discussion** by Commissioner Ector, he wants to know is there any way to verify that the charity is real, and that the proceeds are actually going to the charity and not just being said that they are. Mr. Farr said that there are rules in place for charity events to take place, however it is new to him to waive the fees. In the past when Mr. Farr had this role the fees were never waived. Mr. Farr said that the promoter would notify us, for us to be aware that it was for charity, and it would help promote the event. Commissioner Ector is worried we are going down a slippery slope and does not know where it ends at, to what is and what is not acceptable. Commissioner Ector feels that something needs to be put in place that the charities can be verified and that people aren't just using the idea of a charity event to get out of paying the fee. Commissioner Towns brought up the Albany State event, saying that was a charity event, so they did not feel they had to be sanctioned. Commissioner Thompson wanted to give Commissioner Ector a little background on why we are on this topic. Commissioner Thompson said Wild Bills Toys for Tots event was something where a gate fee was not taken, it was a toy got you in the event, so this event with Mr. Corbett is a little different. Commissioner Thompson said that all non-profits and charities have to register through the Secretary of State's office, so it should not be difficult to look them up, and see who they are. Mr. Farr said that churches are not required to register with the Secretary of State's office. Commissioner Thompson said churches do not have to register with anyone; however some do file 501C4s but not all. Commissioner Thompson said to have the promoter provide more information regarding this charity and church. Mr. Farr wanted to know what proper verification is for this charity. Commissioner Thompson said a 501C3 or anything that shows that they have filled some form of document with the IRS and they are a real organization. Commissioner Thompson makes a motion to approve this, given that appropriate documentation is provided showing that the charity is verifiable and that the executive director, Mr. Kelly Farr, feels that it is sufficient. Commissioner Towns seconds that motion. Commissioner Ector wants the Secretary of State's office to look into this and make sure that the money is actually being put into the charity. He said that GBI would possibly be able to help with that. Mr. Farr said to the board if this is going to continue, to waive fees then perhaps some rules get put into place for it. Graham

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Barron said that there are rules currently in place for charity events. Stating that three days after the event the promoter is to turn in certified copies showing how much money went to the charity, what it went for, and who accepts the money. Mr. Farr said we need to clarify who determines what is certifiable. Vice Chairman Biello said that Commissioner Thompson's motion still stands, and the commission votes 5-0.

**Motion to Approve** the license application for Lashaun Blair. Vice Chairman Biello asked if Mr. Blair was in attendance. Mr. Woodruff said that he confirmed with Mr. Blair, he would attend the meeting, and reminded the commission that this topic was tabled from December to have Mr. Blair come meeting in front of the board. Mr. Blair was a no show and Commissioner Towns motions to table until February. Commissioner Thompson seconds that motion, and the commission votes 5-0.

**Motion to Approve** the license application for Sterling Moore. Vice Chairman Biello asked Mr. Woodruff if all the proper paperwork is turned in. Mr. Woodruff said that Mr. Moore was also at the December meeting, but had not submitted his medicals for review, and since then he has turned all proper paperwork, with all medical test having good results. Vice Chairman Biello asked Mr. Moore to come in front of the board. Mr. Moore is 54 years old, and Mr. Farr wanted to make it known that he is applying for an amateur application, so when he fights he will have to wear some added protection. Mr. Farr wanted to say that this is different from the person who was also over 50 at the December meeting, because that was for a professional boxer whereas this is amateur where there are rules in place to protect Mr. Moore. Commissioner Towns make a motion to approve for license. Vice Chairman Biello seconds the motion, and the commission votes 5-0 to approve.

**Discussion** for additional video equipment during fights. David Oblas wants to add a Go Pro camera to the referee's chest during fights. It would give an up close look at the fight. The camera can be put on your head as well; however Mr. Oblas likes the chest better. He said that Blake Grice, a referee in Georgia, uses this camera at his gym in South Carolina for training. Mr. Oblas has asked Will Fisher, also a referee in Georgia, to try on the camera and see how he feels with it on. Commissioner Thompson wants to know what referees are going to wear this, MMA? Kickboxing? Boxing? Who will wear it? Mr. Oblas said that his goal is more MMA, but he would like to see on both. He proposed maybe to try on both at his event this upcoming weekend. Vice Chairman Biello asked Mr. Fisher to come up and try the camera on. Mr. Fisher instantly starts to examine the camera once it's on him, to make sure that there is nothing sharp on it that could cut or hurt a fighter. Mr. Fisher does not want the camera to get into the way of him or any ref if they have to step in and pull a guy off of someone. Mr. Oblas said Blake Grice will jump to the side to pull a fighter off, and Mr. Grice has tried this at his gym, where he feels it is safe. Mr. Fisher said that refs are taught to go in at a 45 degree angle; however the camera still could get in the way. He did say though from a production side, it would help determine and grade refs on how they perform. Commissioner Thompson said he does not care about the production because this board does not gain anything from production. Mr. Fisher said that this camera could help give us a better look at fights if it's needed. He stated that some video productions are not good, where this will give you an in-ring look at the fight. Vice

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Chairman Biello asked if this is being used in any other states. Mr. Oblas said he is not aware, but it is used in many action sports. Vice Chairman Biello asked Mr. Fisher how it felt on, and Mr. Fisher said that it was fine and that the camera was not moving. Vice Chairman Biello's concern with this is that he has seen how referees move during a match and he feels that the camera is in the way. Mr. Fisher said Adam Sellers, also a referee, to come and see it. Mr. Sellers is worried that what if a fighter is on the ground and comes up and hits it. Vice Chairman Biello wanted to see how the head unit works, and what Mr. Fishers take on it is. Commissioner Thompson said he does not want this to be a replacement, rather additional camera footage. Vice Chairman Biello wants to know what value this camera has to the Georgia Athletic and Entertainment Commission. He wants to see who has done this before and how the results were there. Mr. Oblas said that this does not add value to the commission; however it would add value to the promoters which would draw more interest in the sport. That might then drive value to the commission Mr. Oblas stated. Commissioner Ector is curious to see how fighters would feel about it, since they are in the ring with a foreign object on the referee. Commissioner Ector said he would like to hear from some fighters on what they would think about this being added. Mr. Fisher said that the head gear camera is not very comfortable; but he said that if this camera is used it can help the GAEC review referees. It will allow people to see the referees tactics and skills in the ring. Commissioner Towns asked Mr. Oblas if Go Pro cameras are being used in any other states or if the research has not been done. Commissioner Ector asks if any fighters are in the room to get there take on this camera. Khun Phon, both a fighter and a promoter, said that in the ring it is hard to control what goes on. He feels that the camera is too big and it is something that he would never use at one of his events. Vice Chairman Biello wanted to know if we approve what cameras are used, and Commissioner Thompson said we approve what goes in the ring. Commissioner Kiker said he would like some test to be run in training. Vice Chairman Biello is concerned as to why we are even worried about the cameras. Mr. Oblas said because the commission regulates what goes in the ring. Commissioner Ector wants to get about 3 or 4 peoples take in this, he wants to have the research done and seen before a ruling is made. Commissioner Thompson said he would like to see some test footage of this done before making a ruling to allow this in the ring. Vice Chairman Biello asks Graham Barron if there are any liabilities on this, but Mr. Barron said that this is not addressed by rules; however the commission does approve what is in the ring. Vice Chairman Biello feels that the safety of this issue is still there, a fighter could hit is eye on the camera coming up and never see again. Vice Chairman Biello wants to know if this is a safe thing to do. Commissioner Thompson wants the commission doctors to look at this and get there take on it. Vice Chairman Biello said he would like to have the commission doctors to look at this first, and if they approve then it can be tested in gyms. Mr. Farr said he would offer to poll the other commissions and see if they are using this camera in their states. Commissioner Kiker wants an experiment to be done in this, maybe this could be the next big thing. Commissioner Thompson said this is a subject that needs to be looked at a little more. Vice Chairman Biello asked Mr. Woodruff to do a little research into this. Mr. Oblas said that Blake Grice has been doing this testing for a few months. Commissioner Thompson said he wants to see the footage. Vice Chairman Biello said no to approve this equipment right now. Commissioner Towns wants to know what other states are

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using. The commissioners want to have more research done on this before moving forward.

**Discussion** about adding impact testing. Mr. Farr wanted to know a little bit more about what the commission wants to do with this. Mr. Farr spoke with Dr. Jeff Traub at the December Wild Bills show about adding this test. Dr. Traub described this to Mr. Farr as a requirement of every fighter to get licensed in this state. Dr. Traub also stated that if a fighter gets knocked out then he would be suspended until he passed his impact test. Mr. Farr after the event looked at the rule in place and the testing policy is not as detailed as described by Dr. Traub. The rule is placed under the medical requirements, not the requirements for license. The license reference the medical requirements section of the rules, but only apply to people over 200 rounds. Commissioner Thompson recalled this not being a rule requirement; rather it was going to be a case by case study. Vice Chairman Biello agrees with Commissioner Thompson. Commissioner Thompson said this is still a new topic and still being looked into. Graham Barron said that is under the medical requirements, not the license requirements it wouldn't apply to everyone. Mr. Farr wanted to know how case by case would work. Would it be recommendation from doctors, pick a fight, how? Commissioner Thompson said if it was a knock out that the Secretary of State's office felt needed to come in front of the board that would be a case example. Mr. Farr recommends Lashaun Blair have an impact test done if he is granted a license before his fight.

**Discussion** by Vice Chairman Biello, he wants to somehow honor Mr. Don Geary for all the help that he had given the board. Commissioner Thompson agreed. Commissioner Thompson wanted to have the elections be put on next month's agenda.

**Discussion** with David Oblas. He wanted to make sure his second event permit and fee were approved for his 1/19/2013 event since they were not on the agenda. Mr. Woodruff stated that the application and the fee were submitted and everything was turned in on time. Vice Chairman Biello wanted to make sure that these events are not supposed to drag on. Mr. Oblas said it is not meant to be dragged on; it is security to know that they do not have to be rushed. Commissioner Thompson makes a motion to approve the event permit. Commissioner Towns seconds that motion, and the commission votes 5-0 to approve.

**Discussion** with Khun Phon, promoter for Bangkok Fight Night. He sent an event permit and fee by certified mail on Monday and was told it would be to the GAEC Tuesday. Mr. Woodruff said that the GAEC never received that permit or fee. Mr. Phon said this is his first time sending in the mail because in the past he would drop it off with Andy Foster. Commissioner Thompson wants to know when the event is, and Mr. Phon said March 29. Vice Chairman Biello wanted to have Mr. Woodruff check; however Commissioner Thompson wants to give the authority to the Secretary of State to review and approve upon everything is properly submitted. Commissioner Thompson makes a motion to give the Secretary of State's office authority to approve this event based on all paperwork is submitted properly and accurate. Commissioner Towns seconds that motion, and the Commission votes 5-0.

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**Discussion** with Khun Phon about the possibility of an 8 man international kickboxing tournament. K1, from Japan, wants to come to Georgia to have this tournament; however with the rules in place now is there a way to get around that for this event to take place. Mr. Phon said that we don't have the proper rules to allow this event to happen. Commissioner Thompson said that we currently don't allow fighter to fight on the same day because they are suspended for 7 days after a fight. Commissioner Thompson asked Graham Barron to speak on this. Graham Barron said there is a process to have a rule waived, where they would have to ask what rule is waived and why it should be waived. Mr. Barron said it then is posted for 15 days for public comment and then a public meeting is held on it to have it voted on. Vice Chairman Biello wanted to know what time of the year would this event take place and Mr. Phon wanted to make sure this event would take place first. Mr. Barron said that by law he would have to show a certifiable hardship as to how this rule is affecting his event. Commissioner Kiker wanted to know if ISKA sanctions this. Vice Chairman Biello suggest that Mr. Phon meet with Kelly Farr, then Graham Barron to discuss things then bring it back to the board. Commissioner Thompson is aware of K1 and aware of the safety issues that could go along with it, he recommends that good information as to why this event is safe to have and why in Georgia. Kelly Farr wanted to know if other states held these tournaments, and Commissioner Thompson said that states hold kickboxing tournaments, not K1. Vice Chairman Biello said that Khun Phon needs to get with Kelly Farr and Graham Barron to make an argument on why the rules need to be changed, and why this needs to come to Georgia, before bringing back to the board for them to here. .

**Discussion** with Sterling Moore, he wanted to thank the board again for the board granting him a license. Said he is grateful to have the opportunity to be able to fight.

**Discussion** with Anthony Rumanes, from Atlanta Fight Night, wanted to introduce him to the board and say thank you for approving his promoter's license.

**Motion to adjourn;** Commissioner Thompson made a motion, Commissioner Towns seconds and the commission voted 5-0 to adjourn.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 12:11 p.m.