

MN Combative Sports Advisory Council
Department of Labor and Industry
Wednesday, February 16, 2022 @ 4:00 p.m.

Minutes

Members Present:

Bobby Brunette, Chair
Veid Muiznieks
Andrew Haugen
Vanessa Vogl
Denny Nelson

DLI Staff & Visitors:

Matt Schowalter – DLI
Eileen McNiff – DLI
Kate Perushek – DLI
Ali Afsharjavan – DLI

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at approximately 4:15 p.m. and a quorum was present.

2. Introductions

Assistant Commissioner Kate Perushek and newly assigned OCS legal counsel Ali Afsharjavan introduced themselves. Council members introduced themselves.

3. Announcements

Bobby Brunette acknowledged the passing of Councilor Bob Dolan. Mr. Dolan had served the Commission and Advisory Council for over 10 years.

Matt Schowalter gave an update on: the loss of events in 2020-2021 due to COVID-19 pandemic; having done multiple boxing and MMA events since June 2021; and the hiring of four new inspectors to help cover the increased number of events.

Schowalter discussed the development of a COVID-19 policy for combative sports events, which will be adjusted as COVID-19 pandemic changes.

Brunette opined that annual or bi-annual training should be conducted for inspectors.

4. Approval and/or additions to October 22, 2019 Minutes

MSP: The October 22, 2019 minutes were approved as presented.

5. Overview of Draft Legislative Proposals

Assistant Commissioner Perushek discussed draft legislation aimed to improve health and safety in combative sports. The draft legislation would close loopholes, ensure promoters pay a fair contest fee, and improve fighter health and safety. OCS also planned to seek \$150,000 in appropriations to help improve the program.

Ali Afsharjavan highlighted a few of the statutory changes that OCS wished to propose to the legislature, including: a decrease from 9 advisory council members to 5; required oversight by outside organizations of certain combative sports events that OCS does not currently regulate; certain promoter requirements being placed into separate license-specific and event-specific sections; a fee schedule for event fees; ambulance requirements; and an appeals procedure.

There was some general discussion among advisory council members. Members were supportive of all the proposals.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:50 p.m.

DRAFT