

**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