



Athletics Manitoba and MTFOA Resolution

Hello Everyone,

As many of you will know, Athletics Manitoba has been involved in ongoing discussions with the Manitoba Track and Field Officials Association (MTFOA) since December, 2014 regarding the restructuring of the managing group for officials in Manitoba and the need to be better aligned with other provincial affiliates of Athletics Canada. This process was resolved with the Board supporting the motion presented at the board meeting on July 6, 2015. Notification was sent to the MTFOA executive and to the Board of Directors regarding the motion prior to the Board meeting. Details regarding next steps can be found below as well as the message that was sent to all officials earlier today.

On behalf of the Athletics Manitoba (AM) Board of Directors and all members, I would like to thank all officials for your ongoing contribution to the sport of Athletics in Manitoba. I think we can all agree that everyone works well together during the competitions and this was particularly evident June 26 and 27 at the Age Class Championships. As most of you know, AM and MTFOA have been involved in a mediation process for the past few months and, this process ended with the Board of Directors supporting the motion presented at the July 6, 2015 board meeting. The motion differed from the motion in November, 2014 in that it does not dissolve MTFOA and instead provides for MTFOA to appoint 2 representatives of its choice to the officials committee. This was the Board's attempt to address the concerns raised by MTFOA in our mediation process.

To be ready for 2017, we will need to train upwards of 230 people as officials to be able to host Legion Nationals and Canada Games. We have people in the office with skill sets who can support this initiative (Alanna and I built and implemented major education programs for Athletics Canada). It is also going to be key that AM works very closely with Athletics Canada (AC). As such, it makes sense that we align with the structures of AC and other provinces. Volunteers and volunteer leadership will continue to play an important role with officiating in Canada, but we have reached a point nationwide and here in Manitoba where increased office engagement and responsibility is necessary to retain our current officials and to recruit sufficient new officials to meet our needs. At the end of the day my office colleagues and I are the ones responsible for the delivery and growth of all elements of our sport in Manitoba and we are committed to seeing them through.

I think it is important to reiterate that the purpose of changing the structure of how officiating is done in Manitoba has never been to imply that what was done in the past was wrong, but rather to acknowledge that the climate within which our sport operates has changed and we are now forced to adapt to it. Every official, regardless of whether they are veterans or are new, is valued and contributes to the success of Athletics in Manitoba. This new structure will support not only the training and development of new officials as needed, but will also contribute to building capacity with the current group of officials. Having senior officials with advanced credentials is crucial to our success in offering the best possible competitions.

This is copy of formal notification that was sent to the MTFOA executive and the Athletics Manitoba Board of Directors regarding the Board Motion that was passed at the July 6th Athletics Manitoba board meeting:

On behalf of Athletics Manitoba (AM) I would like to thank you and MTFOA for the efforts the MTFOA executive has made to come to a resolution with AM. Given the results of our strategic review, the outcomes of the National Officials Committee (NOC) meetings in April in Winnipeg, changes with the structure of NOC (3 branch selected representatives and 3 Athletics Canada (AC) selected representatives and an AC staff chair), and the structure of all other officials organizations in Canada (all are committees of their respective provincial sport organization (PSO) for Athletics boards), Athletics Manitoba must move collaboratively and decisively to ensure a structure is in place to allow us to be prepared for 2017, 2018 and beyond.

In light of the above comments and taking into account the revised resolution that MTFOA presented to AM, the following motion will be brought forward at the July board meeting. The purpose of the motion is to align structurally with Athletics Canada and our branch partners around officials' development and management as well as create a collaborative environment for officials' development moving forward.

Motion: "Athletics Manitoba (AM) will create an officials committee of four people. It will be composed of two representatives appointed by MTFOA and two representatives from the broader officials' community that the AM board will select. All officials selected to the committee must be members/officials in good standing. The committee will be chaired by the AM Executive Director and charged with developing (recruiting & training), organizing (meet assignments and travel) and managing Athletics officials in Manitoba. The committee will be accountable to the AM Board of Directors via the committee chair. Athletics Manitoba will create a budget line for officiating within the AM budget. The transition of MTFOA to the officials committee will occur over a 6 month period beginning August 1, 2015; however, the AM office will be immediately responsible for the development and implementation of a training and development plan to be created collaboratively with the new committee."

Given that this motion was approved at last night's Board meeting, no mediator's report from the process earlier this year will be released. Starting this fall, AM and the new officials committee will work together on a succession plan. Once the transition is complete, future committee members will be selected as follows: 2 representatives (normally officials) identified by the AM board and 2 representatives identified by the officials community (this could be by MTFOA, if the organization wishes to remain as the liaison to the officials). We have no objection to any particular officials serving as the officials' reps.

In the meantime, we'd like to thank Jennifer Campbell for continuing to coordinate officials for the remaining meets this summer. No changes to processes or policies regarding officials will occur until the fall. Any changes to process or policies will be communicated via email and the website as they occur.

I enjoy working alongside all members of the officiating community in Manitoba and I think this re-structuring initiative will serve our sport well. I look forward to working together to ensure we have all the people we need in place for 2017 and beyond.

Please contact our president, Grant Mitchell, or me if you have any questions or concerns.

Kind regards,
Donna Harris
Athletics Manitoba Executive Director