

The MTFOA is speaking to the motion-

“Motion 1- To dissolve the MTFOA and to administer athletics officiating with a committee of five (5) members chaired by the AM Executive Director.

Motion 2 – The Athletics Manitoba board will appoint four members of the officials committee.”

from Athletics Manitoba executive that was presented to our executive. On Wednesday Oct 29 MTFOA executive was meeting at Sport Manitoba. Donna Harris new Executive Director of Athletics Manitoba asked to be on our agenda. Grant Mitchell – President of AM and Kathy Kelly – VP of AM attended as part of the Athletics Manitoba executive. The motion which is an Athletics Manitoba executive motion **not** a board motion was read to Cindy Doroshuk – BOC, Jane Edstrom, Wendy Verbong and Jennifer Campbell by Donna Harris.

The current AM executive has **never** met with the MTFOA executive or our membership to discuss any matter(s) relating to officials and the Strategic Plan.

During Donna Harris’s reading/explanation she stated AM has the power to dissolve MTFOA. She stated there is precedence within Sport Manitoba.

In talking to a recently retire Sport Manitoba Senior Management employee, he stated that the Coaching Association of Manitoba is not a precedence for dissolving. Sport Manitoba’s Ted Bigelow wanted CAM to be at arm’s length, independent based, there was a Memorandum of Understanding and CAM received direct funding. There were issues [\$], a Task Force was created to see if the issues could be resolved, they could not. CAM was given a choice – Could stand on its own but no funding from Sport Manitoba or come back under Sport Manitoba’s umbrella.

1. MTFOA is not a Provincial Sport Organization
2. MTFOA reports to AM and Athletics Canada’s National Officials Committee
3. Never receives direct funding from Sport Manitoba; MTFOA is a AM budget line [\$3,000.00 -\$3,500.00] Officials groups can apply for a grant from Sport Manitoba **BUT** it has to go through the Provincial Sport Organization, be signed by the President, Executive Director and officials representative. The cheque is always made out to the Provincial Sport Organization.
4. Within the AM Bylaws Article 4: Governance. MTFOA wants to be treated the same way as the Road Running Association and the Manitoba Coaching Association.

MTFOA’s executive would appreciate if Athletics Manitoba executive could clarify this point on Precedence so it is explained to our membership correctly and MTFOA asks the question – “Where in Athletics Manitoba’s bylaws is this stated that AM has the authority to dissolve MTFOA?”

When asked by MTFOA what is the rationale behind this motion, Grant Mitchell, President of AM stated “former officials” had taken part in the Strategic Planning and the executive was addressing their comments. These “former officials” who are not MTFOA members, not active officials and do not have true vision over the last 10 years as to what has been achieved in MTFOA. It appears that Athletics Manitoba has put more credence in the input of “former officials” than gathering information from the current active officials of MTFOA who are the true stakeholders.

The executive of Athletics Manitoba and the New Executive Director was solely involved in the creation of this motion and the Terms of Reference .Yet the MTFOA executive was not consulted at all and this demonstrates a total disregard for Due Process. MTFOA’s first and main priority is the athletes. Officials make sure the athletes are the main focus. Officials provide for a fair competition within a safe environment whereby all athletes have an opportunity to perform at their best.

It should be noted that in the Terms of Reference for this proposed NEW COMMITTEE that the relationship with Athletics Canada’s National Officials Committee [NOC] has not been included under the heading- Scope and Jurisdiction.

Mindful leadership should have said “What is the best relationship for AM and MTFOA?” Officials should be allowed to express their opinions, have a meaningful and honest discussion. MTFOA request that Athletics Manitoba defer this motion till MTFOA membership had time to discuss the motions as officials are the ones who are out there for the athletes!

In June 2009 MTFOA and AM signed a Memorandum of Understanding. Terry Armstrong was President for a short while, he started this work and when he resigned our Executive Director at that time Rob Guy asked him to complete this task. This MOU was signed by Terry Armstrong and MTFOA BOC Kathy Pettinger. The Board of Athletics Manitoba approved the MOU on June 14, 2009 at an AM board meeting.

There are nine points to this MOU. The first three points state our relationship:

- “That AM is the governing and sanctioning organization for Athletics, Road Running and Cross Country in the Province of Manitoba.”
- “MTFOA is the governing body for all athletics officials and officiating of athletics in Manitoba.”
- “AM and MTFOA shall work in harmony with one another under the umbrella of Athletics Manitoba.”

To work in harmony MTFOA needs to be involved in any discussions related to its future. Because of this document MTFOA executive feel that MTFOA is intergraded with Athletics Manitoba. **This MOU was done in good faith!** There is no expiration date which means no ending date. To end this relationship both parties - AM and MTFOA – have to meet to go through a process of renegotiation and discussion or decide which party is going to end their involvement. This has not been done.

MTFOA would like to address a few of AM executive points based on their motion:

1. Steady decline in the numbers of officials.

MTFOA has been consistently working towards improving the number of officials and MTFOA is pleased to say here is the latest number of officials as of Nov. 5, 2014

42 MTFOA officials in our books for 2014

Level 1 & 2 = 15 Have 3 officials ready to take their level 3 open book exam

Level 3 = 14 4 new level 3 officials as of May 2014; names added to the NOC Directory

Level 4 = 4

Level 5 = 9 1 Level 5 listed an associate member

2. Absence of an effective plan to rectify it. MTFOA executive would say that the current statistics indicate clearly that we do have a plan in place to increase the number of officials. In fact MTFOA and our former Executive Director Diana Stevens followed **NOC Handbook Appendix 7D: Suggestions for Recruitment** to assist us in developing our plan. MTFOA executive is working hard and making progress on the issue of recruitment and retention. Other aspects of our plan included:

- a. **Restructured Level 1 Intro Clinic** so that it is more receptive and welcoming, no overloading of the teaching of the rules. Our format now is a laminated “Quick” Reference Sheet and doing a tour of the event areas during a meet to see the relationship between the officials and athletes. This year MTFOA and Special Olympics Manitoba selected Bison Classic Friday night. SO is sending a group of parents.
- b. **Revised the Officials Pathway** for level 1 and 2 officials – no longer require 50% track and 50% field. The Pathway now is more “user” friendly; officials can choose which event discipline he/she would like to try. Reduced the length of time it takes to complete these two levels without compromising the criteria. A group answer and discussion format is used for the open book exam; a very knowledgeable senior official coordinates the exam process.
- c. New MTFOA officials for their first year do not pay a membership fee. They are matched with a Level 4 or Level 5 to “job shadow”.
- d. Have provided opportunities for newer officials to travel to out of province meets to gain experiences:
 - i. Work with different crews
 - ii. The chance to watch and job shadow with different Chiefs

MTFOA’s rationale was that the executive know that this would instill more confidence when these officials were moving from level 2 to level 3, level 3 to level 4. MTFOA executive felt that when going for their first level 4 mentorship, the official would be better prepared to handle the pressure of their first NOC mentorship. MTFOA has done this for three officials- 2010 World Masters in Kamloops, BC [1 official] and 2013 Western Canada Challenge [Tri Province Meet], Calgary, Alberta [2 officials]. MTFOA was hoping to do this again last summer for the 2014 Western Canada Challenge [Tri Province Meet] but it could

not be arranged which was unfortunate. All the expense of travel is covered by MTFOA.

- e. Have approached Senior Citizen Groups – the long hours and physical strength required, did not suit them.
 - f. Advertised in community newspapers.
 - g. At AGMs and in our newsletters MTFOA executive has asked our membership to bring a friend or a work colleague. This has shown success.
 - h. Approached senior athletes personally. MTFOA now has 4 athletes who are officials and MTFOA has a core of 6-8 senior athletes who assist officials as Technical Assistants.
 - i. Seek the help of clubs. Big thank you to WOA, SATT, and Flying M for being proactive and getting parents to come out to the Intro Clinics and have started to officiate and are now in training.
- 3. Dire need of officials.** What organization would not be looking for more officials / Volunteers! MTFOA executive feel that our improved statics is a good indicator, shows MTFOA is moving on the right track!
- 4. Separate Entity is both rare and ineffective.**
- i. **Rare** – Athletic Canada with our structure is satisfied. AC has an association under its umbrella – Road Racing Association as does Athletics Manitoba – Manitoba Runners Association and Manitoba Coaching Association. Within Sport Manitoba there several official associations to name a few:
 - MB Volleyball Officials Association
 - MB Basketball Officials Association
 - MB Soccer Officials Association
 - MB Softball Officials Association

Manitoba Track and Field Officials Association is more a historical name. MTFOA is in line with other provincial officials committees. MTFOA was formed before the Canadian Track and Field Association now Athletics Canada and the Manitoba Track and Field Association now Athletics Manitoba. This history was provided by the Keith Beard when MTFOA created the Keith Beard – Hours of Service Award.

In 2010 I attended the AC's Presidents meetings as was President of AM and my ED Rob Guy attended as well. I was asked to talk about NOC. First each President/Executive Director shared how their provincial worked. I can tell you there are similarities and there are differences but the main goal has never changed – **to make sure the best officials are there for our athletes!**

In all provinces the officials committees are run by the **officials** and not by the Executive Directors, Staff or Board members. Officials committees do have board or staff members attend now and then at their convenience as liaison personnel. Diana Stevens was a regular attender, contributor and supporter. **Provincial officials committees are elected by their officials.** MTFOA holds elections for their executive positions.

- ii. **Ineffective** – Athletics Manitoba hosted the 2011 & 2012 Canadian Juniors. Athletics Canada Technical Delegate David Weicker in his report to AC stated – “the National Junior Track and Field Championships was one of the best junior championships in the past 15 years. “There was a great group of volunteers, who, due to their experience as athletes made them capable assistants to the technical officials.” “The referees and chiefs and most other officials were appointed far enough in advance due to the appointment of a competent Meet Director and Official’s Coordinators.” During these two meets **34** mentorships were done and **12** of these were MTFOA officials who upgraded and **3** MTFOA officials were certified as National Mentors.

MTFOA has followed NOC’s lead in establishing and clarifying guidelines and policies to ensure officials can no longer bend the rules for their personal gain. These changes are now more black and white and not open to personal interpretations.

MTFOA executive has been active in promoting for our officials:

1. **MTFOA Travel Policy** 40% indoors [5 out of 13 meets], 40% [6 out of 15 meets] outdoors. Attendance is always taken and cross referenced. The purpose of this policy was that just working 8 credit hours in a year is not enough to have your name placed on the MTFOA travel list. This policy does not apply to IAAF ATO’s and ITO’s as they fall under the jurisdiction of the IAAF and Athletics Canada. This statement can be verified by David Weicker, coordinator, Technical Operations [Officials and Events] IAAF and IPC International technical Official.
2. Buddy Mentoring System
3. Creation of a MTFOA newsletter. When NOC NOC is sent to level 3, 4 & 5 officials, MTFOA executive send this newsletter to our level 1’s and 2’s.
4. MTFOA executive created a **12 point Strategic Plan** as per Athletics Manitoba’s request. This will be presented at our AGM on Nov 19.
5. MTFOA officials were the first officials group in Sport Manitoba to require our officials to do the Sport Manitoba online – Respect in Sport.
6. Only province in Canada to have a Junior Officials Program. First graduate of this program was Scott Murray who is working on his second mentorship for Level 4 PFCJ.
7. Appreciation Gift program – MTFOA executive make sure we say thank you to our officials.

Be assured that MTFOA has followed the rules of NOC and Athletics Canada. MTFOA believes strongly in supporting our athletes and working in harmony with Athletics Manitoba.

The MTFOA executive has spoken but our membership needs to hear and discuss this Motion/ Terms of Reference in order to make an informed decision. The membership of MTFOA will reply to Athletics Manitoba executive in a timely manner.

In conclusion, MTFOA executive is making the following suggestions:

1. Following the MTFOA AGM, the wishes of the membership for MTFOA will be brought forward; we formally request the opportunity for MTFOA executive to meet the Board of Athletics Manitoba to discuss the issues.
2. To defer the motion of dissolving until such time as MTFOA has had the opportunity to discuss the motion at their AGM on Nov. 19, 2014 and have a follow up meeting with Athletics Manitoba.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to speak to this Motion.

MTFOA Executive

Cindy Doroshuk

Wendy Verbong

Jane Edstrom

Jennifer Campbell

Nov.10, 2014