

OTFA Board of Directors Meeting

Friday, September 21, 2007
Sport Alliance of Ontario
Boardroom 3A
8:42

Present: Albert Tschirhart (Chair), Mike Illingworth, Marc Christie, Val Sarjeant, Bill Stephens, John Craig (staff), Roman Olszewski (staff), Anthony Biggar (staff)

Regrets: Denis Landry (Vice-chair)

1. **Welcome:** Albert welcomed all to the meeting and thanked them for attendance.

2. **Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting:**

Note: Minutes should be approved by the Board prior to publication on the our website. In future John will send the minutes electronically for approval prior to publishing them on the OTFA Website.

Motion: To approve the minutes of the last Board meeting.

Stephens / Sarjeant

Carried

3. **Business Arising:**

Albert ran a quick review of the minutes and updates were given on all action items.

4. **Approval of Agenda:**

New OTFA logo will be discussed under New Business, as will harassment. (Note: the meeting went overtime and the facility closed before we could have discussions on these items).

Motion: To approve the agenda for the meeting.

Illingworth / Stephens

Carried

5. **Technical Committee Recommendations (motions):** The Board considered two motions which had been approved by the Technical Committee. These motions are attached to these minutes. One motion recommends that the list of records as recommended by the Director of Technical Services be accepted. The second motion is that the distance of the Bantam Girls Cross Country Championship race be increased to 3,000 (from 2,000) effective 2008.

Motion: To adopt the Technical Committee Recommendations

6. **Reporting Procedures for New Positions:** With the OTFA hiring new contract positions, the Board recommended that:
- The New Head Coach liaise with our Director of Technical Services
 - The New Development Program Coordinator liaise with the Director of Marketing and Administration
 - The New Membership Director report to the Director of Marketing and Administration
7. **Code of Conduct:** While some discussion of member conduct is included in our OTFA Policies and Procedures manual, this manual is cumbersome and lengthy. John suggested that perhaps we need a more readable document which is short and concise and which would be easily read by members. We might even consider a requirement that all members sign a contract with membership acknowledging that they had read, understood and accepted the Code of Conduct.

Such documents exist in other branches (for example BC) and OFSAA and Athletics Canada each have a similar document. Such a document outlines best practices, harassment policy, poaching policy, respect, and other issues that should provide guidelines for all our members.

Action: Bill will try to draft a document for OTFA purposes.

8. **Provincial Amnesty:**

Prior to the Board Meeting John and Roman presented a suggestion that the OTFA might offer some leniency – an amnesty so to speak – to athletes who had competed in OTFA Championships in 2007 without being OTFA registered members. While the OTFA policy on this is unequivocal, the introduction of such a policy tends to strain some personal relationships, especially those between club coaches/administrators and OTFA staff.

John suggested the OTFA was also complicit in some misunderstanding about the application of this policy and that we had to accept some blame for misunderstandings.

However, some concern was expressed by Bill that by backing out of this position we are not being fair to those who did obey the rules. The problem, implications, system and protocol were discussed at length.

The Board re-affirmed that anyone who enters an OTFA Championship meet MUST be a duly registered member of the OTFA by 11:59 p.m. of the Sunday prior to the Championship Meet. Once this deadline has passed, the OTFA staff will scan for athletes who are entered but for whom there is no record of OTFA membership.

As a courtesy the OTFA staff will then contact the clubs and advise of athletes who are entered in the meet but who cannot compete because they are not OTFA members. This will provide the club/athlete with an opportunity to provide the OTFA with information that may show that the athlete is, in fact, registered and that the OTFA has made an error.

NO OTFA memberships will be accepted for the meet after the registration deadline above (11:59 p.m. on the Sunday prior to the competition). Athletes who are not OTFA members at the time of registering for the meet will not be allowed to compete. If for some reason a non-member does compete, his or her performance will be stricken from the official results and the performance will not be recognized.

Action: John to contact Hy-Tek to see if we can make the OTFA Membership number field mandatory as part of entering. John also to see if the Hy-Tek system can be 'married' to an OTFA number spreadsheet so that the number isn't accepted unless it matches a number in our base.

Action: This issue to be raised and discussed again at the Board meeting on November 21 and raised at the AGM

For 2007 only, athletes who competed in OTFA Championships but whom were not members of the OTFA at the time, will be provided with an opportunity to send their membership forms and fees in now and have their performances recognized.

Action: Anthony to standardize this process, write it out and publish it in all forums so that it is known by all parties.

9. **OTFA Trip to US High School Indoor National Championships:** Bill expressed concern with this trip and wonders if there is strong value in the event. Citing discipline as a problem, he saw the meet as being significant but wondered if the money for this trip might be better spent elsewhere, on a series of summer meets perhaps, or some other program. Marc believes the meet is as valuable as the Espoir meet and that it provides a real opportunity for these athletes.

If the OTFA is to continue, Bill recommends some changes to selection and travel so there is better management, control and responsibility. Maybe we need to hire security at the hotel. Also we need to make standards tougher. We need to have some people look at this and determine how to do this better.

Action: Marc to form and lead a committee to make recommendations on the merits of this trip and opportunities to make it better. Bill will sit on Committee as well and other members may be asked to join.

10. **Naming Rights of New AC Awards:** An opportunity exists to have the OTFA name an existing Athletics Canada annual award or, perhaps, provide a new one. This may provide the OTFA with a chance to recognize some of the people in our sport who have contributed in outstanding ways.

Action: John to investigate costs and protocol. John also to ask Enrico if the OOC wants to take on the naming of the officials award.

11. Meet Director's Clinic:

John forwarded an idea from Enrico Toscano that the OTFA might host a Meet Directors symposium aimed at both our Championship Hosts and hosts of smaller competitions. This would provide new meet directors with a chance to learn from the veterans, and would re-enforce the OTFA's requirements and protocols for our own Championships. Among other things topics could include: expectations of host clubs (responsibilities of Meet Secretary (pulling numbers), awards ceremonies, sponsorship opportunities, officials responsibilities, official recruitment, priorities (run on time) etc.

We should look at two symposia per year and possibly host one this year in conjunction with the Athletics Canada Technical Congress in November of 2007.

Action: John to follow up with some veteran OTFA directors to see if they would be interested in hosting or addressing such a Symposium.

12. Dartfish: Tabled until the next meeting.

13. Coaches Cards and Access to Infield: The Board entertained some discussion around the production of plastic Coaches ID cards which could be used as passes to the infield at OTFA Championships. The discussion was cut short because of time restriction and was tabled until the next meeting.

14. AGM and Elections:

The OTFA AGM is Saturday, November 24 at UofT and will be hosted in conjunction with the Athletics Canada Annual General Meeting.

Several vacancies will be open on the Board of Directors come the November OTFA AGM. In response the OTFA formed a Nominations Committee with Bill Stephens as the Chair. This Committee will determine the desired qualities and skill sets that would help enhance the effectiveness of the OTFA Board, and present a slate of nominees to the AGM in November.

Other nominations will be accepted up until the time of the opening of the meeting.

15. New Membership Categories: This topic, which would see the adoption of two new membership categories was tabled until such time in the future as it can be discussed.

John also advised that there needs to be a change in the name of the OTFA Juvenile age category as the rest of the country will be switching to the IAAF terms in this regard.

Motion: That the OTFA standardize with the rest of the country regarding name age classifications

Tschirhart / Stephens

Carried

16. Head Coach Position: The Board was brought up to date on the success and delays in finding a Head Coach.

Action: John to speed up the process and make sure Contracts, Terms of Reference, and Duties and Responsibilities are made available as soon as possible.

17. Out of Province Transfers:

Action: John to check with Athletics Canada to see if, when an athlete moves from one province to another, he or she can immediately join and represent the new branch and club in competition.

18. Fixtures Coordinator: Bill suggested we need to develop a statement saying you can't have a meet running up against an OTFA competition. Roman pointed out that, of course, we have no jurisdiction over unsanctioned meets.

Action: Roman to come up with a policy statement on fixture conflicts and sanctioned competitions.

19. RJT Training Program (with FIA):

Action: Albert suggests we go to the ministry of education to make them aware of the RJT program. Val to investigate this as an action.

20. OFTA Operational Review and Gap Analysis:

Val suggested the need to look at what the staff is doing and see if we have some gaps. There is a need, for example, to do an overhaul of our Policies and Procedures manual. The staff is overloaded. Therefore we need to do a review to make sure priority items are being looked after and there is other functions are maintained.

Obviously things have changed through the last several years and old job descriptions probably bear little resemblance to current tasks and responsibilities.

Action: John to ask staff to write job descriptions and give back to Val for review.

Action: Val to forward to Albert and John some of his tools to help guide us in this process.

21. Information: John provided updates on several items:

Bingo: The OTFA bingo at Finch Bingo Country in Toronto will close it's doors at the end of September. This program, which once netted the OTFA about \$70,000 per year has now stopped. We will try to re-locate for a single bingo per month in another location, but there is no guarantee of this and the OTFA can no longer count on Bingo revenues to fund programs.

Move: The OTFA will move sometime next summer (2008) to a new location and better facility, along with the other sports in the SAO. The move will likely be cost neutral and rent in the new building will meet anticipated rents at our present location.

Guelph High Performance Centre: John advise that he had been out to visit Dave Scott-Thomas in Guelph and had enjoyed a frank and direct discussion about High Performance Centres, the OTFA's concerns about attaching such centres to clubs and/or universities, and the activities of the Guelph centre. The discussion led to some ideas on how we might work more closely together to offer even better services and opportunities to our members.

22. Adjournment:

Motion: Sarjeant / Stephens

Meeting adjourned 11:32 p.m.

Technical Meeting Motions

MOTION: *That the list of new records, as recommended by the Director of Technical Services, be accepted.*

Illingworth/Toscano

CARRIED

MOTION: *That the distance of the Bantam Girls Cross Country Championships race be increased to 3000m (from 2000m) effective 2008.*

Tschirhart/Sarjeant

CARRIED