

AGM Report 2020- Vice Chairperson - Athletics Ontario Officials Executive Council

2020 will be a year that is remembered for many things, track meets that never were, lockdowns and lots of hand washing. This will be a brief report but when I look at what has been going on, I have been involved in a number of activities to support AO officials and our role in athletics.

Our 2019 AGM in November 2019 had its bumps too. Peter had car trouble and did not get to the meeting so I chaired the meeting, without notes. Helen had a family emergency and had to turn around and drive home again, leaving Merv to do the new NOC mentorship workshop on his own. But all in all, there was a good turn out and as always lively discussion and good luncheon.

The next day I attended the AO AGM to represent the official's council in Peter's absence. There were some interesting presentations as part of the AGM, Respect in Sport, training for coaches, parents and officials, and Richard LeBlanc, York University on Volunteer Board Governance.

The council board met by teleconference in late fall 2019 to discuss the editing of the AO Expense Policy. This was to add some clarification and update the policy. This was in place for the indoor season.

The council members have meet via teleconference and zoom, however there has not been need for meetings in this time of COVID 19. But I have learned some new skills since March.

I was recruited by Peter to work with the WMA 2020 Toronto committee to train volunteers for July 2020. As we all know WMA 2020 Toronto this came to a screeching halt in March.

I sat in on many of the weekly AO Town Halls hosted by Paul Osland to provide the perspective of an official in any planning for return o competition.

Peter and I coordinated a zoom session and a series of telephone conversations with upper level officials to determine what would need to be in place for AO officials to return to their role in competitions. Much of this work was then sent on to AC and used as the ground work for the NOC Guidelines of Officials, in Return to Track. My thanks to all officials who provided their recommendations. It was challenging as the situations changed daily, through out the spring and into the summer months. When there were opportunities for outdoor track meets the health and safety recommendation were in place. Thanks to the officials who did come out and assist as they felt possible at the outdoor meets.

Anthony Biggars of AO and I had reviewed the results of the survey from fall 2019, one of the points noted was the need for staying connected and improved communication, so a newsletter for officials was developed. **Unofficially Speaking** has published with the help of the AO staff. The **Officials Town Hall** had a good response at the first one in October and will now be a monthly event going forward. (First Tuesday of the month at 7:00pm on Zoom)

I attended on Zoom a session on how to recruit and maintain officials in sport today, looking for ideas to help athletics officials.

As many of you I look forward to returning to the track, but likely not until later in 2021. Thank you to my fellow council board members.

Regards,
P. Lynn McFerran

