



## NZ Masters Athletics Board Meeting

**Minutes of the Board meeting held on Thursday 25 February 2021**

**at the Autolodge Motor Inn, 393 Devon St East, New Plymouth, commencing at 1pm.**

Present: Andrew Stark (AS) (President), Michael Wray (MW) (Vice-President), Stewart Foster (SF) (Secretary/Treasurer), John Campbell (JC), Ian Carter (IC), Claire Giles (CG) and Derek Shaw (DS) (Minute Secretary).

Apologies: None

### 1. Welcome:

The President welcomed members to the face to face NZMA Board meeting.

### 2. Minutes of the previous Board meeting held on 6 December 2020.

*That the minutes of the Board Zoom meeting held on 6 December 2020 be confirmed as a true and correct record.* A Stark / D Shaw Carried

### 3. Matters Arising and Actions:

- \*P1 The changes to the Constitution passed at last year's AGM had not yet been filed.
- \*P3 No progress on drafting questions for the survey of NZMA members and ANZ masters.
- \*P4 AS reported that there were 223 entries for the 2021 NZMA T&F Championships.
- \*P5 DS reported that following an email discussion it was decided not to pursue the inclusion of a rotation policy in the proposed changes to the Constitution that had been circulated for discussion at the 2021 AGM.

### 4. President's Report:

AS tabled his draft report for the AGM on the following day. He reflected on the challenging year due to the world wide Covid-19 pandemic which has disrupted many events and changed life as we knew it for the foreseeable future. He highlighted the additional challenges of organising events over the winter, especially during level 2 lockdown with the restrictions of less than 100 in any given space. Covid had resulted in the NZ Cross Country Championships being down-graded to 'challenge' due to Auckland being in level 3 and Auckland athletes not being able to travel to Dunedin. The NZ Road Championships were moved back to November. He highlighted that many ANZ non-stadia championships were well supported by master's athletes, such as the NZ Road Relay Champs held in Feilding in early October.

One positive outcome he highlighted was the monthly Zoom meetings initiated by Athletics NZ with all Centre Presidents, which given the overlap of 'open' and masters administrators were well received. Covid had resulted in the cancellation of the NZMA Indoor champs and contributed to the reluctance of NI Centres to plan and host the NI Champs which resulted in them also being cancelled.

Although the MoU between ANZ and NZMA had not pleased everyone, he believed that it had helped maintain attendance at the NZMA champs at a consistent level between 192 and the 223 for this year. He commented on the continued decline in direct NZMA members and the low *Vetline* subscription uptake by ANZ masters that has resulted in the print run for *Vetline* falling below the 300 required for a discounted postage rate. The subscription for *Vetline* no longer covers the cost of production and postage.

There was then a discussion on the future of *Vetline* with questions relating to whether we continue with producing it in a hard copy format and perhaps increase the NZMA membership and *Vetline* subscriptions rates or do we move to an electronic format that is emailed out to those on our database and posted on the website as soon as it is produced instead of delayed. It was noted that the Australian Masters organisations had moved several years ago to electronic newsletters. For those that would still require a hard copy a photocopied and stapled version could be supplied. There was an acceptance that we should move to an electronic format and review the frequency and number of pages.

*That printed copies of Vetline cease with the January 2022 edition.*

S Foster / J Campbell

Carried

AS indicated that the new approach of electing the Board at large and the Board allocating the various roles begins this year. He acknowledged that Stewart Foster and John Campbell are stepping down from the Board at the AGM and thanked them both for their work and many contributions over their respective 17 and 13 years of service.

#### 5. Secretary's Report:

SF had distributed a copy of the summary of the inwards and outwards correspondence since the December Board meeting. He had also circulated his Secretary/Treasurer's report that had been prepared for the AGM. This report indicated that although the year was one that many wished to forget, we had only missed conducting two of our annual competitions – the indoor and NI T&F champs, with the latter not due to the pandemic. He highlighted the move to Zoom meetings and the considerable financial savings achieved. He mentioned the reduction in direct NZMA memberships and *Vetline* subscriptions which has resulted in increased postage costs for distributing *Vetline*, our principle means of communication, and raised the issue of how long it can be sustained in its current hard copy format and that this needed to be discussed.

He signed off his final report “after a happy, often frustrating, and enjoyable 17 years ... the changes that have taken place over that time have been immense and have created a path forward within our sport. May we continue forward. To the many I have worked with, and often annoyed, I say thanks for your support and comradeship.”

#### 6. Treasurer's Report:

SF had circulated the financial report to 31 January 2021, which showed a balance of \$23,375, but noted that \$5031 was owed to Taranaki Masters for the entry fees to the NZMA champs. SF also spoke to the annual accounts that would be presented to the AGM. He highlighted the \$5000 saving from the holding of meetings via Zoom and that there had

been one extra meeting on the usual number. Closing of the PO Box at the end of February would save \$200 per year. The cost of *Vetline* had reduce compared with the previous year as there was one less hard copy edition. Bank fees were now costing \$10/month with only 13 payments for the year.

#### 7. Database:

AS indicated that he had purged the database of those that have not paid a membership or purchased a *Vetline* subscription since September 2020, which has reduced the number of copies of *Vetline* needed to around 125 plus spares for Centres.

MW mentioned that the only master's centres that had requested information on ANZ masters in their area were Otago (to promote SI Masters T&F champs) and Wellington.

#### 8. Constitution changes:

The proposed changes discussed at the last Board meeting and subsequently by email had been circulated to the master's centres and were up for discussion at the AGM. It was agreed the MW would speak to the proposed changes at the AGM.

If the proposed changes are supported at the AGM then DS agreed to merge the two lots of changes into a master Word document and send them to SF and AS. It was agreed that SF, CG and AS would sign off the changes for filing.

#### 9. Championship Rosters:

In terms of the 2022 NZMA T&F champs, MW indicated that Wellington Masters was seriously investigating the possibility of hosting them but it was still to be finally confirmed. The date of the champs would need to fit around the Capital Classic (expected to be one of the last two weekends in February), ANZ T&F champs (4-6 March) and Round the Bays run and that the Wellington Centre officials do not want consecutive weekends. As a consequence, the second weekend in March (11-13) looks the most promising. The current roster has Auckland hosting in 2023 and then Southland in 2024.

In terms of the 2021 NI Masters T&F champs it was hoped that Manawatu – Whanganui Masters would be able to host them, mostly likely in Palmerston North as they had been scheduled to hold them in 2021 when they didn't happen. Auckland Masters was suggested as another possible host.

In terms of the 2021 SI Masters T&F champs CG confirmed that Otago Masters are looking at the weekend of 19-21 November, a week later than last year's champs.

MW indicated that the Agency 10,000m event which had incorporated the NZMA 10,000m champs is scheduled for 13 November 2021. He is keen to again see the NZMA 10,000m champs included and hoped that this year there would be masters from the South Island taking part. In terms of medals, he indicated that last year he had organised a special order of medals in Wellington with inserts and would need to order more medals after this year.

#### 10. International / Oceania Masters:

AS reported that the OMA Council held a zoom meeting in January and there are serious doubts as to whether the OMA Champs currently scheduled for January 2022 on Norfolk Is will go ahead. At present the only flights to and from Norfolk Island are via Australia and with the current approach to community COVID-19 outbreaks of shutting the borders in Australia there is no confidence in being able to fly in and out of Norfolk. Chatham Air have not resumed flights to Norfolk. There are also some major issues with irrigation of the grass track on Norfolk. In response to a question about whether there is a date by which a yes or no decision will be made, he indicated that there wasn't yet but felt that at the latest it should be 6 months out from the champs ie in June/July 2021.

There was a brief discussion about whether any NZ centre would be in a position to consider taking over the champs and it seemed to be an option, especially for a centre that already had experience with hosting the champs, such as Waikato Bay of Plenty.

AS reported that OMA ran a virtual championship over January that seemed to be well supported by both NZ and Australian athletes.

#### 11. Proposed Changes to ANZ Competition Regulations:

The Board discussed the discussion document prepared by Rod Syme on the 'Potential Rationalisation of Masters Events at NZ Cross Country and Road Championships' dated January 2021 that had been circulated by AS. The was agreement that the masters grades for both the NZ Cross Country and NZ Road champs be simplified to just having 5-year age grades as is the practice at NZMA T&F champs and for other ANZ championships such as the NZ Mountain Running champs. This change would mean that a master's athlete could only qualify for one individual medal for one performance which seemed fair and appropriate.

There was also support for retaining the Centre Team competition for both men and women and having these apply to 15-year age groups – namely 35-49, 50-64, and 65+. For the first two 15-year age groups it was also agreed that the Centre teams should involve 4 people while the teams in the 65+ age groups would be better to require 3 people.

In terms of the distances for the various age grades there was support for retaining the current distances in the NZ Cross Country champs of 8km for M35-64 and 6km for M65+ and all the grades for master's women. It was noted that the discussion paper had mistakenly listed 5km for the master's women grades as opposed to 6km in the current regulations.

In terms of the distances for the NZ Road champs there was agreement on 10km for the master's men but no agreement on the distance for master's women. It was agreed that there should be consultation and feedback sought on this issue with options ranging from the current distance of 5km up to 10km.

In terms of the request for the introduction of an Open 70 grade at the NZ Road Relay champs, this was supported. It could perhaps be introduced as a three-year trial as happened when the O60 grade was introduced with recognition as an official grade with separate results and medals. However, there was no agreement on whether it was best to have 6-person teams (easiest administratively as it would be the same course as the O60, JM and JW grades) or 4-person teams (likely to result in more teams). It was agreed that this

would also be a good point to encourage feedback on in the consultation. There was a suggestion that if an O70 grade was not officially introduced this year, that there could be discussions with the LOC to see if an unofficial O70 grade with local medals could be incorporated into the event as was implemented for race walkers at the 2020 NZ Road Relay champs in Feilding.

It was agreed that after the draft minutes were circulated that DS and AS would send a response to Rod Syme for consideration by the Rules Sub-committee.

#### 12. 4th World Veteran Games Trust:

There was a need for a new trustee to be appointed to the 4WVG Trust to fill a vacancy. SF has indicated interest in the position now that he will no longer be on the trust as a result of his NZMA Board role. It was noted that this item is on the agenda for the NZMA AGM the following day.

#### 13. NZMA Records and Results:

JC had circulated a paper on NZMA records and results for discussion. It contained four recommendations. Firstly, he urged that, since there is electronic timing at all NZMA champs and overseas champs, all hand timed NZ records performances should be archived in a "legacy records file". This would keep them separate from the current electronic records in much the same way as we had archived throws records for different implement weights and for pentathlon events when the points tables changed. It would also be similar to how ANZ have archived the records for the old non-metric distances.

Secondly, he suggested that we list all known wind readings with the sprints and horizontal jumps so that they are open and transparent for all to see. Thirdly, in order to be fair in our colour awards and athlete of the year awards that all performances that are over 95% and of all finalists in the athlete of year awards should be verified in the same way as they would for a formal record application. Currently we may take the published results at face value, without checking the photo finish results and wind readings.

Fourthly, he urged that we archive all championship results files (eg Meet Manager) and photo finish files (eg Finish Lynx). This could be a simple file export at the end of the meet and archived in our NZMA Dropbox so that we have digital file copy. He noted that some meet files seemed to be stored on the laptops of officials and over time are deleted or lost.

MW pointed out that our handbook requires electronic times for NZMA records for events up to 400m and where it not readily evident that a historical hand time record or electronic time is faster both will be listed. For events over 400m, if electronic timing is not available then hand times recorded on at least three watches, including printout watches will be accepted. He indicated that he had been deleting hand timed records if electronic times are clearly faster.

JC suggested that if the removal of hand time records results in a blank or no record then we could check previous championship results to find a replacement record, however as many of the wind readings are not included it could be very difficult.

Moving forward it was noted that there are 12 records that have both hand and electronic times, so there could be a review of these records and see how many are left. MW offered to do a review and email the outcome to Board members. MW agreed that wind readings should be recorded and he will go back and check them and add them where he can. He will also add the athletes Centre to the results.

14. ANZ Mile Championships:

IC raised the question that since ANZ has resurrected the NZ Mile Championships that we should try to have the NZMA mile champs included, perhaps on an age-graded basis. MW indicated that there was an elite master's mile in Whanganui this year and discussion about adding a non-elite master's mile next year. He felt we should have 5-year age groups and that the idea needs to be discussed with ANZ, including who covers medal costs and entry fees. He thought it might be possible to have the NZMA mile champs alternating between Whanganui and the Lovelock Mile meet in Timaru. He offered to start discussions with ANZ.

15. NZMA Programme:

MW indicated that Wellington race walkers would like to see the addition of a 1500m race walk to the NZMA champs programme on Saturday, so that there were three possible events for race walkers. This raised the question of what should be the process for additions to the programme – can it be by simple request to the Board, a change to the bylaws (by the Board) or does it require a remit to be passed at the AGM or a SGM.

MW also indicated that Wellington race walkers had requested whether a penalty box could be used at the champs. SF pointed out that this would require eight additional officials.

16. Masters Awards, Rankings and in Action:

MW indicated that the reduction in championship events made the sorting out of colour awards and athlete of the year awards more difficult this year and resulted in more emphasis on age grading percentages. He reported that World Masters Rankings now have proposed individual age grading tables available which will be official in 2022. These will make it much harder to achieve a 95% level, so if we adopt them there may be a need to review the awards criteria to a lower percentage.

It was agreed that for next year's awards for 2021 performance that we would stick with current 5-year age groups percentages and then adopt the individual age group percentages when they are official in 2022.

MW reported that he is working on a NZMA Masters Ranking site which he is hoping will be finished in a few months. It will use a Caspio system that allows 100,000 records and then after that there is a cost of \$100/month. He will go through the 2020 results and then add the last five years results. AS queried whether it was best to use season rather than calendar year and MW responded that it could do both. He also indicated that the ranking site could be used for looking at performances for awards. MW also indicated that only masters 35+ are eligible for master's awards. He raised the possibility of a special award for the 'elite' masters and, if so, should there be a residential requirement – which could be challenging as to where to draw the line.

MW also reported that he will be looking at a NZ Masters in Action communication which included listing coming events. AS suggested that it could become more frequent and in time replace *Vetline* if it has additional content.

17. New Board configuration:

Rob McGregor has indicated that he would like to retire as our Reviewer in August this year. The reviewer is supposed to have a knowledge of the organisation they are reviewing. AS suggested that Anna Lynch could be approached to do the treasurer or reviewer role and could look at an accounting package such as Zero or Go-Money. JC indicate that he will continue to do the layout of *Vetline*.

It was agreed that we need to use the new co-opting provision in the constitution to help ensure we can meet the required quorum of five and to broaden the skill, experience, diversity and geographic spread around the Board table, such as more women, somebody from Auckland, a thrower, and perhaps a race walker.

MW agreed to take over the lead on record applications.

18. Next meeting: **Sunday 30 May 2021 commencing at 2pm.**

Meeting closed at 5.30 pm.