



# **MINUTES**

## **Special General Meeting**

**7pm, Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2017**

**Cathy Freeman Room, Athletics House, 31  
Aughtie Drive, Albert Park**

# 1. Open and welcome

7.10 pm

CEO Anthony McIntosh welcomed everyone and thanked them for their attendance especially after a long and very successful State Relay Championship. He then handed over to

Colin Segota – President, Little Athletics Victoria, who also welcomed everyone. Colin introduced the Board of Management and went through the details of the Special General Meeting.

LAVic Board members present: Colin Segota (President), James van Beek (Director), Paul Bray (Director), Michael Wallace (Director), Steven Coulson (Director). Sherrie Boulter (Director) is an apology.

## **Standing Rules overview**

Any member desiring to speak must attract the attention of the Chair by rising in their seat, or raising the Centre board. When called upon they must identify themselves to the Chair. If two or more members indicate simultaneously, the Chair will call upon the member who first caught his/her eye.

The Chair will, as far as practicable, call on speakers for and against a motion or amendment alternatively, subject to the right of the seconder to speak immediately after the mover. If two consecutive speakers have both argued for or against a motion or an amendment, and there is no member wishing to argue the opposite view, or, in the case of a motion, to move an amendment, the motion or the amendment shall, subject, in the case of a motion, to the mover's right of reply or the seconder's right of reserve, be put without further debate unless otherwise determined by the meeting.

- A member moving a motion or amendment will be deemed to have spoken to it. A member seconding a motion or amendment without speaking to it may reserve the right to speak to it subsequently.
- After a motion has been duly moved and seconded speakers will only be heard alternately for and against the motion excepting for the purpose of moving or seconding any amendment or further amendment and failing any speaker rising for the other side the motion will be put unless otherwise determined by the meeting.
- Points of Order do not require a seconder and may be called at any time during debate and, are matters on which the Chair must decide.
- Personal Questions can be moved by a member, although the Chair has the option of accepting or rejecting the question which may be to the Chair or any other member.
- Any member may move the suspension of Standing Orders to discuss a matter of urgency or more fully discuss a matter without the formalities of debate to the meeting. Such motion of suspension will be declared carried if supported by two-thirds of the members present.

## 2. Present & apologies

2.1 Acknowledgement of Life Governors – Margaret Carty, Gwen Timmins, Andrew Sterling, Shaz Cairns, Debbie Baskin, Carol Timmins, Marion Sparkes, Rosalie Wilson, Chris Doubleday

2.2 Acknowledgement of Centres present.

### **CREDENTIALLED CENTRE DELEGATES**

<b>Albury</b>	Brett Schofield	Jeremy McGuire
<b>Alpine</b>	Tikali Nicholls	
<b>Altona</b>	Daniel Shield	Wayne O Halloran
<b>Ararat</b>	Judy Leggett	
<b>Bacchus Marsh</b>	Linda Thompson	Leon Whitehand
<b>Ballarat</b>	Rodney Thomas	
<b>Barooga</b>	Colin Clifford	
<b>Bendigo</b>	Warren Sutton	
<b>Berwick</b>	Steve Woolfe	
<b>Box Hill</b>	Steve Taylor	Alan Bertacco
<b>Brighton</b>	Mark Barling	
<b>Brimbank</b>	Carol Timmins	
<b>Camberwell/Malvern</b>	Vu Nguyen	
<b>Camperdown</b>	Kathleen Marsh	
<b>Casterton</b>	Jenny Evans	
<b>Caulfield</b>	Tony Glew	Russell Harper
<b>Chelsea</b>	Cameron Whillas	Greg Russo
<b>Coburg</b>	George Pecchiar	
<b>Cockatoo</b>	Rae Mills	
<b>Cohuna</b>	Erica Blake	
<b>Corio</b>	Simon Hill	Graham Cole
<b>Corner Inlet</b>	Robert Jamieson	
<b>Cranbourne</b>	Mark Jouvelet	Michelle Baxter Hanna
<b>Croydon</b>	Andene Rooke	Fiona Mebalds
<b>Dandenong</b>	David Daff	
<b>Diamond Valley</b>	Aaron Bourne	Travis Soutter
<b>Doncaster</b>	Andrew Glover	
<b>Essendon</b>	Gwen Timmins	Jamie Gray
<b>Frankston</b>	Iain Finlayson	
<b>Geelong</b>	Matthew Payne	Jason King
<b>Hamilton</b>	Teresa Purcell	
<b>Horsham</b>	Terry Arnel	
<b>Hume</b>	Cheryl Duff	
<b>Keilor</b>	Mike Lloyd	

<b>Kew</b>	Mark Rice	
<b>Knox</b>	Robert Monteath	Stephen Hough
<b>Kyabram</b>	Chris Doubleday	
<b>Kyneton</b>	Tony Davis	
<b>Lancefield Romsey</b>	Tim Mathews	
<b>Lavington Jindera</b>	Ashleigh Robbins	Valena Robbins
<b>Leongatha</b>	Ben Cruickshank	
<b>Maryborough</b>	David Tull	
<b>Melton City</b>	Aimee Orr	
<b>Mentone</b>	Scott Wilcock	Erina Cunningham
<b>Moe</b>	Tanya Fleming	
<b>Moorabbin</b>	Chris Sharp	
<b>Mornington</b>	Mark Henry	
<b>Murrindindi</b>	Rosalie Wilson	
<b>Nunawading</b>	Scott Tempary	
<b>Oakleigh</b>	Dylan Harrison	Steph Cash
<b>Orbost</b>	Darren Payne	
<b>Pakenham</b>	Justin Piccolo	
<b>Portland</b>	Shane Bicknell	
<b>Preston Reservoir</b>	Rob Walsh	Dawn Walsh
<b>Ringwood</b>	Bryce Sandow	Irene Harris
<b>Sale</b>	Kevin Harris	
<b>Sandringham</b>	Craig Furber	Shane Bilsborough
<b>Seaford</b>	Therese Smith	
<b>Shepparton</b>	Aileen Zanelli	
<b>South Melbourne Districts</b>	James Cornwell	Sue Connelly
<b>Southern Peninsula</b>	Bryce Mulvogue	
<b>Springvale</b>	Cassie Jacobs	
<b>Sunbury</b>	David Thies	
<b>Swan Hill</b>	Julie Bicknell	
<b>Traralgon</b>	Janene Becker	
<b>Wangaratta</b>	Troy Comensoli	
<b>Warrnambool</b>	Craig Ralston	
<b>Waverley</b>	Katy Smith	
<b>Werribee</b>	Rob de Wit	
<b>Whittlesea City</b>	Tony Newstead	Michael McBrien
<b>Williamstown</b>	Ashley Sandison	
<b>Wodonga</b>	Sean Streat	
<b>Wonthaggi</b>	Jenna Meloury	
<b>Yarra Ranges</b>	Michael Clarke	

## **OBSERVERS**

Mike Donato, John Mills, Olivia Edwards, Michelle Laws, Andrew Duncan, Steve Ryan, Raff Agostino, Jenny McCausland, Kaydence Fleming, Zoe Bilsborough, Scarlett Bilsborough.

## **LAVic STAFF (in attendance)**

- Anthony McIntosh – Chief Executive Officer
- Shane Bertrand – General Manager, Education and Competition
- Graham Lucas - Business Assurance, Special Projects and Logistics
- Taylah Perry – Membership, Programs & Merchandise Co-ordinator
- Kim John – E-commerce & Technology Manager
- Debbie Baskin – Special Projects

Debbie Baskin took the minutes of this meeting.

## **APOLOGIES**

*Life Governors:* Alan Triscott, Allen Carey, Dennis Thornton, Norman Walsh, Wes Heywood.

*Centres:* Bar-rook LAC, Benalla LAC, Echuca Moama LAC, Edenhope LAC, Mt Beauty LAC, Rochester LAC, Rutherglen LAC, Yarrawonga LAC.

*Board members:* Sherrie Boulter (Director)

*Other:* Nadine Sellar

## **NO APOLOGY**

Bairnsdale LAC, Beaufort & District LAC, Colac LAC, Collingwood LAC, Craigieburn LAC, Gisborne LAC, Howlong LAC, Kerang LAC, Kilmore & Districts LAC, Mansfield LAC, Nathalia LAC, Seymour LAC, Sherbrooke LAC, Stawell LAC, Warragul LAC, Westernport LAC, Woodend LAC.

## **IN ATTENDANCE**

Of 99 Affiliated Centres – 74 Centres in attendance, 25 absent.

# 3. Special Resolution Motions

**NOTICE OF SPECIAL RESOLUTION C17 – 07**  
**Management**

**Submitted by: Board of**

Amend rule 4 of the Constitution of the Association to amend the definitions of “Affiliation Year” and “Competitive Member” to align age groups for Competitive Members in Victoria, as from the 2018-2019 summer season, with the changes made to clause 25.1 of the Constitution of Australian Little Athletics (ALA) at its Special General Meeting (SGM) on 15 October 2016.

## **CURRENT RULE 4**

“Affiliation Year” means the period which commences on 1 October of any year and concludes on 30 September the following year.

“Competitive Member” means shall consist of those children who are five (5) years of age or older and who are sixteen (16) years of age or younger (including those children who turn sixteen (16) during the Affiliation Year) at the commencement of any Affiliation Year and who are registered with the Association (through an Affiliated Centre or Club) and participate in Little Athletics and/or skill related activities organised and conducted by the Association or any of its Members. For the avoidance of doubt, a child may be registered as a Competitive Member during the Affiliation Year upon attaining five (5) years of age.

## **RULE 4 IF AMENDED**

“Affiliation Year” means the period which commences on 1 October of any year and concludes on 30 September the following year.

“Competitive Member” means shall consist of those children who are five (5) years of age or older and who are sixteen (16) years of age or younger (including those children who turn sixteen (16) during the Affiliation Year) at the commencement of any Affiliation Year and who are registered with the Association (through an Affiliated Centre or Club) and participate in Little Athletics and/or skill related activities organised and conducted by the Association or any of its Members. For the avoidance of doubt, a child may be registered as a Competitive Member during the Affiliation Year upon attaining five (5) years of age.

Note: The above definitions of “Affiliation Year” and “Competitive Member” cease to apply straight after the finish of the 2018 Australian Little Athletics Championships.

“Affiliation Year” means the period determined by the Board from time to time, as set out in the Regulations.

“Competitive Member” means a child who is five (5) years of age or older, and who is sixteen (16) years of age or younger, at the end of the calendar year in which the summer season commences, and who is registered with the Association (through an Affiliated Centre or Club) and participates in Little

Athletics and/or skill related activities organised and conducted by the Association or any of its Members. For the avoidance of doubt, a child may be registered as a Competitive Member during the calendar year in which that child attains five (5) years of age.

Note: These definitions of “Affiliation Year” and “Competitive Member” come into effect for the 2018-2019 summer season and following seasons, straight after the finish of the 2018 Australian Little Athletics Championships.

## REASON

In 2016, ALA decided that it would seek to change its yearly anniversary date to align with other athletics organisations, schools and Athletics Australia (AA), so that athletes would compete in the same age group in competitions in the period up to the end of December. The intention was that Little Athletes would retain their age groups for the duration of the summer season from October to March, as is the current practice.

At its SGM on 15 October 2016, the Executive of ALA brought forward a motion to amend clause 25.1 of the ALA Constitution to change the ALA age groups from being based on the age of a child at the beginning of the summer season on 1 October to the age of a child at 31 December in the calendar year in which the summer season commences. A separate motion was listed to align implement-throwing weights in the ALA Standard Rules for Competition (SRC) with the schools specifications for the affected age groups. The intention was that the changes would operate from the 2017-2018 season. An amendment was passed at the AGM to change the operative date to the 2018-2019 season, to allow for transitional rules to be fully developed for children born between 1 October and 31 December.

Under clause 3.1.2 of the ALA Constitution and By-Law 12/3, each State Association affiliated with ALA is required to abide by the Constitution, Rules (including the SRC) and By-Laws of ALA. Accordingly, the practical intention behind the change to clause 25.1 was to require each State Association, as part of its affiliation with ALA, to do what is needed within its sphere of operations to give effect to the tenor of the change. For Little Athletics Victoria, a change is needed to two definitions in rule 4 of the Constitution of the Association to bring about that change.

Since the 2017 LAVic AGM held on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> August 2017, the Association was advised by ALA at its Board meeting on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2017 that the Association would not be able to affiliate with LAA for the 2018/2019 season unless the Constitution of the Association reflected the terms of clause 25.1 of the ALA Constitution.

## BOARD COMMENT

Paul Bray provided an overview and legal context behind the motion that Centres were to vote on.

<b>MOTION: C17-07</b>	X	PASSED – Amended ( )		LOST		LAPSED
SECONDED Sandringham				WITHDRAWN		
<p>Colin Segota (LAVic President, on behalf of the Board) made the following comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board believes that it is in the best interest of the sport for LAVic Centres to pass this motion. LAVic is the only State that has not adopted this change. It is a positive move towards the adoption of the one sport mode.</li> <li>• Phasing in the change is not an option as the LAA Constitution would still not allow LAVic to affiliate. Please remember the “big picture” issue you are voting on is LAVic’s ongoing ability affiliate with LAA.</li> </ul> <p>Craig Furber (seconder for the motion, Sandringham LAC) speaking for the motion made the following comments:</p>						

- This is about the journey through athletics, it is about a choice of whether children will be able to participate or not participate under the banner of Little Athletics Victoria.
- It is not just about the October to December children this year, it is to align everyone together, all the organisations together.
- It is an important decision for the future and growth of Athletics in Victoria.

There was then a call for speakers against the motion. No delegates chose to speak against the motion.

Centres were asked to vote; the scrutineers counted the vote. A division was asked for. The result and the following comments were then announced by Colin Segota as below:

- The votes were counted and rechecked by the scrutineers.
- A total of 74 Centres cast a vote in this Special General Meeting.
- 59 Centres (80%) voted in favour of the motion.
- 14 Centres (19%) have voted against the motion.
- 1 Centre (1%) abstained from voting.
- On the basis that at least 75% of the centres in attendance at this Special General Meeting have voted in favour of the motion, I declare that the motion has been passed.

Colin Segota made the following closing comments:

- To the team in the LAVic office - thank you for all of your efforts not only in organising tonight's Special General Meeting but also for the considerable amount of time and effort that has been expended in working through this issue over the past 8 weeks.
- To the Association members who not only took the time to provide constructive advice and feedback on this topic but also voluntarily shared their knowledge and expertise on a number of issues relating to this topic.
- Thank you to all of the Regions and Centre Delegates that provided us with an opportunity to present an update on aspects of the motion at their Region Delegates Meetings. By and large we felt that these discussions were productive as delegates were able to ask questions, raise concerns or seek clarity around aspects of the proposed Age Group Change.
- Finally, I'd like to thank the LAVic Board and in particular Sherrie and Anthony for their efforts and support over the past 8 weeks.
- The past 8 weeks have been very interesting to say the least and on reflection provide a number of learnings and indicators as to why we are facing a number of challenges within our sport.
- From the start the Board realised that this had the potential to become a very divisive issue that would be driven primarily on emotion, rather than fact based discussion. Personally I don't believe that during my entire time in Little Athletics, and I have been involved at all levels of our sport, that there has been a more significant issue that the Association has faced. The reality is that it's not every day that a State association contemplates walking away from a long standing, mutually beneficial relationship with a National Association over what could be reasonably argued, is ostensibly a minor change in the day to day administration of our sport.
- The Board see's tonight's successful vote as an endorsement of LAVic retaining our ongoing affiliation with Little Athletics Australia and the Little Athletics movement which after all was established right here in Victoria back in 1964. I can assure you that the Little Athletics Australia Executive and Board will be very relieved with the outcome of tonight's vote as there was a genuine concern that the motion would not



be successful and that we consequently would not be able to affiliate with Little Athletics Australia.

- Thank you to those Centres who voted 'yes' to support the motion tonight. Each and every Yes vote was an important vote as it saved the association from months of uncertainty and isolation from the Australian Athletics community whilst the consequences of a no vote were addressed by the LAVic Board and Office team.
- To those centres that did not support the motion, I am here to tell you that we want your Centre to remain involved in Little Athletics. We firmly believe that each and every centre has a valuable role to play in driving Little Athletics in new and exciting directions.
- I indicated earlier that in the past 8 weeks we have identified a number of learnings that both LAVic and LAA will take out of this issue and work towards addressing. Examples of these issues include:
  - A general lack of understand around what LAA is, the role of LAA at a National Level and finally the nature of the relationship between LAA & the respective state associations including LAVic.
  - Uncertainty around the role of the LAVic Board and to a lesser extent our office team.
  - The lack of a clear athlete transition pathway.
  - Athlete retention in the U16+ age groups particularly for country centres.
  - That a number of our centres are resistant to change and this resistance is one of the key shackles that are preventing our sport from moving forward.
  - A sense of apathy from some centres who have failed to show at either or both of the 2017 AGM & today's SGM. It is extremely disappointing, particularly with tonight's SGM and the nature and implication of the motion that less than 90% of all affiliated centres failed to attend or be represented even when all Centres were provided with the opportunity to nominate a delegate to represent them.
- Before I wrap up and advise of the next steps from here there are several issues I want to specifically address.
- Firstly – there were several instances during our discussions with centre and region delegates and parents where there were accusations levelled at me personally, and at the broader board, that we were withholding information, not being truthful and were deliberately misleading centres. There is no substance or truth to these accusations and I take it, as I'm sure the rest of the Board do, as a personal affront on our individual characters and reputations. As a Board we have all voluntarily taken on our respective roles, not because we stand to personally gain from our involvement, but because we genuinely believe that we can make a positive contribution to the Association - just as I'm sure you all do when you take on leadership roles within your centres and regions.
- Secondly, we have been aware for some time of a closed Facebook Group called "Athletics For Children In Victoria". This site is in no way endorsed by the LAVic Board. It's time for our sport to move forward and to direct all of our energy and efforts to the positive, constructive development of our sport. If, as a member of this forum, including those members who are holding key Regional Executive positions, you feel the ongoing need to work against the objectives of the association and want to continue the negative, rock throwing and potentially sport destroying views that are aired on this forum, then I would strongly suggest that it is time for you to consider your ongoing involvement within Little Athletics.
- Finally, as an association it's time that we recognised that the enemy that we need to battle does not sit within the Association. We can, if the members so desire, continue to spend the time, effort and resources fighting internal battles and whilst we do this, we will continue to lose members and relevance in the external community. As a sport we need to come together as one and focus our combined

resources on continuing to develop our product offering, remaining relevant in the communities we operate in and retaining and attracting new members - we need to do this not only for the benefit of Little Athletics, but for athletics in general as our athletes are the future on athletics in Australia.

- The Board hopes that all centres can put the matter behind and move forward for the good of the sport, our families and athletes. There is common ground in a profound sense of passion for the sport by all. So where to from here?
- A communication will be sent to all Centres on Monday advising of the outcome of tonight's vote.
- Anthony and his team will commence mobilising the planned transition activities that will assist Centres, Athletes, Coaches and parents transition to the new age group arrangements.
- Once again, on behalf of the Board and our Office team, I'd like to thank you all for attending both State Relays today and tonight's Special General Meeting. I wish you all a safe, enjoyable Christmas and all the best for 2018. Safe Driving and we look forward to seeing you at the next State Event which will be the 2018 State Multi Event Championships which will be held at Casey Fields over the weekend of 27 & 28 January 2018. Good night.

Finished at 7.55pm.

DRAFT