

NZ TRAINERS' ASSOCIATION (INC) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Held 10am Remuera Room, Ellerslie Racecourse Saturday 24th August 2019
MINUTES

IN ATTENDANCE: Tony Pike, Gary Vile, Paul Claridge, Jim Burns, Sally McKay, Andrew Carston, Andrew Forsman, Shaune Ritchie, Robert Wellwood, Wendy Cooper

APOLOGIES: Nigel Tiley, Michael Pitman, John Wheeler

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES FROM THE LAST AGM – 10TH AUGUST 2018 Passed as a true record
Pike/Vile

MATTERS ARISING:

- Dutch gags/Spurs in flat races – following international ruling so will not be introduced.
- Program Booklet – emphasized strongly to Marty Burns that this needs to be reintroduced. Rather than individual postage to trainers, suggested copies could be sent to clubs for uplifting by trainers.

ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS – FOR YEAR ENDED 31 MAY 2019 were passed.
Tax exemption approved by IRD. *Carston/Pike*

ELECTION OF PRESIDENT

Tony Pike nominated *Vile/Carston*
There being no further nominations, Tony Pike duly elected

ELECTION OF TWO VICE-PRESIDENTS

Nigel Tiley nominated *Vile/Pike*
Michael Pitman nominated *Carston/McKay*
There being no further nominations, Nigel Tiley and Michael Pitman duly elected

APPOINTMENT OF SECRETARY/TREASURER

Wendy Cooper's appointment confirmed *Carston/McKay*

DETERMINATION OF ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

It was agreed that the annual subscription remain at zero.

APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR (IF APPLICABLE)

Quote had been received by NZTR approximately \$4000. Consensus that this was not required.

LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

Meeting approved Mac Henry for Life Membership

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10.30am

GENERAL BUSINESS FOR DISCUSSION FOLLOWING AGM:

Martin Burns – NZTR GM Racing & Equine Welfare, tabled a paper prepared for the meeting. Due to time constraints there was unable to be much discussion on some of the points raised which included:

- KPI status for 2018/19 season
- Thoroughbred Welfare
- Owner/Trainer Reforms
- Training and licensing
- Immigration
- Health & Safety
- Handicapping and R65 Bottleneck – Jim Burns requested that for mid week meetings in the South Island, perhaps there should be only 6 races programmed, so there was the ability to split races more regularly.

Jim Burns raised that there was no consultation with a Trainers' Association representative from Otago regarding the Oamaru race abandonment and subsequent transfer. Andrew Carston did advise he was contacted and that as the majority of horses were from Canterbury, the transfer was acceptable. Martin Burns appreciated that the communication wasn't necessarily clear. In future situations the branch representative should be contacted and any talk of transfer of licence to be made more clear.

GUEST SPEAKERS:

Alan Jackson: CHAIR NZTR, Dean McKenzie, CHAIR RITA and Anna Stove RITA Boardmember joined the meeting.

Tony Pike (TP) questioned Dean McKenzie (DM) on a number of issues including:

Debt Repayment – concern that due to the high level of debt, even with the proposed increase in revenue streams, it will not be possible to maintain or increase stake levels. DM responded that the rules had changed and that RITA was accountable to the Minister for Racing. There was a Letter of Expectation (available on the DIA website) that clearly had two bookends – the first was that there was to be no reduction in returns to stakeholders and the second was that the balance sheet was not to be deteriorated. RITA had to report financial status and communications to the industry on a quarterly basis.

TP questioned whether the proposed increase in revenue from the betting levy, racefields and the point of consumption tax were enough to achieve this? Substantial cost-savings would also need to be achieved. DM advised that the RITA management team had presented the RITA board with a draft budget that had been rejected. DM reassured the meeting that the industry was to be run as a commercial entity so that cost-savings needed to be achieved.

It was mentioned by many of the Trainers' Association representatives that the performance of the senior management team, particularly the Chief Executive was woeful. Yet it appeared this same management team were all still in place and outwardly nothing much had changed. DM stated that the reform program as outlined in the Messara Report was being followed and change was occurring. The first Bill was done and the second bill underway – a briefing paper

was being prepared in August with information to parliament later this year. It was planned to be up and running by 1 July 2020. There would be some thorny issues to be faced such as Class 4 gaming venues, virtual racing etc. The other political parties were being regularly kept up to date and lobbied for support.

DM acknowledged that the Fixed Odds Betting platform had not yet yielded a profit. TP questioned how RITA could expect to keep up with the IT internationally for NZ to be competitive. He believed outsourcing was the only option but questioned whether RITA had the management with adequate wagering experience to be involved in the negotiations. DM advised that RITA was utilizing experts via Australia who did have existing relationships and expertise. There was to be a robust process followed to ensure the best outcome for NZ and to retain competitiveness and not be priced out of the market. DM confirmed he was in regular contact with John Messara.

Alan Jackson advised that NZTR had done the figures and had doubts about the ability to retain a competitive position without outsourcing. He questioned how can RITA promise to increase stakes when there is at least a \$20million gap which is exacerbated by loan repayments of \$35million TP advised the situation was dire – significant growth was needed as the industry was in a downward spiral. DM responded that the most significant change was the rules set out by the Minister. There were 2 options – either no change which is not acceptable or support the reform program as outlined in the Interim Report. He assured the meeting that in 12 months time the industry will be getting all the revenue streams it can but that outsourcing would not be running in 12 months time however it would not require legislative change to be operational. It was pointed out that the TAB's worth will be eroded quickly over time so some urgency was required.

Gary Vile asked whether in 2 years time if the industry would be wealthier. DM said yes, it would be in the best possible position it can be in.

Shaune Ritchie asked would there be a reduction in expenses – DM responded yes that budget setting was rigorous.

Tony Pike asked what happens 1 July 2020 – DM responded that there would be a following of the Messara report regarding the governance structure with the Codes having more power and the TAB would be on the side as the commercial driver of revenue.

Anna Stove advised we needed to be positive and show a united front to keep favour of the politicians.

In conclusion, DM assured the meeting that TP had an open line of communication and that the industry would be kept informed of progress.

There being no further business, the discussions concluded at 11.45am.