

**MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY SPORT ADVISORY BOARD**  
**MEETING 3/2021 – 22 July 2021**

The minutes of meeting 3/2021 of the Melbourne University Sport (MU Sport) Advisory Board held on Thursday 22 May at 2:30pm via zoom.

**PRESENT:**

Mr Ian Marshman (Chair)  
Professor Sarah Wilson  
Professor Sarah Biddulph  
Professor Richard James  
Mr Paul Holland  
Ms Joanna Weston  
Mr Shawn Ingle  
Mr Michael Dardis  
Mr Tim Lee (Director)

**APOLOGIES:** Ms Lara McKay

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mr Jean-Luc Garlick (Secretary)  
Mrs Julie Caundle (Minute taker)  
Ms Stefanie Voelker for item 1.3  
Mr Zijing Chu for item 1.3  
Mr Zein Benjamin for item 1.3  
Ms Catherine Leung for item 1.3  
Mr Aaron McNaughton  
Mr Alex Affleck  
Mr Rod Warnecke  
Ms Jo Massoud  
Ms Bridgid Junot  
Mr Rob Paterson  
Mr Gary Ryan

**1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 Welcome**

The Chair welcomed all present and noted the appointment of Mr Paul Holland as the Internal member to the Advisory Board. The Director introduced Mr Gary Ryan who was in attendance as the consultant who will facilitate the Board Strategic Planning session at the September meeting.

**1.2 Apologies**

Ms McKay was noted as an apology.

**1.3 Club Presentation – MU Dragon Boat**

The Chair welcomed the Dragon Boat Club and Mr Warnecke introduced Ms Voelker, Club Vice-President, to present along with the other club observers.

Ms Voelker outlined that the club currently competes successfully at local and international regattas and is currently situated at the Docklands Boat Hub but will require an alternative permanent location over time.

The Chair thanked Ms Voelker for her presentation.

Ms Voelker and the other club representatives left the meeting at 2.45pm.

**1.4 Minutes from the previous**

The minutes were accepted as a true record.

**1.5 Business Arising/Action Item Updates**

There were no business arising/action item updates.

**2. MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION**

**2.1 Strategic Plan Review Presentations**

The Director outlined that the Chair had suggested Professor Wilson present on the University's expectation and themes that may relate to sport, recreation and fitness and that the Director outline on the important issues impacting on the organisation to set the scene for the proposed strategic planning session. The *Strategic Plan for Sport* was endorsed in 2018 and since then the University has adopted a new strategy, *Advancing Melbourne 2030*, and with the impact of the pandemic it is timely to review the objectives and targets of the strategic plan.

**2.1.1 University Expectation of Sport**

Professor Wilson noted that the purpose of the presentation was to outline the University's broader agenda and themes in relation to the student experience and the opportunities that this may provide to MU Sport.

The immediate focus is on activating the campuses as the University develops strategies to encourage both students and staff to return. The University's *Discover UniMelb* program will attempt to improve the access to information on student services and programs. A Student Wellbeing and Mental Health Framework is also being developed to ensure a more coordinated and considered approach to provide personalised services.

*Melbourne Plus* is being developed for participation in co-curricular activities to be included on transcripts to encourage students to focus on activities or programs that develop skills that connect them to community and enhance leadership, ethical and moral decisions, and innovation.

Recent data on student expectation was presented which has prompted the University to consider strategies to provide tailor programs, extracurricular activities, as a personalised experience to students using digital platforms, apps, and other communication channels. These are all opportunities for MU Sport.

**2.1.2 Issues Impacting on MU Sport**

The Director set out some of the major issues impacting on MU Sport, addressing three broad themes; activating the campus, spaces and places, and programs and services.

Activating the campus includes the challenge of the return to campus in second semester and understanding the long-term impact of COVID on our operation.

The short-term focus was to adjust our programs and services to encourage students and staff to return to campus in line with the University's plans and communications. Further consideration is required on any future changes to the way the University will operate that may impact on time on campus and any longer-term changes to the activity patterns of students and staff as a consequence of this and COVID-19.

Spaces and Places is about ensuring the provision of quality facilities that are conveniently located and easy to access, with the flexibility and capacity to meet the diverse and constantly changing needs of the University community. The footprint of our facilities at Parkville have not increased since there was a student population of 16,000 whilst other local universities have increased their investment in sport capital significantly.

The 2019 Student Wellbeing Survey identified that 21 percent of students were not engaging in any regular physical activity and reported a lower level of satisfaction with the student experience than those that did. These students were more likely to be from non-English-speaking backgrounds, low socioeconomic and equity groups, commuting significant distances or based at regional or smaller metropolitan campuses.

Various options should be considered to better manage the current overheads on buildings and staffing so that additional resources can be directed to providing the targeted and effective programs and to further reduce the cost of participation for students.

The Director outlined that he was confident that we have the strategies, the people including volunteers and the leadership from the Board and the passion of our stakeholders to overcome the challenges and meet the expectations of the University and our students.

### **Resolution**

*The Advisory Board noted the Strategic Plan Review Presentations.*

### **Action**

*To increase the duration of the Strategic Planning Workshop by one hour.*

## **2.2 Advisory Board Briefing**

The Director outlined significant current issues and the recent progress of strategic tasks which are covered in greater detail in his report.

Twenty members of the University community had been selected to represent Australia at the Tokyo 2021 Olympics and Paralympics Games commencing next week led by alumna Chef de Mission Ian Chesterman.

The Club Financial Health Check process has been established and will be undertaken annually to increase oversight of the financial position and management practices of each club to attempt to identify and rectify any issues. Clubs were asked to provide financial information for 2020 which is used to categorise them into three broad groups using a traffic

light system. 42 (of 45) clubs submitted information for last year which was reviewed, and each club categorised as follows:

- Green: 34 clubs were considered financially viable from the financial information provided.
- Yellow: 7 clubs were still in the process of providing all the information required.
- Red: 3 clubs had not replied .

The clubs in the red category remain our focus to determine their financial position as a matter of urgency. Further action will be considered if we are unable to receive a response and the Board will be kept updated.

The following recommendations have resulted from the process this year:

- That a Club Financial Practice model is developed to ensure best practice in club financial management.
- That clubs are asked to submit financial information in November each year so that the report can be presented in February the following year.
- That clubs are encouraged to operate under the MU Sport Club Financial System.

The organisation swung into action again late on Thursday 15 July to close down our facilities and suspend all club face-to-face activities and to communicate this to all stakeholders. The lockdown was subsequently extended until Tuesday 20 July and the Second Semester Orientation activities are now online and other campus major activities postponed until the week of the 16<sup>th</sup> August. Students and staff can register their interest in our programs and services and club activities via our QR code.

Pleasingly, donations to clubs have also returned to 2019 levels with almost \$700,000 received to date. The Boat Club has donors committing funds to be matched by other donors over the next five years which has already raised \$450,000 taking their chapter to almost \$3M.

MU Sport was recognised recently with two national awards at the Unisport Australia AGM. The Strong Women Network was recognised as the Most Outstanding University Sport Program in 2020 and the Soccer Club was also recognised with the 2020 Club Leadership Award for creating a more inclusive club.

Unfortunately, the Faculty of Fine Arts and Music (FFAM) recently decided to repurpose the Southbank Fitness Studio as a student lounge. The studio opened in August 2019 in partnership with (FFAM) who provided a space and contributed to the staffing costs whilst we provided the equipment and supervised the operation.

Professor Wilson and I also met recently with the team overseeing the University's Estate Plan as it is proposed that the Estates Committee may have the capacity to consider a small number of future capital projects later in the year.

### **Resolution**

*The Advisory Board noted the Advisory Board Briefing.*

## **3. MATTERS FOR NOTING**

**3.1 Director's Report**

The Director's Report and Finance report were taken as noted.

**Resolution**

*The Advisory Board noted the Director's Report and Finance Report.*

**4. OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

**5. MEETING FINALISATION**

**5.1 Meeting Close**

The meeting closed at 4.00pm.

**5.2 Next Meeting**

Next meeting on Thursday 9 September 2021 at 9:30am – 11:00am.

Signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record:



Chair Mr Ian Marshman

8 November 2021

Date