

Greater Richmond Aquatic League

Board of Directors Meeting

February 3rd, 2025, at the Colonies

Next meeting: Monday March 7, 2025 at 7pm—virtual

The Greater Richmond Aquatic League (GRAL) is an organization of swimmers, coaches, and parents whose aim is to promote and participate in the sport of summer swimming. GRAL provides an opportunity for young people to compete against others of similar ability in an atmosphere of fair play, good sportsmanship, and safety.

Meeting called to order at 7:02pm

Roll Call and yearly dues collected

- Present: Ashcreek, Ashland, Atlee, Battlefield Green, Bell Creek, Canterbury, Chestnut Oaks, Church Run, Colonies, Federal Club, Goochland, Hanover, Hungary Creek, Kings Charter, Mechanicsville, Milestone, Old Church, Pebble Creek, Raintree, Rockville Dolphin Club, Tuckahoe Village West, Twin Hickory, Wellesley, Wembly, Wyndham
- Absent: Burkwood, Dominion Club, Fox Hall

President's Report: Julie Zubris (Rockville) President@gralva.com

- Started the meeting with a brief presentation from Matt Tonga, a GRAL coach, who spoke about Comfort Zone Camp. He's been part of GRAL since 1994 as a swimmer and now coach. His mom passed away when he was 15 and he attended Comfort Zone Camp, which was free of charge. Like last year, his team, Hungary Creek, is doing a swimathon to benefit the camp and he invited other GRAL teams to participate. It is completely voluntary. They raised \$21,000 last year. Church Run did relays/ games and a meal. Wyndham did a pancake breakfast and "fun" meet and kings charter did relays, fun activities for their swimathon. They shared their experiences and what a great cause it is. All three clubs said they would do it again this year.
- At the end of 2025 we will need several new Exec Board members: President, Secretary, Treasurer, VP of Training & Certification, and currently what is called

VP of Equipment and Technology. **Ask your teams for anyone interested!!! You don't have to be GRAL board rep!**

- There are currently a few teams advertising for coach openings on the website. If you need to post a listing on the website, please email secretary@gralva.com.
- SwimTopia (ST): we had a very high level overview webinar of the SwimTopia website on Saturday, which is what is used for team management. Not too many teams attended, but those who did seemed to find it helpful. We are planning to offer a similar overview webinar of Meet Maestro for GRAL. Find upcoming open to the public live webinars here: https://help.swimtopia.com/hc/en-us/articles/32971415077147-Summer-Team-Webinars#getting_started
 - Tentatively have planned an overview webinar on Meet Maestro for Monday Feb 17th at 7pm. ST is going to create a sample meet that each can have access to and then use that to play around with the system and have it open during the training to follow along during the webinar. You should strongly encourage members of your team to attend live so they can ask questions.
 - GRAL will have trainings on Meet Maestro and meet entries with coaches and computer reps in the spring.
- For tracking team contacts, we will eventually be able to do that through ST. I have created roles that are pushed down to each team (Board rep, parent rep, coach, champs coordinator, computer rep, officials coordinator). Once swimmers have registered and their parents are in the system, you (or your admin) will need to go in assign a person to each role. It's one thing that is really simple to do. But for now, we need to stick with our current system, so if you need to make an update for this year, you need to complete the google contact form.
- Website was shared by Julie to the board. She has continued to work on it. It is not final. Once complete the web address will be switched over, so we will still have the same domain (www.gralva.com). Teams send in your bios and logos to President to be included on the website. Include email for info, and a contact name if desired.
- January meeting minutes: The Federal Club made motion to approve, Atlee seconded. None opposed; accepted into the record.

Secretary Report: Michelle Shores (Battlefield Green) secretary@gralva.com

The new contact list will be updated closer to the season starting to account for any new people. If your team completed a contact change recently, Michelle just entered them into the system and should be live now.

Treasurer Report: Cindy Anderson (Raintree) treasurer@gralva.com

No changes to the budget balance from last meeting as nothing has come out. \$43,694.

VP of Officials Report: Tom Connolly (Pebble Creek) officials@gralva.com

Start recruiting your officials now. 3-4 Training sessions will be forthcoming. There will be some changes to the training to make it simpler and more accommodating to officials. We want people to want to be officials. Looking into USA swim videos as an option.

VP of Training and Certification: Debi Knott (Wembly) training@gralva.com

Working on streamlining who is trained, certified, and who walked when. The old system of keeping track of who did what is too burdensome and we are working on making it easier to document and complete.

VP of Equipment Report: Moira Sweazey (Hanover) equipment@gralva.com

Next year the role will be Equipment and technology/webmaster. Next month will focus on ribbons, DQ cards orders. No other equipment issues for this role.

Computer Coordinator Report: Ralph Jones ralph@gralva.com

Ralph has been super busy with his job and still not retired. He will be working on GRAL stuff this week and will get the time standards done, the CHAMPS 2024 finals sent to be posted online, and the ST info squared away.

VP of Champs Report: open position champs@gralva.com The position was thought to be filled but we are not able to contact the person. The board WILL NOT be running CHAMPS this year. If there is NO VP, there will be NO CHAMPS.

- Champs is scheduled for July 19-20, 2025 at SwimRVA. 12 and unders will be Saturday, 13 and over on Sunday.

Old Business

- 2025 Proposed budget was discussed last month and attached to the January meeting minutes. Vote to approve budget: Old Church made a motion to approve and Bell Creek second. No opposed. Budget was passed. TVW asked if there was enough in the budget to cover ribbons and metals without raising the cost of dues this year. The additional cost of \$13,000 for ribbons was included and with the cushion in the budget, it is covered. But in future years, the Board will need to decide at what point they need to raise registration cost. The number of ribbons to be ordered is back to before COVID and the upcoming boards need to follow it closely. Registration this year is \$9.40 a swimmer with the ST discount. Next year it will be \$10/swimmer.
- Proposal to allow senior swimmers to swim the summer they graduate regardless of age. Discussion included a couple of different possibilities. One was to make exemptions for the swimmers that are seniors in highschool and turning 19 to be allowed to swim. The second was the bylaw was to be changed to allow senior swimmers to swim up until the age of 19 years old. A review of the handbook showed that there was no clear definitions and there was a vote to add a bylaw to the handbook that states: "A swimmer may participate if they meet one of the following criteria. 1. They turn 18 years old prior to June 2 of the current year; OR. 2. They are 19 years old and graduated from high school in the

same school year immediately preceding the season being swum.” Bylaw was passed with a motion made by Pebble Creek and second by Bell Creek. There were 21 yes and 2 no (federal club and atlee).

New Business

- Time Standards- To be sent out as soon as Ralph finishes them.
- 2025 GRAL Meeting dates (tentative plan—dates likely to stick, but in person/virtual may change)
 - Monday, March 3rd (virtual)
 - Monday, April 7th (virtual)
 - Monday, May 5th (TBD)
 - Monday, June 2nd (in-person—registration is collected and we hand out ribbons)
 - Monday, July 7th (in-person)
- 2025 Meet Dates
 - Meet 1 = Wednesday, June 4th
 - Meet 2 = Wednesday, June 11th
 - Meet 3 = Wednesday, June 18th (Question about it being okay for the rain date to be on Juneteenth? GRAL does not say it can not. Recommended to work it out with your team you are swimming)
 - Meet 4 = Wednesday, June 25th
 - Meet 5 = Wednesday, July 2nd
 - Meet 6 = Tuesday, July 8th (must be on Tuesday because of the tight timeline for Champs)
 - Champs = Saturday, July 19th and Sunday, July 20th
- Other important dates for the season
 - Registration due from teams by 11:59pm Friday May 23 (that is Memorial Day weekend, so plan accordingly) There are rules for adding swimmers later.
 - Registration paid at June Board meeting (6/2) \$9.40 a swimmer this year (same \$7 as last year, with an additional \$2.40 per swimmer for SwimTopia).
 - Coaches test due by 11:59pm Friday May 30th.
 - Coaches meeting Saturday, 5/31 at 9am—in person.

Good of the League

- None

Adjourn. At 830pm

Submitted by Michelle Shores, secretary