

Greater Richmond Aquatic League
Board of Directors Meeting

January 9th, 2023, held virtually

Next Board Meeting Monday, February 6th, 2023, at 7pm at Milestone

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 7:05 pm

Roll Call:

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

President Report: Kristin Brittle (Atlee) president@gralva.com

- Want everyone to know that lots of info gets shared just so that the Exec Board can be as transparent as possible with the full board.
- It's been asked why our Champs meet is not recognized by USA Swimming. Please know that we have asked that Champs become a certified event and our requests have been denied; they do not approve summer leagues.
- 2023 Divisions are available on the website.
- The 2023 coaches meeting will be on the morning of June 3rd at Atlee Rec.
- Thank you to the time standards committee for all their work in the off season. The committee included Christy, Chad Lehr, Kevin Trent, Roy Sabo, and Sarah Cox.
- Computer Rep feedback has been used to improve the digital cover sheet.
- TimeDrops: we have collected feedback from Colonies, the home team who used it, as well as the three teams who utilized it as visiting teams. We need more info, so the Exec Board would like to hold a meeting in the next month with those four teams so we can come back in February with more info.
- The Executive Board has reviewed suggestions on how to improve the handbook. These will be reviewed in detail during Old Business. We appreciate

other eyes looking at the handbook. We have a handbook committee every two to three years, so we would ask that if you find minor things that need to be changed, you write them down and then join that committee when applicable.

- Acceptance of September meeting minutes: motion to accept by Federal Club, Atlee second; unanimously accepted.
- President, Secretary, and VP of Champs will be open positions next year.

Secretary Report: Julie Zubris (Rockville) secretary@gralva.com

- Contact changes should be sent to secretary. She will reply via email when changes are made. In the off season, give it a week, but if you don't hear back from her, please send it again.
- Certificate of Insurance for your pool will be due by May 30th. Wait to send it until you renew for the 2023 season.

Treasurer Report: Debi Knott (Wembly) treasurer@gralva.com

- Started the year with \$29,000 in our account; ended with approximately \$27,000.
- Gross receipts for the season were \$68k, expenses were \$70k.
- Higher than normal expenses with replacing all the medals and securing an umbrella policy for Champs.
- We sold more ads and had better heat sheet sales than expected during Champs and that helped make up the budget shortfall.
- Question: Do we have enough medals left over to help offset the extra expense from 2022? Answer: Yes, we have a surplus of about 30%. Only should spend \$9k this year on medals.
- Question: Is the umbrella policy only required at SwimRVA? Answer: We don't know what other facilities require, but if a swimmer is injured, that is not covered while at SwimRVA. We are swimming at SwimRVA in 2023, but don't yet know about 2024.
- February meeting will be in person. Bring dues payment (check made out to GRAL) for \$200. There will be a late fee if you don't bring it to the meeting.
- 2023 Budget will be sent out this month, so review it to vote on it in February.

VP of Officials Report: Roy Sabo (Milestone) officials@gralva.com

- The main change for 2023 is that in person trainings for all new strokes and turns officials will be mandatory. There will be multiple training dates offered.
- The reason for this change is based on number of Champs disqualifications; they significantly increased in 2022. We want to ensure the quality of training is as high as possible. All other positions can continue to train virtually.

Computer/Webmaster Report: Christy Evanko webmaster@gralva.com and christy@gralva.com

- If you want your meets in your Swim Manager system earlier than April, let Christy know.

- Christy will be doing an online computer training this year for Meet Manager.
- If anyone is interested in using Swim Manager, Christy will provide training on that as well. GRAL uses Hytek because of the huge amount of data they will share with our league to do everything required for Champs. Christy thinks currently they are still the best option for our league.

VP of Equipment Report: Nathan Mondragon (Goochland) equipment@gralva.com

- New starters are backordered for months (Atlee's has been ordered since June), so teams should check theirs and take care of that ASAP if necessary. We do not have an alternative vendor right now (we only know of Colorado Timing System). So, for this year, away teams must bring their starter to meets in case there is a problem with the home team's equipment.

VP of Champs Report: Allison Unowitz (Tuckahoe Village West) champs@gralva.com.

- This is Allison's last year as Champs VP, so we will need a replacement. It would be great if someone could come alongside and train this summer to be prepared for 2024.
- We have locked in our dates for 2023; the only dates available for Swim RVA are Sunday July 30th and Monday July 31st. Sunday is 12 and under, Monday is 13 and over.
- Will start sharing more info in July.

Old Business

- We are being asked to commit to dates for a venue for 2024 Champs. In 2024, Hanover and Henrico will finish school on May 31st. The issue up for vote is when we will start the season. There are two options: 1) first swim meet week of 6/3-6/8 with Champs around 7/20-7/21. 2) first swim meet week of 6/10-6/15, with Champs around 7/27-7/28. We don't know availability of all venues for Champs dates, but we know that swimRVA is already booked 7/27-7/28.
 - Motion by Bell Creek and seconded by Colonies and Canterbury to start season week of 6/10-6/15
 - Kings Charter, Rockville, Ashland, Wyndham, Old Church, Raintree, Burkwood, CRR, CORA opposed; Atlee abstained; motion denied.
 - Motion by Kings Charter, seconded by Ashland to start season 6/3-6/8
 - Pebble Creek, Canterbury, Colonies, Bell Creek HCRA, Wellesley, CRR, Fox Hall opposed; Atlee abstained; motion denied
 - Topic will have to go Executive Board for further discussion.
- By-law Change Proposals
 - 1) Page 12 BYLAWS ARTICLE VIII - MEETINGS Section 5 – GRAL Fiscal Year

Language: The GRAL fiscal year begins January 1st of each year and ends December 31 of the same year.

Suggestion: Either January 1st and December 31st or January 1 and December 31.

2) Page 16 I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Language: 1.) Meets will be run in accordance with the most recent United States Swimming Rules except as noted below:

Suggestion: Change to "USA Swimming".

- Motion to accept proposals #1 and #2 by Federal Club, seconded by Fox Hall; unanimously accepted.

3) Page 22 VII. MEET PROCEDURES

Language: 4.) All meets shall be swum using the Order of Events as specified by the League

Suggestion: Add a '.' To the end of the sentence.

4) Page 28 XIII. MEET OFFICIALS RESPONSIBILITIES AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS 1.) Meet Director

Language: (e) ... No certification required.

Suggestion: Eliminate the yellow highlight over the period.

- Motion to accept proposals #3 and #4 by Federal Club, seconded by Kings Charter; unanimously accepted.

5) Page 9 BYLAWS ARTICLE IV - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 4 – Attendance at GRAL Meetings

Current language: Each member club's GRAL Board Representative must be present at all GRAL meetings. If a GRAL Board Representative fails to attend two (2) consecutive board meetings, the Executive Board is empowered to take action.

Suggestion: Attendance at GRAL Meetings. Each member club must be represented at all nine GRAL meetings. If a GRAL team fails to have a representative at three or more meetings within a calendar year, the Executive Board is empowered to take action.

- Motion to accept proposal #5 by Federal Club, seconded by Bell Creek; unanimously accepted.

6) Page 39 XIX. CALCULATIONS TO DETERMINE LEAGUE DIVISIONS FOR THE NEXT SWIM SEASON

Language: 2.) To determine the size of each division, the following rules will apply: a.) 6 or 8 are the target sizes for a division. Divisions shall not be smaller than 6 teams, nor larger than 8.

Discussion: The League has been apprehensive about having an odd number of teams in each division. However, with 28 teams and six meets a season, 7 team in a division would mean each team swim another team just once during the regular season.

Exec Board Comments: We cannot swim seven teams in a division without either a bye AND trimeets, or swimming out of division which would mean that the lower division team would have a vast disadvantage (because top would have to swim top, etc.) and would also make division point calculations difficult. Six is the ideal division size, followed by eight.

- NO motion to change; Exec Board is just clarifying that we CANNOT have seven teams in a league; it doesn't work mathematically.
- Potential 2023 Relay Carnival,
 - Hosted by Burkwood, hopefully to be held at Nova Regency and paid for by participating teams.
 - Will vote at February meeting. Voting for the Relay Carnival means committing your team to participate and contribute to the event.
 - Cost: \$50/team for facility, \$109/team for insurance policy, and \$10/relay (up to 22 relays, 1 per event), plus volunteers from your team.
 - Looked into umbrella policy on Relay Carnival, would be about the same price as champs. Even though it's only one day, it could potentially be a lot more swimmers than Champs (could be 2400 swimmers).
 - Proposed date for event is Monday, July 10th.
 - Casey from Burkwood added that the \$50 could possibly change based on how many teams participate. Teams would have to join committees to help plan (officials, medals, etc.) Burkwood would set up the meet in Meet Manager, but all participating teams will need to help with logistics.
 - Question from Kings Charter: When will we know the exact date? How can a team commit to the event if we don't know the date? Answer: For all the teams who commit to participating, they can all talk to determine what would be the best date.
 - Question: Has Burkwood considered off season, such as spring, to make the scheduling a little easier and to get everyone excited about the swim season? Or could it be the off week before Champs? Answer: Casey will take the suggestion for an off season event in 2024 back to Burkwood. Exec Board cannot support the off week before Champs because of all the work that is going into Champs.

New Business

- Time Standards Committee met during the last few months and had some issues updating the time standards due to Covid. Based on the formula, we SHOULD be using 2020, 2021, and 2022. However, 2020 was not a true swim year (only 10 teams), and 2021 was a Covid carryover year because there were different types of meets, 19-year-olds were allowed to swim, there was only one timer per lane allowed, and we had a semi-automatic timing system trial with several teams. Therefore, the committee is proposing that we use 2019 and 2022(X2) in the formula to adjust the time standards. We need a vote to change this one time rather than a by-law change since it was caused by the pandemic and factors that we could not control. Motion by Federal Club, second from Canterbury to use 2019, 2022, 2022 to update the time standards; unanimously accepted.
- Board meeting dates for 2023

- Monday, February 6th (in-person at Milestone, bring annual dues check)
- Monday, March 6th (virtual)
- Monday, April 10th (virtual)
- Monday, May 1st (in-person, location TBD)
- Monday, June 5th (in-person at Ashcreek, registration monies are due, ribbons are distributed)
- Monday, July 10th (in-person, location TBD)—if the relay carnival is 7/10, then meeting will be Tuesday, July 11th
- Sunday, September 17th—annual meeting (in-person, location TBD)

Good of the league:

Ashland asked about the discussion at September 2022 meeting regarding gender in relays. Exec Board is not comfortable recommending a change to current policy, but reminded the board that any board member is welcome to bring a motion.

Motion to adjourn by Canterbury, seconded by Atlee.

Adjourned 8:03 pm

Respectfully submitted by Julie Zubris, Secretary