

Greater Richmond Aquatic League

Board of Directors Meeting

September 18, 2022 at Kings Charter

Next Board Meeting Monday, January 9th, 2023 at 7pm via Zoom

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

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

- No votes tonight, just info and topics to discuss with your team this fall, and then we will vote in January.
- Thank you for a phenomenal, in-person season! We passed our 2019 pre-Covid registration numbers. The exec board was contacted for only a few concerns and all of them fell into what we would refer as the gray zone. We can't possibly include every detail of every rule in the handbook. The Exec board is here as the team of leaders to provide guidance and oversight when clarification is needed. Thank you for your support of the Exec board and leadership at your individual pools. Please pass along our gratitude to all the leaders at your pools.
- One gray area that came up that we want to clarify. Anything that is happening with the swim meet, even if it's not on the actual deck, is considered as the deck. This means that the same rules (regarding no alcohol) apply to the computer/table worker/ribbons, etc. room, even if that area is in the clubhouse or removed from the actual pool deck.
- Exemptions are not just about giving permission, more often they are related to communication. Coaches, parent reps, refs can see an exemption on website so

that the communication can happen in advance and we don't need to discuss personal swimmer info on deck.

- 2023 Coaches meeting is scheduled for Saturday, June 3rd. Will include each division meeting as coaches to meet as divisions and talk about the upcoming season.
- The Exec Board is committed to the following work during the off season:
 - Additional bylaw edits for clarification
 - Revising the coversheet so it is more user friendly
 - Revised list of responsibilities of the GRAL roles—officers and for teams
 - Clear list of volunteers needed by hosting and visiting teams
 - Potential Relay Carnival in July 2023
- Acceptance of July meeting minutes. Motion to accept by Federal Club, Hanover second, unanimously accepted.

2023 Exec Board:

- Secretary—position is open, Julie Zubris has agreed to stay one more year. Milestone motion, Bell Creek seconded, unanimously approved.
- Treasurer—Debi Knott started in 2022 so her term goes through 2023.
- VP of Officials—John Datovech is leaving; Kristin nominated Roy Sabo from Milestone. Roy introduced himself—he was USA certified in 2016. Unanimously approved as new VP of Officials.
- VP of Equipment—Nathan started in 2022 so his term goes through 2023.
- VP of Champs—position is open, Allison Unowitz is willing to stay on another year to make improvements to Champs. She welcomes a co-chair who is interested in the position in the future, for training purposes. Unanimously approved.

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, send it again because it may have gone to junk mail.

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

- Started the year with \$29,000 in our account; have \$41,000 right now but we still have some more expenses to pay out.
- Fiscal year is January to December.
- New budget will be presented at the January meeting.
- Gross receipts for the season were \$68k, expenses were \$55k, after we finish paying out expenses, we should just about break even at the end of the year.
- We went slightly over budget on ribbons and medals, but otherwise were on target. We will use this budget to help create the 2023 budget.

VP of Officials Report: John Datovech (Ashland) officials@gralva.com

- Thank you for all the help over the last two years.
- Take the officials list that Christy handed out and discuss with your team the needs going forward and who you can approach to ask them to assist the team by becoming an official.
- Each team should ideally have 2 refs (no more than 3), 6-12 S&T (depending on size of team), and 2 starters

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

- Make sure the officials list is correct because it is in a new database and there could be mistakes. Send Christy an email with people that should be removed from the list. There is an issue with the Strokes and Turns position that will be fixed with the online posting.
- Regarding computer, Christy occasionally gets requests for records. September is the time to ask for records, not June. Christy does not maintain records for your team, but she will teach you how to get them.
- Online computer rep training will be introduced next year due to multiple requests.

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

- We have extra medals, probably half of what we will need for next year.
- 2023 ribbon order should be a standard order rather than a larger than usual number.
- We will need to order a large number of DQ cards.
- Years ago, GRAL maintained the starter equipment, but that is no longer the case. Therefore, each team is responsible for buying a new starter when it dies. The original GRAL starters are probably around 20 years old, so they are all starting to die. A new starter is around \$1200, but you could check with local universities and swim teams to see if they have any used ones to sell.
- If you have any medals that have any blemishes or issues, let Nathan know.
- To the team that said they needed ribbons, let Nathan know exactly what you need and he will get it to you.
- We have a storage unit with medals, ribbons, and equipment. We have some starter mics and starter stands available for teams that might need them.

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

- 915 qualifiers for 2022 Champs
- Overall, it went smoothly, with no major issues
- Extra heat sheets are in the back, if you want a souvenir, take one.

- 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.
- We did not have a choice in dates for 2023 as Nova never got back to us despite multiple attempts to reach out. We also contacted Jeff Rouse, but it is in Stafford, and we decided the distance was too much of a problem. Our goal is to hold Champs on Saturday and Sunday.
- 2023 Champs will be another meters year.

Old Business

- Time standards are assessed every other season as outlined in our by-laws. We pushed it off for a year because of the 2020 Covid non-season. We need a small committee to help look at the math. The standards are based on a formula. Chad from Hungary Creek, and Roy Sabo from Milestone volunteered to join Kristin and Christy on the committee.

New Business

Most of the following topics need to be taken to your team (as well as coaches) this fall so that we can come back in January and vote on each issue.

- Issue of Champs being run in yards vs. meters: GRAL's goal is to do have a 2/2 cycle—2 years of yards and then 2 years of meters. There was a request to add that specific language to by-laws. However, this issue could be problematic based on venue (not all venues have meters available). If we change it in the by-laws, we need a loophole in case the venue is not able to accommodate meters. The Executive board recommends not changing the bylaws but continuing to try to have two years in meters and two in yards (on the opposite cycle of time standards changes) when possible.
- 2024 schedule: Hanover and Henrico will be running on the same school calendar with an earlier end date and an earlier start date. In May of 2024, they will end school on 5/31, and they will be returning in August. PLEASE get input from your teams about moving the schedule up a week. If we wanted to move the season up a week, then the first meet would be the week of June 3rd, and Champs would be 7/20 and 7/21. The second option is the same schedule we usually have, with the first meet June 10 and Champs 7/28 and 7/29. This will have to be voted on in January, 2023 so that we can secure a venue for 2024 Champs. The benefit to moving up the season a week is that it will more easily accommodate family vacations at the end of the summer and even a first meet of 6/3 will be after the end of the school year. The drawback is that teams will have less time to practice as the pools are often not open and/or too cold to really

begin practice until the end of May. If the pool is available, there may be issues with college coaches being available earlier in May for practices.

- Consideration of a relay change: For inclusion purposes, there was a suggestion that SV relays (this does not apply to advanced) could only have a max of 2 males so that females would have more opportunity for swimming in relays (right now it may be 3 of the same gender). The Exec board feels to truly be fair all, SV relays would have to be set as 2 males and 2 females. There was a question from the Board on why this suggestion was made--Often there is only 1 female in the older kids SV relay because boys are typically faster in the older years. Therefore, the suggester feels that girls are being discriminated against. But in the younger years, girls are faster, and in older kids, boys are typically faster, so Kristin feels it all balances out in the long run. Another question was why we don't have mixed relays as well as same sex relays in the league--The answer is because small teams don't have enough swimmers to make it feasible. If we made a 2/2 relay rule change, there would have to be lots of exemptions because of all the teams that don't have the kids on the roster to make the 2/2 rule. Also, the change would have to be league wide based on the computer system, not per division. This conversation needs to happen with the coach of your team more so than your team committee.
- Burkwood has offered to host a relay carnival. Their proposal includes:
 - 22 events: free relays, medley relays, mixed age relay (10&U, 11-12, 13-14, 15-18)
 - One relay per event per team
 - Same sex relays
 - Rent NOVA facility
 - \$50.00 entry fee plus \$10.00 per relay
 - Awards for top 4 or 6
 - First place teams awards based on Division
 - Entry fees will pay for pool rental and awards. Money leftover goes to local Special Olympics or local Learn-To-Swim program
 - Second Monday evening in July
 - Times obviously do not count for GRAL season
 - Burkwood is willing to host however volunteers will be needed from participating teams

** We would also need to get GRAL liability insurance, so costs might change. We will vote in February. If you vote to do it, then you are committing to participate so that Burkwood can start planning.

- Hosting meets: by-laws do not currently specify that teams are required to host their meets at their home pool. If we want to ensure that GRAL meets are hosted at GRAL pools and are hosted at the facility in which the team joined the league, then we need to vote to change the by-laws. In case of an issue with a pool (renovation, broken pump, etc.) we would make exceptions as necessary.
- Board meeting dates for 2023 (tentative plan): all Mondays (except the annual meeting, which is a Sunday), the virtual/in-person could change if necessary. We will host two in the west and two in the east; we need volunteers to host.

- Monday- January 9th (virtual)
- Monday, February 6th (in-person, dues are due)
- Monday, March 6th (virtual)
- Monday, April 10th (virtual)
- Monday, May 1st (in-person)
- Monday, June 5th (in-person, registration monies are due, ribbons are distributed)
- Tuesday, July 11th (in-person)—if the relay carnival is Monday, 7/10
- Sunday, September 17th—annual meeting (in-person)
- In 2022, we had best practices presentations at board meetings. We are changing it up and in spring 2023, will host a parent rep roundtable. We need a committee to help plan the event. Jen Tucker from TVW volunteered to help.
- Meet dates for 2023: Week 1 school will still be in session, so in February, when the schedule is released, teams will coordinate with one another to pick a date that works during the week of 6/11-6/16. This date must be communicated to Christy for planning.
 - Meet 1: 6/11-6/16
 - Meet 2: Wed. 6/21
 - Meet 3: Wed. 6/28
 - Meet 4: Wed. 7/5
 - Meet 5: Wed. 7/12
 - Meet 6: Tues. 7/18
- GRAL 2023 Divisions are on the website. They are determined by the calculations in the handbook. We must have even number in each division (e.g. if there were seven teams in the division, whom would team 7 swim in the first week?). Last year we added to the by-laws how we calculate which divisions have 6 teams and which have 8. It is determined by standard deviation and the calculation is in the handbook if you want to see how it is done.

Good of the league:

Fox Hall asked if there was there a decision regarding using an automated timer system? Answer--We need more time to assess the details and will discuss it in January.

Adjourned 8:13 pm

Respectfully submitted by Julie Zubris, Secretary