

# Greater Richmond Aquatic League

## Board Meeting

July 8, 2024, at Colonies

Next Board Meeting Sunday, September 15th 2024 at 7pm at Burkwood

*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

### Roll Call:

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

### President's Opening Comments (Julie Zubris, Rockville, [president@gralva.com](mailto:president@gralva.com))

- In 2025 we absolutely must have a VP of Champs. There will be no CHAMPS next year without a rep in charge. Please share with your team that the position is open, and we need to fill the position!
- The scholarship application was simplified and streamlined during the off season, and that has resulted in 27 applications! Scholarship committee is hard at work evaluating all the applications and winners will be announced at Champs. There are a lot of great candidates. We have lots of amazing kids in the league!
- Teams need to make every effort to get their meets in on Tuesday night. Forecast has improved, so hopefully there won't be thunderstorms, but families need to be prepared to wait it out to get the meet completed. With the very tight timeline for Champs, meets need to be finished Tuesday and in worst case scenario, on Wednesday.
- Board reps are the liaison between the league and teams. At GRAL, we expect that Board reps are familiar with GRAL protocol and the rules in the handbook. If you see an issue happening with your team, it is your responsibility to speak up and try to remedy the situation. If you need assistance, reach out to the appropriate league person. Also, it is your responsibility to help your team understand what is a league issue and what is a

team issue. If you see something happening at your pool, you need to reach out and try to take care of it. There have been lots of instances of issues that are really “team centered” and not “league centered” this year. With so many new people it would help if all teams reviewed the USA swimming rule book and GRAL handbook.

- Some examples of rules and best practices that need to be followed:
  - If home team cannot fill a certified position and they are aware, they ask the away team for assistance before the meet.
  - Home team needs to be sure that parent letter requesting the volunteers as listed in the handbook.
  - Heat sheets need to be distributed before the meet starts.
  - Refs should be speaking with S&T judges regarding calls that have been made.
  - Refs pre-meet need to be thorough and include more than, “Does anyone have any questions?”
  - Timers must stand at the edge of the pool and lean over the edge to see the swimmers’ hands touch and get an accurate time.
  - Coaches should be looking over the meet summary before it is submitted to try to catch any timing errors.
  - If swimmers in attendance are accidentally scratched, they must be allowed to swim.
- Acceptance of June Meeting Minutes: Motion from Wembly, Ashland seconded.

#### Officer Reports

Secretary (Michelle Shores, Battlefield green, [secretary@gralva.com](mailto:secretary@gralva.com))

- With all of the CHAMPS communications recently, there has been a flurry of “I did not get the email” sent to the secretary and all of those emails were from Gmail addresses. Gmail is notorious for sending GRAL emails to SPAM/Junk. Please have your reps search email by subject to find them. If they still cannot, reach out to the secretary to double check the entry into the email forwarding system.

Treasurer (Cindy Anderson, Raintree, [treasurer@gralva.com](mailto:treasurer@gralva.com))

- Ending bank balance is \$47,577.00. We will have to increase registration next year with the impending ribbon expense.

Officials (Roy Sabo, Milestone, [officials@gralva.com](mailto:officials@gralva.com))

- There have been several offers to officiate at CHAMPS- S&T is Invite only, but if you have an experienced judge have them email [officials@gralva.com](mailto:officials@gralva.com)
- Requesting that teams email officials with some examples of the issues they faced this past season. What are some of the problems with protocols and the way things were run? Specific areas that are interested in: Any areas of ref/starter/stoke and turns/table process to discuss first. Think of the training. We are hearing a lot of issues with starter/S&T/ref and coaches.

Computer (Christy Evanko and Ralph Jones, [computer@gralva.com](mailto:computer@gralva.com))

- The biggest issue this year has been errors in the meet audits. Three or four meets a week that say there is an error on the meet. When there is an error, they have to go back and redo the entire meet. This is VERY time consuming. A nice report that is in the computer rep training will be added next year. Ask your coaches to review the meet summary before they leave and check out the report for any obvious errors.
- For Champs, please do NOT create meets in Swim Manager.
- Ralph shared that he has been working with Christy since June 2<sup>nd</sup> and the role is very cumbersome and has a steep learning curve.
- Is champs a USA sanctioned meet? No. It has been asked multiple times but USA Swimming has not agreed.

#### Equipment (Moirá Sweazey, Hanover, [equipment@gralva.com](mailto:equipment@gralva.com))

- This year has been rough with the ribbon deficit. We had inventory of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> ribbons in storage but not much. Ribbons are the most expensive piece of equipment.
- Next year each division will get the exact number of ribbons that they need, and if you do not have the number of ribbons that you need, it is on your pool to order more out of your own budget.
- GRAL spent \$8900 on ribbons this year. The amount will be doubled next season, and they take about 3 months to get delivered. We had to order some from Amazon, they are not as nice.
- Do your older swimmers care about the ribbons? If not, please think about not giving them to that group for the last meet tomorrow. Ribbons will be distributed at the end of the meeting.
- Going forward, the home team needs to provide the ribbons for the entire meet.
- Burkwood shared that their parent rep is going to do a ribbon donation box for their team after they had a number of parents that asked to not have ribbons given to their children. If you do not pick up your ribbons by a certain time, they will be donated into the pool, and then stickers can be removed, and they can be reused.
- Make sure you send out the inventory to the GRAL and make sure it is accurate. The bags should have 25 ribbons in them. Please don't throw out ribbons!

#### Champs (open position, information given by Kristin Brittle, past president)

- There are 2 in person dates before the event. CHAMPS registration is Saturday at Atlee. Friday the 19<sup>th</sup> is pickup (Rockville and Atlee) See emailed Spreadsheet with where the pickup is for your team 5-6pm.
- The due dates for most other things have the same timeline as previous years. But there are things due every day this week except Tuesday (because teams will be at their last meet). See the multiple Champs emails that have been sent on what specifically is due each day.
- See registration checklist for an itemized list of what needs to be brought to registration on Saturday.
- Any ad orders are sent directly to the printer. Heat sheet ads are due by midnight on Thursday. The ads must match (payment/file name to go to the printer).

- Some t shirts will be onsite for sale. The pdf of the Champs shirt has been sent out.
- Thursday the video is due, and it must be sent direct to SwimRVA (see Champs email for more details).
- Heat programs are \$18. Heat sheet only for coaches is \$8. Each team receives one and may copy it or order additional copies for their coaches.
- Please explain to the coaches the timeline—6<sup>th</sup> meet must be in and finalized before the eligibility report is coming out on Wednesday. Coaches shouldn't even think about Champs relays until they get the eligibility report.
- Champs is July 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>

Old Business—None

New Business

- 2024 GRAL meeting dates
  - **Sunday**, September 15<sup>th</sup>—annual meeting at Burkwood (3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in person is written in the bylaws) committees to be made for offseason.
- Meet Dates
  - TUESDAY, July 9<sup>th</sup> (rain date Wednesday 7/10)
- High point standings will go out for those with swim manager.
- CHAMPS dates are sent for next year is July 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. 2026 is up in the air.

Good of the League

- Question from Fox Hall of why relays at the end of the meet? The individual events must be finished in order for the meet to be finished in cases of weather delay.
- Have we thought about moving up the season by a week? The teams wanted time after the swim season to have “summer break” and most pools are not open before Memorial Day.

Adjourn- Federal club motion, second by Hanover.

Submitted by Michelle Shores, Secretary