



# Babe Ruth League, Inc.

# Virginia

## Baseball and Softball



## MINUTES

### March 17, 2024

**Montgomery Hall Park**  
**1000 Montgomery Avenue**  
**Staunton, VA 24401**

### **In Attendance**

Brandon Currence, State Commissioner  
Phillip Larcomb, Secretary-Treasurer  
Paul Coates, Asst. State Comm., Softball  
Tommy Clary, District 2 Commissioner  
Ken Bosserman, District 4 Commissioner  
D.J. Stewart, Asst. District 4 Commissioner  
Pat O'Brien, District 6 Commissioner  
Steven Cohn, District 8 Commissioner  
George Burke, Umpire-in-Chief  
Robert Guagliardo, Baseball Advisor  
Tyler King, NEA Softball  
Heather Hollinsworth, District 4 Riverheads  
Nancy Currence

Dave Cogar, Asst. State Comm., Baseball Ops  
Glenn Spangler, Asst. State Comm., Training  
Brian Eamigh, Asst. District 1 Commissioner  
Justin Sandford, District 3 Commissioner  
Dennis Cobb, Asst. District 4 Commissioner  
Ray Pitsenbarger, Asst. District 4 Commissioner  
Sheri Zimmerman, District 7 Commissioner  
Caleb Dunlee, District 10 Commissioner  
Bruce Frye, Softball Umpire Advisor  
Joey Jones, D4 -ABR Director & RARO Chair  
Kevin Phillips, District 4  
Emma Collie, Herndon  
Paul Link – Former Virginia State Commissioner

Brandon Currence, State Commissioner, called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m.

**Invocation:** Tommy Clary offered the invocation, dedicating the day's business to the benefit of Virginia's baseball and softball players.

**Roll call:** Brandon Currence had the District Commissioners introduce themselves and give a brief description of the geographical locations they represent in the State.

**Reading of the minutes:** By unanimous vote, the reading of the minutes of the Fall 2023 meeting was waived.

**Treasurer's report:** Phil Larcomb reported that the State treasury contained, as of March 16, 2024, \$8,085 in the checking account, \$10,003 in a CD and 64,405 in the mutual funds account for total cash and reserves of \$82,493. There were no liabilities. 52 out of 69 leagues that are chartered have been billed. Anticipated 2024 liabilities will be the umpire training, trophies, rings, banners, and patches. Except for the 9-year-old state baseball contract, every state tournament contract has been billed. All outstanding State fees and remaining tournament contracts are due by May 1, 2024.

## **BUSINESS**

**Training Seminars:** – Glenn Spangler will be coordinating the Tournament Director training to be held during the first two weekends in May 2024.

**Umpire training review:** George Burke reported that ten baseball umpire training sessions and two softball training sessions have already been held. George, Bruce, and Robert reported 125 Baseball and 21 softball umpires have been trained this year.

**State Website:** – Brandon reminded the district commissioners to have their League Presidents check the Virginia website on a regular basis going forward as we approach the season for notices and updated information.

**2024 State baseball tournament host leagues and contract status:** – Dave Cogar reported that host fees payments and signed contracts were due today and that 4 of the 11 State host leagues had met the deadline. Follow up with the remaining leagues was expected within the week.

**State softball tournament host leagues and contract status:** – Paul Coates reported the softball contract will be billed once Glen Allen charter is commissioner approved at HQ.

**2024 Virginia State tournaments:** State tournament start dates are posted in the Virginia Babe Ruth website's Tournament Center:  
<https://vababeruth.com/tournaments/tournaments.php> .

**2024 Regional Tournaments in Virginia:** – Virginia will be hosting the Rookies, 9- and 10-Year-old regional tournaments. Additional SE Regional tournament locations are posted in the Southeast regional Babe Ruth website's Tournament Center: [Babe Ruth Southeast Region \(brlseregion.com\)](http://BabeRuthSoutheastRegion.com)

**2024 World Series in Virginia:** 13s are in Glen Allen.

**Washington Nationals 2024 Champions Day:** – Paul Link reported that the Champions Day series is a Washington Nationals program that recognizes area baseball and softball teams that have won championship titles. On pre-selected dates during the, eligible teams are invited to Nationals Park to participate in an on-field, pregame recognition ceremony. Teams receive a digital copy of the Champions Day ceremony, team picture, a Washington Nationals Champions Day T-shirt and a complimentary ticket. Discounted tickets are available to friends and family. The Nationals are now extending the state champions from Cal Ripken & Babe Ruth baseball and Softball (14, 13, 12/70, 11/70, 10, 9 and 8-year-old divisions only). For more information contact [TeamUP@nationals.com](mailto:TeamUP@nationals.com) or (202) 640-7136.

**Southeast Regional Meeting recap:** – Brandon provided feedback on the Southeast Region meeting held on December 7-8, 2023, at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. The meeting minutes are posted at [https://brlseregion.com/meetings/files/minutes\\_120823.pdf](https://brlseregion.com/meetings/files/minutes_120823.pdf) Brandon highlighted the following from the SER meeting:

- Pitch counts are to be announced at the end of each half inning.
- Softball is moving World Series to Florence, Alabama
- Use Umpires who are familiar with pitching machine for Rookie Tournaments

**Abuse Training:** – Brandon reminded that all managers, coaches and league board members as well as any person who has consistent and direct contact with players through league sanctioned activities, must have a national Verified Background Check and Abuse Prevention Training approved through Babe Ruth League, Inc. every two years.

**Boundary discussion:** – Brandon mentioned if a league wants to move to another district, it must be approved first by the current District Commissioner and then by the gaining District Commissioner. For shared boundaries, leagues would be blended by school districts and by zip codes.

**Tournament format discussion:**

- Pool Play
- Small and Large League divisions
- Multiple teams to State Tournaments
- Ensuring All-Star teams play at least 4 games
- Final games to decide who goes to SER
- Follow SER formats for single elimination after pool play.

Emma Collie – Herndon League President presented for the State officers and District Commissioners on how to make the district tournaments and state tournaments more fun for the kids. Too many smaller leagues play two games and are done for the year. Sherri Zimmerman, District 7 Commissioner, offered to look over the numbers per league and come back with a solution to determine a large league vs a smaller league.

Phil Larcomb provided Sherri a copy of the actual numbers on file from the 2023 Headquarters that is used to bill the leagues 2024 invoices. The planned proposal for this concept was as follows:

**Planned Proposal:**

1. Eliminate the Majors district tournaments and replace them with “Division tournaments” for the State Championship.
2. During the time allotted for district tournaments, each division will play a tournament with awards given for state division champion and runner-up.
3. From the division tournaments, teams will qualify for a state tournament—possibly the winner and runner up creating a 6-team state tournament, or the top 3 creating a 9-team tournament.

4. From the state tournament, there will be a state champion who will go to the regional tournament. The second team to go the regional tournament will be the team who advanced the farthest in one of the other two divisions.
5. This gives all teams in the state a fair opportunity to participate in a state tournament and get an award as well as participate in a regional tournament.

Emma Collie has graciously offered to help with the play-in tournament, but this may be held in three separate locations with the State tournaments (11/70 & 12/70) held in the already selected locations.

**Minimum Scheduled Game requirements:** Brandon re-introduced the need for Virginia to implement a ten-game minimum schedule with the players participating in 50% of the league's games. Following a motion, Brandon's recommendation was passed by unanimous vote.

**Coach Training Clinics discussion** – This topic was tabled to the Fall 2024 meeting.

### **League Discussions and Comments**

**2024 rule changes:** Brandon said the new rule changes for 2024 can be found at [2024\\_rule\\_changes.pdf \(brlseregion.com\)](https://brlseregion.com/2024_rule_changes.pdf)

**Rookie rules for 2024:** Baseball – [rookie\\_rules.pdf \(brlseregion.com\)](https://brlseregion.com/rookie_rules.pdf)

8U Softball - [rookie\\_rules.pdf \(brlseregion.com\)](https://brlseregion.com/rookie_rules.pdf)

### **Open Discussion:**

**Scholarship and grant programs:** Phil reminded Commissioners to communicate the following application deadlines to their league presidents:

- Babe Ruth College Scholarship Program – June 30
- Jamie Horn Memorial Softball Scholarship – September 1
- Virginia Grant Program – September 1

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

Prepared by Phillip Larcomb, Secretary-Treasurer