



# BABE RUTH LEAGUE, INC.

Home of Babe Ruth Baseball,  
Softball, and Cal Ripken Leagues



## Babe Ruth Leagues of Virginia, Inc.

### MINUTES

March 19, 2017

Room B, Courthouse Community Center  
29 Stafford Avenue  
Stafford, Virginia 22554

#### In Attendance

Paul Link, State Commissioner  
Dave Gushee, Secretary/Treasurer  
Phil Larcomb, Ass't. State Comm., T&C  
Dave Cogar, District 8 Commissioner  
Curtis Moore, District 3 Commissioner  
Ken Bosserman, District 4 BB Commissioner  
Dennis Cobb, Ass't. Comm., District 4  
Gayle Clary, Ass't. Comm., District 2  
Lisa Kemper, Ass't. Comm., District 9  
Don Kelley, Stafford Babe Ruth League  
Brian Seeley, SYA Babe Ruth League  
Patrick Tarr, Arlington Sr. Babe Ruth League  
Topper Phelps, District 3

John DeYoung, Ass't. State Comm., Baseball Opns.  
Don Gowen, Ass't. State Comm., Softball Opns.  
Glenn Spangler, District 4 SB Comm.  
John Kemper, District 9 Commissioner  
Don Rose, Jr., State Umpire-in-Chief  
Larry Pritchett, District 5 BB Commissioner  
Tommy Clary, District 2 Commissioner  
Bruce Frye, State Ump. Consultant, SB, South  
Robert Dreistadt, Stafford Babe Ruth League  
William Blanchard, Stafford Babe Ruth League  
Mike Krulfeld, Arlington Sr. Babe Ruth League  
Alan Schneider, Arlington Sr. Babe Ruth League

Paul Link called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Tommy Clary offered the invocation, asking that the Board carry out its deliberations with particular attention to the best interests of the State's players and that all the Board members get home safely after the meeting.

By unanimous vote, the reading of the minutes was waived.

Dave Gushee reported that the State treasury contained, as of March 19, 2017, \$10,615.27 in the checking account and \$81,965.65 in reserves invested in several mutual funds. The operating budget ran a loss of \$5,069.80 last year, but investment revenue was \$4,538.08. Net was a loss of \$531.72, about as close to even as one can get on a cash flow of about \$24,000.

So far this year, 39 leagues have chartered and been billed for State dues and 23 have paid. This is about the same as last year.

## **Old Business**

**25-Year Pin Award Ceremony.** Babe Ruth Leagues of Virginia is blessed with its volunteers. It turns out that we have currently active 27 great people who have served 25 years or more. Paul Link called each to the front and awarded them a fine pin and a letter of appreciation from Steven Tellefsen. The honorees are umpires Donny Rose and Mac Pultz; David Hawks and David Peters in District 2; Curtis Moore in District 3; Ken Bosserman, Glenn Spangler, and Dennis Cobb in District 4; Gene Sandridge in District 5; Bob Gerber, Mike Krulfeld, Alan Schneider, Pat Tarr, Glen Cordell, and Frank Lee in District 6; John Karinshak in District 7; Dave Cogar, Ray Walker, Mary Clarke, and Robert Dreistadt in District 8; John Kemper, Lisa Kemper, Mike Kniceley, and Bob Brown in District 9; and State officers John DeYoung, Don Gowen, and Dave Gushee. Those in attendance to receive the pin are included in the attendance list at the head of this report.

**General Discussion.** Paul Link, as he begins his fifth year as State Commissioner, thanked all the volunteers throughout the State's leagues, and State Board of Directors for their efforts in making Babe Ruth baseball available to the almost 20,000 players in the State. Operating the system is getting more complicated all the time, and he appreciates the willingness of all these volunteers to soldier on in the face of these extra demands.

Paul pointed out that the Parents Team Gate Pass Fee (PTGPF) used by the Southeast Region has been increased to \$500 (the Region's hosting fee is \$2,500 for each hosted baseball age group and \$1,500 for each hosted softball age group). The State continues to calculate its PTGPF to include the cost of umpires, baseballs and softballs, and the hosting fee, which is being maintained at \$400 for 2017.

Paul reminded the District Commissioners to urge their leagues to keep in mind the existence of an option for players to use as their Babe Ruth address either that of the school the player attends or his home address, when the two addresses are in the geographical boundaries of two different leagues. When using the school option, it is required that the league use the School Attendance Form developed by the State BOD to show league approval and to include this form in their tournament credentials book.

Paul reported that tournament baseballs are available through national headquarters for \$48 per dozen and regular season baseballs are available for \$36.00 per dozen. [The March 1 deadline for ordering has passed, but if Virginia leagues want to order baseballs or softballs through Headquarters, they should contact Joe Smiegocki directly. His email address is joes@baberuthleague.org.]

Paul suggested that the District Commissioners discuss with their league officials the rotation chart for tournament host leagues by District in future years to alert the leagues to think about their interest in becoming State tournament hosts.

**Charter Renewals from Leagues New in 2016.** Charlotte in District 2 has renewed its

charter. Other leagues in District 2 charter later than most, since they are dealing with older players, many of whom are playing high school ball. Tommy Clary pointed out that, for a number of years, leagues have come and gone over the short term as player interest has waxed and waned. Glenn Spangler reported that the softball leagues that joined last year are all expected to return, although a couple may join other leagues in light of insufficient numbers of players to remain as separate leagues.

**Impact of Little League Retreat from 17-18 Year-Old Players.** Curtis Moore reported that it is likely that leagues in District 3, particularly Glen Allen, may get as many as seven new teams of the former Little League players, but it is too early to know the exact count.

**SI Play.** Paul Link summarized input to him that league experience with SI Play shows that the system is working somewhat better as leagues interact with the system, but that some specific problems remain. Most leagues having problems have found that the system specialists have for the most part solved the individual specific problems. Paul reported that SI has developed guidance documents that will help leagues navigate the system. They are in Power Point formats and will be posted on the Virginia Babe Ruth website.

**Reminder that Regular Season Rosters Are No Longer Required in Tournament Credentials Books.** This change is the result of SI Play. The SI Play system generates tournament rosters only from players in the system from which regular season team rosters are generated.

### New Business

**Status of League Charters.** Thirty-nine leagues have chartered and 23 have paid their dues. Last year, 61 leagues (about 95% of the leagues) had chartered and 39 had paid. Last year's meeting was 2 weeks later than today's meeting. District Commissioners are to follow up with the unchartered, and then the unpaid, leagues.

**Rule Changes for 2017.** The new pitch count rules (for tournament play – Rule 11.05, paragraph 4) will be effective for the 2017 tournament season. It is still a local league option for the regular season. John DeYoung pointed out that Babe Ruth will switch to the new USA Bat standards in 2018. This should be kept in mind when buying bats this year.

Mirror-like- surfaced (chrome) batting helmets are now banned for both baseball and softball. Four coaches will be allowed in the softball dugouts.

**16-Year-Old Test Pilot Program for 2017.** Last year, a test pilot program was initiated for 1 year; a 16-year-old player can play in the 13-15 Division but “will NOT be eligible for 2017 tournament competition.” This program has been extended to 2017.

**Impact of Pitch Count Requirement on Tournament Play.** This new rule will be

applied to both District and State tournaments. Use during the season is at each league's discretion. Stafford has used pitch counts for several years. Robert Dreistadt said it works out alright if each team manager and scorekeeper, the plate umpire, and the tournament official scorer all know what their assignments are and get together before the game to clarify who does what and how the three scorers are to agree after each half inning on the count for that half inning. Included in what has to be clarified is that warm-up pitches do not count, foul balls with two strikes on the hitter count, and dead-ball pitches (thrown when a balk is called, for example) count. A couple of attendees provided horror stories about lack of agreement among the scorekeepers when these preparatory meetings are not held. The Virginia suggestion to Babe Ruth management that a count of batters faced would be much easier to implement was rejected. The State and the Southeast Region have developed forms on which to record the pitch counts, which are available on line for Tournament Directors. Babe Ruth headquarters has also posted a form to track pitch counts.

Another issue was not as easy to deal with. When tournaments are held on several fields at the same time, the rest period requirements of 1 or 2 days can wipe out pitchers' eligibility while many games remain to be played. This issue may lead to manager headaches on how to use their pitchers, on the one hand, or make multiple field use much more unattractive, which could lead to the need to extend tournaments.

**Tournament Directors Workshop.** This year's workshop will be held on June 10 at the Stafford Courthouse Community Center. Tournament Directors or their representatives must attend this workshop, as trophies, patches, and banners are distributed to the host leagues. The tournament UICs must also attend this workshop.

**Waiver Process Review.** Blanket waivers have been obtained for fewer than 4 teams in a league and fewer than 12 players on a team.

**A State Tournament Glitch.** There have been three occasions in the past dozen years or so when a team's Parents Team Gate Pass Fee checks have bounced, but the nonpayment was not recognized until several weeks or more after the tournament had ended. A lively discussion developed, the upshot of which was a motion, which was VOTED, to insert in the Tournament Directors' training a statement that it is preferable that checks associated with the tournament be cashed within 2 weeks of the tournament's conclusion.

**2017 State Tournament Host Leagues and Estimated Teams.** The locations and start dates for each of the 10 State baseball tournaments and 5 State softball tournaments are available on the State website. It is too early to determine the numbers of teams that will participate.

#### **Assignment of State Representatives to State Tournaments.**

##### Baseball

Rookies  
9s

Rappahannock  
Williamsburg

John Kemper  
Brandon Currence

10s	Rockville	Larry Pritchett
11s70	Glen Allen	Curtis Moore
12s60	Arlington Ripken	George Burke
12s70	Arlington Ripken	George Burke
13s	Arlington Senior BRL	Link, DeYoung, Larcomb
14s	Greensville	Tommy Clary
13-15s	Shenandoah Valley	Ken Bosserman
16-18s	Southwestern Youth Assoc.	Dave Cogar

### Softball

6U	not scheduled	
8U	Varina	Don Gowen
10U	Varina	Don Gowen
12U	TBD	Glenn Spangler
14U	TBD	Glenn Spangler
16U	TBD	Glenn Spangler
18U	not scheduled	

**Buddy Ball for 2017.** Don Gowen will spearhead planning for this year's get-together. It is tentatively scheduled for mid-May. Don will contact all the leagues with chartered Buddy Ball teams to invite them to participate. Don Rose memorial medallions are already in stock to give to each player. Buddy Ball was one of Don's greatest delights.

**T-Ball Tournament Plans for 2017.** T-Ball invitational tournaments are under consideration in Manassas and Glen Allen. Plans are being developed. In previous years, there has been some concern about the presence of some T-Ball players in the tournaments who have played during the season in machine-pitch games. Such players have a significant competitive advantage over players who have only hit off tees. This issue will be addressed during the planning.

**Trophies, Plaques, and Patches.** The Trophy Case has changed hands but will make the trophies and plaques. Ken Bosserman reported that the prices this year will be held even. The trophies will be ordered early with the goal to have them available for the tournament directors at the tournament training workshop.

**2017 Southeast Regional Tournaments in Virginia.** The Southeast Regional 9s and 10s tournaments will be held in Williamsburg and the 16-18s will be held at Stafford Baseball's Chichester Park in Fredericksburg/Stafford. All five Regional Softball Tournaments will be held at Chichester Park.

**2017 World Series.** The 14s World Series will be held in Glen Allen. As a reminder, the Virginia State Champion will advance directly to the World Series and the State runner-up will advance to the Southeast Regional as the Virginia State representative.

**Virginia Babe Ruth Umpires Association.** The Association stands ready to help league officials identify umpires for both regular season play and tournament play. To help

VBRUA to do this, Donny Rose asks the District Commissioners to find out from their leagues what umpire association(s) they use for umpires so that he, George Burke, Mac Pultz, and Bruce Frye can interact with them for mutual benefit.

**Umpire Training.** Donny Rose reported that three baseball umpire training sessions and one softball training session have already been held. About 130 umpires participated. Forty-seven junior umpires have joined.

**Umpire Assignments for District and State Tournaments.** Don Rose, Jr., will work closely with Paul Link, District Commissioners, and Tournament Directors to identify and schedule umpires, all of whom must be certified by both the National Umpires Association (NUA) and the Virginia Babe Ruth Umpires Association (VBRUA).

**Virginia Umpires Association Fees.** Fees for 2017 are unchanged.

**Parents Gate Pass Program Fee for 2017.** The Parents Gate Pass Program Fee table for 2017 State baseball tournaments (played in the default double-elimination format) was distributed; the tables for baseball and softball tournaments will be available to tournament hosts.

**Champions Day at Nationals Park.** This year, the celebration of 12-year-olds State Champions in Virginia, Maryland, and D.C. will be held on September 9. The Washington Nationals will also celebrate “Youth Baseball and Softball Days” on May 15 and June 12 with discounted ticket prices and an on-field pre-game parade: [http://washington.nationals.mlb.com/was/ticketing/group\\_theme\\_games.jsp](http://washington.nationals.mlb.com/was/ticketing/group_theme_games.jsp). Owing to Babe Ruth Leagues of Virginia’s developing and strong relationship with the Washington Nationals Community Relations Department, they have awarded, in addition to last year’s \$5,000 grant from the Baseball for Tomorrow Fund, uniforms for all players in the Pioneer Cal Ripken League. The Arlington Optimist Cal Ripken, Herndon Optimist Youth Cal Ripken, and Northern Fairfax County Babe Ruth Leagues are also participating in the Washington Nationals Uniform Program. Every team on those leagues is wearing a combination of different color Washington Nationals jerseys and caps. [Paul Link noted after the meeting that it made for quite an impressive sight to see at opening day ceremonies.]

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 3:07 p.m.

Prepared by Dave Gushee, Secretary/Treasurer