



# BABE RUTH LEAGUE, INC.

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



## Babe Ruth Leagues of Virginia, Inc.

### MINUTES

March 4, 2018

Irene Givens Administration Building, Montgomery Hall Park  
1000 Montgomery Avenue  
Staunton, Virginia

#### In Attendance

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|--|--|
| Paul Link, State Commissioner                    | John DeYoung, Ass't. State Comm., Baseball Opns. |
| Dave Gushee, Secretary-Treasurer                 | Don Gowen, Ass't. State Comm., Info. Technology  |
| Phil Larcomb, Ass't. State Comm., T and C        | Glenn Spangler, District 4 SB Commissioner       |
| Myron Struck, District 6 BB Commissioner         | John Kemper, District 9 Commissioner             |
| Curtis Moore, District 3 Commissioner            | Don Rose, Jr., State Umpire-in-Chief             |
| Ken Bosserman, District 4 BB Commissioner        | Pat O'Brien, Ass't. Comm., District 6            |
| Dennis Cobb, Ass't. Comm., District 4            | Brandon Currence, District 1 BB Commissioner     |
| Nancy Currence, Ass't. Comm., District 1         | Shana Kirby, District 5 BB Commissioner          |
| Lisa Kemper, Ass't. Comm., District 9            | Ray Pitsenbarger, West Augusta BRL               |
| Kevin Wimer, Virginia Umpire                     | J.P. Cooney, Arlington BRL                       |
| Joey Jones, South Augusta Babe Ruth League (BRL) | Courtney Phillips, South Augusta BRL             |
| Victoria Dunlap, South Augusta BRL               | Greg Phillips, South Augusta BRL                 |
| Miranda Edwards, South Augusta BRL               | Brad Comer, Shenandoah Rec BRL                   |
| Marty Gordon, Christiansburg Parks and Rec       | Chuck Muncey, Christiansburg Parks and Rec       |

Paul Link called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m.

Kenny Bosserman 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.

Paul Link asked for a Moment of Silence in memory of Phil Edwards, a long-time leader (more than 40 years) of Lakeside Babe Ruth League.

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

Dave Gushee reported that the State treasury contained, as of March 4, 2018, \$11,916.65 in the checking account and \$95,965.65 in reserves invested in several mutual funds. The operating budget ran a loss of \$896.05 last year; investment revenue was \$3,725.88. So far this year, 38 leagues have chartered and been billed for State dues and 15 have paid. This is about the same as last year.

## **Old Business**

**General Discussion.** Paul Link, as he begins his 6th year as State Commissioner, opened his remarks by commenting on how exciting this time of the year is as all leagues are in the process of getting ready to Play Ball. He thanked all the volunteers throughout the State's leagues, and State Board of Directors for their efforts in making Babe Ruth baseball and softball 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 reminded the District Commissioners to urge their leagues to keep in mind the existence of the option for players to use as their Babe Ruth address either his/her home address or that of the school the player attends 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. The form is available for download on the State website ([vababeruth.com](http://vababeruth.com)).

Paul pointed out that there have been some minor alterations in the State's policies 1016 (UPM Black Flame pitching machine for 8U softball and 7-8 Rookies baseball in District and State Tournaments) and 1019 (Baseball Swing Player Pitching Limitations). Both policies are downloadable from the State website.

The State website home page offers, in addition to late news, a navigation directory so that the user can find, for example, State Policies 1016 and 1019.

Paul also asked all the State Board members, softball directors, and umpire coordinators who have not yet done so to submit their pictures and bios to him so that the website can be updated.

## **New Business**

**Southeast Regional Meeting (Myrtle Beach, SC, February 23–25).** The 2018–20 Southeast Regional Softball Tournaments will all be held in Jensen Beach, Florida. All teams competing in both State and Regional Tournaments are eligible to participate, whether or not they were Champions.

China (8U, 10U, and 12U) and the Dominican Republic (14U and 16U) will compete in Softball World Series Tournaments this year.

Babe Ruth has instituted a new Regional Champ Uniform Policy (jersey, pants, belt, socks, and cap or headband). The new uniforms will replace the ones used at the lower tournament level, which have been provided by the leagues involved and vary widely in design and esthetics.

Babe Ruth will institute, starting in 2018, World Series at the Cal Ripken 8-year-olds Player Pitch, 8-year-olds Machine Pitch, 9-year-olds, and 11-year-olds 70-foot levels. To qualify for these World Series, teams must play to completion in their respective tournament trails. State Champions and teams advancing to the Regional Tournaments must take part in their Regional Tournaments. State Champions and Regional Champions will have first consideration to participate in their respective World Series. Each age group has openings for 15 teams. The Series will be played in Jensen Beach, Florida, August 7–12 this year. Teams participating will be responsible for the arrangement and expense of their travel and lodging for the World Series.

Southeast Region has developed a revised application form for leagues seeking approval to host Regional Tournaments. The application must be accompanied by a form to be signed by the league's State Commissioner endorsing the application. The forms are available on the Regional website.

The Consent for Treatment form has been modified to permit 18- and 19-year-old players to sign for themselves.

**2018 Regional Tournaments in Virginia.** Stafford will host the 11s70, 12s60, and 14s Regional Tournaments. Augusta will host the 16-18s Regional Tournament.

**QuickBall.** This is a newly developed game aimed at 4- and 5-year-olds. The players hit a thrown ball instead of off a tee. The game features much more activity for each player on both teams and is an appealing way to interest these younger players and maintain their interest as they play. Information is available on the web at [usaquickball.com](http://usaquickball.com). A set of equipment, including bats and balls, is available at a reasonable cost. Babe Ruth suggests that leagues take a look at it as a way of reaching and keeping younger players and their parents.

**Awards Plaques Policy.** Babe Ruth will no longer provide District plaques. Instead, Babe Ruth will provide complimentary first-place plaques for the State Champions. Plaques for the runners-up will be provided only if the State host buys individual awards for the State champions and runners-up from the approved Babe Ruth trophy supplier.

**New Leagues for 2018.** The following new leagues have already or are expected to charter this year:

- Western Branch (BB)
- Metropolitan Junior Baseball League – Richmond (BB)
- Piedmont (SB)
- Fauquier (SB)
- Blacksburg Softball Association (SB)
- Christiansburg Parks and Recreation (SB)
- Montgomery County Parks and Recreation (SB)
- Radford City Parks and Recreation (SB)
- Pulaski County Parks and Recreation (SB)
- Giles County Recreation (Narrows Recreation Department) (SB)

Some of the new softball leagues may also charter baseball leagues.

**2018 Bat Rule and T-Ball Sticker Program.** A convenient summary of the new rule is on the State website. Some legal T-Ball bats that don't already carry the appropriate markings can be marked as legal with a small sticker. A small supply of stickers was provided to all District Commissioners in attendance.

**Status of League Charters.** As of the meeting, 38 leagues have chartered and have been billed for State dues, compared to 39 last year. 15 have paid, fewer than had chartered at last year's State spring meeting, which was 2 weeks later.

**Rule Changes for 2018.** Nine rule changes have been promulgated for 2018. They are posted on the State website.

**16-Year-Olds Test Pilot Program for 2018.** In 2016, a test pilot program was introduced to allow a 16-year-old player to play in the 13-15 Division but "will NOT be eligible for 2016 tournament competition." This program was extended to 2017 and has been extended again for 2018.

**Tournament Directors Workshop.** This year's workshop will be held on June 16 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. The District Commissioners are also urged to attend.

**Waiver Process Review.** Blanket waivers have been obtained for fewer than 4 teams in a league and fewer than 12 players on a team. They are available for download from the State website.

**2018 State Tournament Host Leagues and Contract Status.** All host leagues except for 10U and 12U softball have been identified and their host contracts and invoices prepared. The information is posted on the State website.

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

Baseball

Rookies	Gainesville-Haymarket	George Burke
9s	Rockville	Shana Kirby
10s	Waynesboro	Ken Bosserman
11s70	New Kent	Brandon Currence
12s60	Rappahannock	John Kemper
12s70	Winchester	Phil Larcomb
13s	Williamsburg	Brandon Currence
14s	Greater Manassas	Dave Cogar
13-15s	Glen Allen	Curtis Moore

16-18s            Arlington                            Myron Struck

Softball

6U	not scheduled	
8U	Greater Manassas	Dave Cogar
10U	TBD	Glenn Spangler
12U	TBD	Glenn Spangler
14U	Stafford	Curtis Moore, Dave Cogar
16U	Stafford	Curtis Moore, Dave Cogar
18U	not scheduled	

**Buddy Ball for 2018.** 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 2018.** T-Ball invitational tournaments are under consideration in Manassas and Glen Allen. Plans are being developed. It is possible that a league or two will try a QuickBall program in the Fall.

**Trophies, Plaques, and Patches.** It was VOTED that, starting this year, the 16-18 baseball and 16U softball State Champions will be awarded rings instead of plaques; in addition, all State Champions going to Regional Tournaments will be awarded T-shirts with logos, and all softball State Champions (gold) and Runners-up (silver) will be given pins and medallions. This move was made in light of increasing comments that trophies and plaques were becoming passé.

**Virginia Babe Ruth Umpires Association (VBRUA).** 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, 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. Five more are scheduled. About 100 umpires have participated so far. Forty-seven junior umpires have been trained.

**Umpire Assignments for District and State Tournaments.** Donny Rose 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 Umpire Association (NUA) and the VBRUA.

**VBRUA Fees.** Fees for 2018 are unchanged and are posted on the State website.

**Parents Gate Pass Program Fee for 2018.** John DeYoung summarized the Parents Gate Pass Program fee (PTGPP fee) table for 2018 State baseball tournaments (played in

the default double-elimination format). When the number of participating teams is determined for a State baseball tournament, John will enter the PTGPP fee amount in the MTIP if this option is chosen by the host league.

**Regional Lightning and Hot Weather Policies.** These have been updated. The updated versions are on the State website.

**Champions Day at Nationals Park.** This year, the celebration of 12-year-olds State Champions in Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia is tentatively scheduled to be held on September 8. 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.]

**Babe Ruth College Scholarship Program.** This program provides financial assistance to former Cal Ripken Baseball, Babe Ruth Baseball, and Babe Ruth Softball players looking to further their education beyond high school. The former player must file his or her own application. Details are available from Babe Ruth headquarters or by phone at 800-880-3143.

**Virginia Babe Ruth Grant Program.** This proposed program is designed to award financial grants to chartered Babe Ruth Leagues within Virginia’s defined boundaries to improve playing facilities and equipment for the benefit of Virginia Babe Ruth baseball and softball players.

Grants will be awarded annually and will range from \$500 to \$1500. Applications must be submitted to the State Commissioner by September 1. The awards will be announced in December and payments will be sent before the end of the year. The individual applications will be reviewed by the State Executive Committee, who will evaluate the applications. The number of grants approved each year will depend primarily on the earnings from our reserves.

Each applicant must submit an official grant application form (available from the State Commissioner) and have it approved by the appropriate District Commissioner. Each project submitted must have a separate application form.

After thorough discussion, it was VOTED unanimously to authorize this program.

One suggestion: Leagues desiring to start a QuickBall program could apply for a grant to fund the startup costs.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 3:57 p.m.

Prepared by Dave Gushee, Secretary-Treasurer