



BABE RUTH NETWORK

Home of Babe Ruth Baseball,
Softball and Cal Ripken Leagues



Babe Ruth Leagues of Virginia, Inc.

MINUTES

March 15, 2008

Dorey Park Recreation Building
7200 Dorey Park Drive
Varina, Virginia

In Attendance

Don Rose, State Commissioner	John DeYoung, Asst State Comm./Baseball Opns
John Armentrout, Asst State Comm./Compliance	Dave Gushee, Secretary/Treasurer
Tommy Clary, District II Commissioner	Gayle Clary, District II Asst. Comm.
Todd Stebbing, District III Asst. Comm.	Ken Bosserman, Dist. IV Baseball Comm.
Glenn Spangler, District IV Asst. BB Comm.	Dennis Cobb, District IV Asst. BB Comm.
Roy Brewer, District V Commissioner	Paul Link, Dist. VII Commissioner
Chris Crane, District VIII Baseball Commissioner	Phil Larcomb, District IX Commissioner
Bruce Frye, Umpire Consultant, Softball	Don Rose, Jr., Umpire Consultant, Baseball
Tom Knapstein, Umpire Consultant, Ripken	David Jay, State Tournament Coordinator 16-18
Gerry Henson, State Tournament Coordinator, 13-15	
Cliff Stewart, Varina Baseball/Softball	Dwayne Wills, New Kent Softball
Mike Crostic, Varina Baseball/Softball	Michelle Davis, Fauquier Baseball
John Kemper, Fauquier Baseball	Kim Barnes, Bethlehem Softball
Matthew Clary, District II	

Don Rose, State Commissioner, called the meeting to order at 12:00 noon.

Tommy Clary offered the invocation, dedicating the day's business to the benefits of Virginia's baseball-and-softball-playing kids.

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

Dave Gushee reported that the State treasury contained, as of 3/15/08, \$3,131.64 in the checking account (compared with \$2,347.47 on 3/1/07); 1627.31 shares of Lord Abbett Balanced Fund valued at \$17,444.80 compared to 1490.85 shares valued at \$17,949.80 as of 3/1/07; and 94.70 shares of Hartford Capital Appreciation Fund valued at \$3,508.64 compared to 86.70 shares valued at \$3,385.52 as of 3/1/07 Total assets as of 3/15/08: \$24,085.08, compared with \$23,682.79 last year. Five dues checks have been deposited to this date, compared with three last year.

Old Business

General Discussion. Don Rose reviewed progress toward his goal of having discrete and non-overlapping boundaries for every League in the State. Significant progress has been made, but the job is not yet done. This isn't necessarily as simple as it might appear for those not yet in compliance, given, in those cases remaining, many years of operating with overlapping boundaries and thus complex negotiations among two or more affected leagues with their parents and players. Don asked that the process be completed before charters are filed for the 2009 season.

New Business

The 2008 Budget. Dave Gushee reviewed the budget experience over the past several years. Two changes make the review timely: for the 2007 budget year, softball was added to baseball; for the first time, the State Officers submitted all of their expenses, including those which for the most part have been donated to Babe Ruth Leagues of Virginia (BRLVa) but not noted in the records. Softball has added about \$8,000 to the historic \$12,000-\$15,000 incurred by the baseball program, bringing the total to a bit under the \$25,000 per year level at which point IRS historically has required that a return be filed. Total donated expenses by the State Officers totaled about \$9,100 in 2007, which raises the cash flow level well above the \$25,000 cut point. BRLVa filed a Form 990-EZ for 2007, the first one since, according to our incomplete records, the early 1970s.

The 2008 budget is close to balance. The major uncertainty will be the ability of those Leagues hosting State Softball Tournaments to generate the \$500 per tournament guarantees which, when matched by the State, are provided to the winner and runner-up teams in each tournament to help defray travel expenses to the Regional Tournaments.

Updated Information on IRS. Dave Gushee reported that the IRS is tightening the reporting net on tax-exempt organizations in response to the Pension Protection Act of 2006. The Act requires that tax-exempt organizations with cash flow over \$5,000 per year report annually to IRS on one or another variant of Form 990. With cash flows of \$5,000 to \$25,000, Form 990-N, which can be filed over the Internet, will suffice. From \$25,000 to \$100,000, either Form 990-EZ or Form 990 is to be filed. Above \$100,000, Form 990 is to be filed. Previously, those with cash flows below \$25,000 did not need to file annually.

IRS has simplified the process by which a Subordinate Organization to a Central Organization can be recognized as tax exempt. Each Babe Ruth baseball or softball League in Virginia is a Subordinate Organization to the Central Organization, Babe Ruth Leagues of Virginia, Inc. (BRLVa). Each League is required to have an Employer Identification Number (EIN) of its own. Each League must be individually recognized by IRS as tax exempt either on its own or through its Central Organization.

IRS lists BRLVa as tax exempt. Its latest letter on that subject is on the State Web site. BRLVa is not listed by IRS as a Central Organization. We have never applied for that status. It has

come to our attention that, through incomplete understanding of the fine points of tax law, there are at least several Leagues in Virginia that have been operating *de facto* as Subordinate Organizations and thus are not legally tax exempt.

To correct these situations, each of these Leagues must apply to IRS for an EIN if they don't have one and, once having an EIN, must apply separately for recognition as tax exempt. The IRS fee is currently \$750. Alternatively, BRLVa can apply to be recognized as a Central Organization and be given a Group Exemption Number (GEN). The application would cost the State organization \$900. An IRS person has indicated over the phone that there should be no difficulty in getting this recognition, provided all the forms are filled out as required.

After discussion, it was VOTED unanimously that the Leagues in Virginia be canvassed as to their status with IRS, that those Leagues who choose to gain recognition as tax exempt through the State organization so inform BRLVa, and that BRLVa apply to IRS for recognition as a Central Organization with those self-identified Leagues specified as included Subordinate Organizations. Those included Leagues will be required to file their annual tax returns directly with IRS rather than through BRLVa, and those Leagues so choosing will be charged a pro rata share of the \$900 application fee.

Each League choosing to participate in this method of obtaining recognition as tax exempt must provide to the Secretary/Treasurer of BRLVa a letter expressly authorizing BRLVa to include the League, plus the name, mailing address, and EIN of the League. Whenever the League changes its name or mailing address, it must inform BRLVa by letter so that BRLVA can include the new information in its annual updating report to IRS.

At the moment, it is not clear how many Leagues might be involved. Three are known; it is also known that all the Leagues in Districts VI and VII (baseball and softball) have their EINs and have been recognized by IRS as tax exempt. The remaining District Commissioners are requested to check with their Leagues. As the next step in this process, the Secretary/Treasurer will e-mail to each District Commissioner a sample letter to be provided to the officers of each League choosing to join this effort.

Charter Status and New Leagues. Don Rose reported that 1077 baseball teams and 147 softball teams have been chartered to date. Totals at the end of 2007 were 1555 and 298, respectively.

New Leagues so far

Aberdeen, Ripken and softball 12U – District I; Crewe-Burkeville, 13-15 and 16-18 – District II; Ashland, Ripken and 13-15 – District III; and Warren County softball 12U and 18U– District IX.

Assignment of State Representatives to State Tournaments.

Baseball

8s	Mt. Crawford	Ken Bosserman/Dennis Cobb
9s	Stuarts Draft	Ken Bosserman/Glenn Spangler
10s	Fauquier	Gerry Henson
11s/60	Fluvanna	Roy Brewer
11s/70	Winchester	Phil Larcomb
12s/60	Williamsburg	Brandon Currence
12s/70	Pioneer	Paul Link
13s	McLean/Great Falls	Paul Link
14s	Eastern Loudoun	David Jay
13-15s	Greater Manassas	Gerry Henson
16s	Brunswick	Tommy Clary
16-18s	Glen Allen	TBD

Softball

8s and 10s	Albemarle	Don Rose
12s	Albemarle	Don Rose
14s, 16s, and 18s	TBD	Glenn Spangler

2008 Southeast Regional Baseball Tournaments in Virginia

The Regional 9s Tournament will be held at Stafford. The 16s will be in Vienna. The 16-18s will be in South Hill.

Southeast Region Meeting March 7-8, 2008

John Armentrout and John DeYoung attended. They reported that the national newsletter has been redesigned, that there will be a new traveling outreach program to bring news of Babe Ruth Leagues to areas where we are underrepresented, and that there was a tentative agreement to set entry fees for Regional Tournaments – namely Individual Day Passes would be \$5 for adults, \$3 for ages 6-18, and free under 6, with local hosts free to do their own thing for group rates, full tournament passes, and the like.

Trophies, Plaques, and Patches

Ken Bosserman reported that the prices this year will be close to those of last year. The trophy base plate will be changed to wood instead of marble – marble prices have escalated over the past year. Ken reports that the wood bases look good and weigh a lot less than the marble ones, thus easing the back strain on those officials carrying the trophies to the tournaments.

Umpire Clinic Sessions

Two training sessions for new umpires have been set for March 29. One will be at Dorey Park in Varina. The other will be at the Hampton Inn in Chantilly. Full details are on the State Web site.

The effort to get more umpires for both baseball and softball Babe Ruth-certified continues. There was extensive discussion of how costly umpires are and how hard it is becoming to cover umpiring costs at tournaments. The training programs are designed to help in this regard. Another initiative is to work towards a Virginia Babe Ruth Umpire Association – no significant progress toward this goal has been made. Donny Rose Jr. has initiated discussion with John Porter of Northern Virginia Umpires Association. Porter has expressed a willingness to discuss the issues but has pointed out that better umpires, like other folks, tend to go to where the pay is better, thus leaving the less qualified to be more likely to be available to those paying lower fees. The issue remains unresolved.

Rosters On Line

John Armentrout reported that headquarters is making progress toward an improved digital system for information transfer across the board but isn't there yet. It is now possible to download and use the roster program by the leagues. Interactions with other purposes remain in the development stage.

State Fund for Financially Limited Areas

It has been recognized by Major League Baseball and others that baseball no longer is the automatic first choice of many youths today. This is particularly felt in center cities and other underprivileged areas. Some current and former black major league players have expressed concern over the trend. The idea here is that Babe Ruth Leagues of Virginia look into the possibility of creating a Trust Fund or the like to solicit contributions for the purpose of underwriting the startup costs of teams and/or leagues in target areas in the State. At least two players with major league experience currently living in Virginia have expressed cautious interest in the idea.

After discussion, it was VOTED that the State Commissioner form a task force to explore the idea further.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:41 pm.

Prepared by Dave Gushee, Secretary/Treasurer