

BYLAWS FOR GEORGIA WATER POLO LEAGUE



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DEFINITIONS

1. “Club” and “Team”: As used within these By Laws, Club and Team are interchangeable, and represent an organization or entity affiliated with a specific school or aquatic facility, where that entity is the umbrella organization responsible for subordinate teams that play in one or more competitive divisions (e.g., A, B, Development, and Girls).
2. Terms such as “vote by the membership,” “voting membership,” and “vote by the GWPL membership” as used in these By Laws shall be construed to mean a vote of the Voting Members as defined herein.

BYLAWS FOR GEORGIA WATER POLO LEAGUE



ARTICLE I – NAME

The Organization shall be known as the Georgia Water Polo League (“GWPL”).

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

1. To promote competitive water polo in the State of Georgia.
2. To promote and schedule a high school and middle school water polo season consisting of match play and occasional tournaments.
3. To host a State Championship Tournament at the end of each season.
4. To host Splashball games to introduce water polo to players at a younger age.
5. To conduct competition according to the GWPL guidelines.
6. To disseminate information pertaining to water polo programs in the State of Georgia.
7. To promote the common understanding and correct teaching of water polo among all coaches and officials.
8. To host clinics for coaches, officials, and players.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERS

Section 1 Membership

Members of GWPL shall be club water polo team officers, affiliated participants, and athletes within the State of Georgia who are seeking to participate in competitive water polo under the guidelines of the GWPL.

1. Membership in the GWPL is open to individuals who satisfy one or more of the following criteria:
 - a. Athlete
 - b. Club officer, head coach, assistant coach
 - c. Parent or legal guardian of player
 - d. Referee
 - e. Volunteer, with an individual club or with the GWPL, or both
 - f. Elected Officers and Directors of the GWPL
 - g. Ex officio members of the Board of Directors
 - h. Individuals as may be designated by the Board of Directors, with such designation premised on the individual’s support of the purpose of the GWPL
2. All adult members of clubs and the GWPL, and such others as may be specified by the GWPL, who have contact with players must be members of USAWP and must have completed such training as may be specified by the GWPL or USAWP from time to time.

3. Payment of league dues by such date as set and published by the Board of Directors confers good standing to a club, unless that standing is otherwise suspended by action of the Board of Directors.
4. Persons as described in III.1.1, and properly rostered athletes, comprise the General Membership of the GWPL. So long as a club is in good standing its general members are in good standing.
5. Each member shall maintain with the League a valid email address at all times.

Section 2 USA Water Polo (USAWP)

1. To participate in GWPL activities, all GWPL players must be current members of USA Water Polo or of such body as the GWPL designates in the future.
2. All adult members of clubs and the GWPL, and such other members as may be specified by the GWPL, who have contact with players must have completed such training as may be specified from time to time by USAWP or the GWPL.

ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS

Section 1 Powers and Duties

The Officers of the GWPL shall be: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Each Officer shall be elected by the voting membership and except for the initial adjustments of shorter terms needed in order to create staggered terms, each will serve a two year term or until a qualified successor is duly elected. For one calendar year after his or her term has ended, each former Officer may serve as a consultant (non-voting member) to the current Officer holding the same position. The Officers shall each serve as members of the GWPL Board of Directors. The following are the officers of the GWPL, which shall also serve as Directors and shall have the following responsibilities:

1. President
 - a. Convene and preside at all GWPL Board of Directors and Officers Meetings and General Membership meetings.
 - b. Provide opportunities for GWPL members to express their views and have input into the decision-making of the GWPL Board of Directors.
 - c. Sign on behalf of the organization such contracts as authorized by the Board of Directors.
2. Vice President
 - a. Preside over Board of Directors and Officers and General Membership meetings in the absence of the President.
 - b. In the absence of the President, sign on behalf of the organization such contracts as authorized by the Board of Directors.
3. The Board may appoint one or more Associate Vice Presidents to assist the President and Vice President in the conduct of their responsibilities and any related supporting responsibilities as may be defined from time to time. Any such Associate Vice President shall serve as ex-officio members of the Board of Directors, without vote.

4. Secretary

- a. Record, present, and maintain minutes of all Board of Directors and Officers and General Membership meetings.
- b. Conduct the correspondence of the GWPL as directed by the President.
- c. Maintain custody of one copy of Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws and Policies for GWPL and make copies available to every member.
- d. Maintain the roster of Officers and Directors and their terms of office, and club associations, if any.
- e. The Board may appoint an Associate Secretary to assist the Secretary in the conduct of their responsibilities and any related supporting responsibilities as may be defined from time to time. Any such Associate Secretary shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors, without vote.

5. Treasurer

- a. Disburse and receive all GWPL funds.
- b. Responsible for all financial matters of the GWPL.
- c. Make all books of account and financial records available for audit when requested.
- d. Sign for the League, such contracts as authorized by the Officers and the Board of Directors.
- e. The Board may appoint an Associate Treasurer to assist the Treasurer in the conduct of their responsibilities and any related supporting responsibilities as may be defined from time to time. Any such Associate Treasurer shall serve as ex-officio members of the Board of Directors, without vote.

Section 2 Vacancies in Office

When any Officer or Director resigns or is removed, the remaining members of the Board of Directors shall appoint a successor who shall serve for the balance of the term of the former Officer.

Section 3 Removal of Directors or Officers

An Officer or Director of GWPL may be removed from office only by vote of the GWPL membership as follows:

1. A motion calling for removal vote may be made by any voting member in good standing at any duly convened membership meeting.
2. If such motion is made, seconded, and carried by the voting membership, the Board of Directors shall designate a time and place for a special meeting of the members within 10 days of the date of the motion for removal and provide at least five days written or electronic notice to all members as to the time, place and subject matter of the meeting.
3. The Officer or Director whose removal is at issue may not preside at the special called meeting for their removal. If the officer or Director whose removal is at issue would otherwise preside, the next Officer or Director in succession, or such individual selected by the Board or the Voting Membership to serve as parliamentarian, shall preside.

4. A two-thirds vote of the voting members in attendance at the special meeting other than the Director or Officer whose removal is at issue shall be required to remove the Officer or Director.
5. Until such a vote can be taken, the other Officers or Directors may, by a majority vote, suspend said Officer or Director from exercising any power and duties under these Bylaws.
6. Upon suspension, removal or pending a special meeting as set forth above, the Director or Officer subject to the vote for removal shall take no further action on behalf of the League and shall cease to represent himself or herself as an active Director or Officer of the League.

ARTICLE V – THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1 Composition

The Board of Directors of the GWPL is composed of the elected Officers of the GWPL and such Directors as may be elected. In addition:

- i. The Head Referee of the GWPL will be an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors, without vote.
- ii. The League Safety and Compliance Director shall be an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors, without vote.

Section 2 Duties and Responsibilities

1. Meet at such time and place appropriate to manage the GWPL and ensure fulfillment of the GWPL purpose.
2. Develop and approve an annual budget for the GWPL.
3. Establish membership dues.
4. Recommend to the membership amendments to the Bylaws as required.
5. Establish and enact policies to help ensure the attainment of the goals of the League.
6. Evaluate membership issues that may arise.
7. Delegate responsibilities to its members and to Standing and Special GWPL Committees.
8. Appoint a League Safety and Compliance Director. The League Safety and Compliance Director shall serve at the discretion of the Board, and will Chair the League Safety and Compliance Committee.
9. Appoint Associate Officers and Directors as may be required from time to time for support of the Officers, Directors, and the Standing Committees of the League. Associate Officers and Directors may not vote on matters before the Board.
10. Take such action as may be deemed appropriate for reported violations of policy by anyone within the general membership, except for such matters under the jurisdiction of the SafeSport process.

11. When a player comes before the Board of Directors for any matter, that player's coach who may also serve on the Board of Directors will abstain from any vote regarding the matter.

Section 3 Executive Session

1. A motion for the Board of Directors to enter executive session requires a simple majority of the Board members present.
2. Executive sessions shall be limited to discussing and voting on membership, such disciplinary matters as fall under the jurisdiction of the GWPL, coaching/staffing issues, and League personnel matters.
3. After full discussion of the subject matter, the Board of Directors may vote. A unanimous vote of the Board of Directors is required for denial or suspension of membership, including player suspension. A simple majority is required for all other issues.
4. If the Board of Directors makes a decision to suspend a player from the league, the suspended player and their parents or legal guardian shall be informed by written or electronic notice within five (5) days of the Board's decision. The player, parents or legal guardian so informed may request an open or closed hearing with the Board, within five (5) days of notice, to present their side of the matter and to hear the reasons the Board used to suspend the player. The hearing shall be held not less than five (5) days from the date of request. Hearings may be held by virtual means.

ARTICLE VI – ELECTION OF DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS

Section 1 Annual Election

1. The Directors and Officers of the GWPL shall be elected at the first meeting of the general membership after the State Tournament, and take office after such meeting. If there is no State Tournament in a given year, then the elections shall take place at a called meeting no later than one year after the date of the prior election meeting.
2. There shall be between four (4) and ten (10) directors at one time, per the discretion of the Officers as to the number of Directors.
3. If vacancies on the Board of Directors arise, the Officers shall have the discretion whether to leave the Director position vacant or call an election for a new Director. In exercising this discretion, the Officers must consider that, at all times, there must be at least four (4) Board members.
4. Beginning in 2026, the Vice President and Treasurer positions will be elected in even years, and the President and Secretary will be elected in odd years. The remaining directors shall be elected at such times as the Officers select at their discretion, and shall serve at least one year terms.

Section 2 Election Procedures

1. Prior to the meeting at which Directors and Officers are to be elected, the Board may appoint a Nominations Committee to identify and recruit candidates for Director and Officer positions from the general membership.
2. Any member in good standing may nominate candidates as Officers or Directors.

3. Each voting member shall cast as many votes as are open positions. In instances where there are more candidates than open positions, the candidate with the most votes will be elected to an open position, followed by the candidate with the second most votes, and so on until all open positions are filled.
4. In instances where the number of candidates equals the number of open positions, the candidates will be elected by acclamation and no formal vote need be taken.

Section 3 Qualification of Officers and Directors

1. The Officers and Directors of the GWPL must be members in good standing to serve on the Board of Directors.
2. Any Officer or Director not in good standing shall lose their vote on all matters.
3. No individual who has served as Officer or Director for the Georgia High School Water Polo Association (GHSWPA) from 2018 through 2025 may stand for election to any GWPL role without prior approval of the GWPL Board or a vote of approval from the membership, with such vote by the membership to be held at any regular or special called meeting of the League.

ARTICLE VII – STANDING COMMITTEES AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Section 1 Standing Committees

1. The standing committees of the GWPL and their composition shall be:
 - a. Administration
 - i. President, Vice President, Secretary
 - ii. Board-appointed Associate Vice President
 - b. Funds and Scheduling
 - i. Treasurer
 - ii. Board-appointed Associate Treasurer
 - c. Marketing and Sponsorship
 - i. Board-appointed Associate Vice President
 - d. Safety and Compliance
 - i. Board-appointed League Safety and Compliance Director
2. The Board of Directors shall appoint chairs for Standing Committees of the GWPL.
 - a. The chairs shall be current members in good standing.
 - b. Chairs may be Directors.
3. The charge of standing committees shall be published in the GWPL Policy Manual, and may be updated by the Board from time to time.

Section 2 Special Committees

1. The Board of Directors may establish special committees and appoint chairs for such committees at any time.
 - a. The Board shall establish the charge, composition, and lifespan of each special committee.
 - b. Special committees shall report to the Board from time to time as specified in their charge.
2. Special committees may be dissolved at any time by action of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VIII – MEETINGS

Section 1 Regular Meetings

1. Regular Board meetings shall be held at such time, date and place as determined by the Board.
2. Board meetings may be held in such manner (in person, virtual, mixed, etc.) as may be determined by the Board.

Section 2 Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the President, Vice President, Treasurer or Secretary. The President shall furnish written or electronic notice at least five (5) days in advance of such special meeting to each member and the notice shall state the purpose, time and place of such special meeting. No other business of any kind shall be conducted at such special meeting.

Section 3 Annual Membership Meetings

Annual Membership Meetings will take place each calendar year as determined by the Board. There will be one pre-season meeting, one post-season meeting after completion of the State Tournament, and one spring meeting.

Section 4 Matters Not Requiring a Meeting

1. No meeting shall be required to conduct League business, unless to remove a Director or Officer.
2. The President may call for votes on designated matters by email or other correspondence.

ARTICLE IX – CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

Section 1 Quorum

1. No business shall be conducted at any annual membership meeting or any special meeting unless a quorum consisting of a simple majority of the voting members is present.

2. No business requiring a vote shall be conducted at any regular Board meeting or any special meeting unless a quorum consisting of a simple majority of the Board of Directors is present.

Section 2 Robert's Rules of Order

Robert's Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary guide for the GWPL at all meetings. At its discretion, the Board may retain the services of a parliamentarian for assistance with the conduct of meetings.

Section 3 Manner of Meeting

1. Meetings may be conducted in person, virtually, or mixed in person and virtual.
2. If a meeting permits virtual attendance, the Board shall provide a means for electronic voting for those voting members attending virtually. Such means may also be made available to those attending in person.

Section 4 Voting Membership

1. Each club in good standing, and which holds voting privileges, shall not have more than one vote in any matter and must have a designated voting member present at scheduled meetings for that club's vote to be counted. A club's voting member shall be a person who fulfills one or more of the following criteria:
 - a. Club officer, head coach, or assistant coach
 - b. Parent or legal guardian of player
 - c. Written or suitable electronic proxy designated by a voting member. The proxy must designate an individual who is otherwise qualified to be a voting member by IX.4.1.a or IX.4.1.b.
2. Prior to the first vote at any meeting of the membership, each club with voting privileges shall communicate to the Secretary, or such other individual as the Board may designate, the identity of the voting member who will vote on behalf of the club, in person or by proxy.
3. The voting membership at any meeting shall comprise:
 - a. The designated voting member for each club.
 - b. Elected officers and directors of the GWPL who do not already have a vote per Article IX.4.1.a or b, or the individual with a valid proxy for that officer or director.
 - c. Officers and Directors who have been associated with a single club within the prior 5 years may not vote other than as the Voting Member for that club. Officers and Directors shall disclose to the Secretary all club associations in the prior 5 years.
4. Clubs that are on provisional status, or have had their voting privileges suspended, are not eligible to vote on any matter, and they do not count toward establishment of quorum.

Section 5 Majority Vote

Except as otherwise provided herein, decisions on all matters before the GWPL membership shall be a majority vote of the voting members of the GWPL present and in person or voting by valid proxy.

ARTICLE X – ADMISSION AND DISMISSAL OF CLUBS

Section 1 Admission of Clubs to the League

1. Clubs may petition the Board for admission to the League at any time.
2. Clubs must have a parent-controlled Board, or have a school-mandated management structure, at the time of admission to the League. The parent Board or school-mandated management structure must be maintained in order for a club to remain in good standing.
3. Clubs will be admitted to the League on a provisional status, without voting privileges.
 - a. Newly admitted clubs shall remain on provisional status for two years, unless such status is extended or shortened by action of the GWPL Board.
 - b. At the end of the provisional period, or after such time at the discretion of the GWPL Board, the GWPL Board shall vote to either admit the club to regular member status, maintain the club on provisional (non-voting) status, or dismiss the club from the League.

Section 2 Dismissal of Clubs from the League

1. Clubs may be dismissed from participation in the League.
 - a. A motion to dismiss a club may be brought for consideration by the voting membership by either the GWPL Board or by a voting member.
 - b. If the motion to consider dismissal of a club is made, seconded, and carried by the voting membership, the GWPL Board of Directors shall designate a time and place for a special meeting of the members within 10 days of the date of the motion for dismissal and provide at least five days written or electronic notice to all members as to the time, place and subject matter of the meeting.
 - c. A two-thirds vote of the voting members in attendance at the special meeting other than the club whose dismissal is at issue shall be required for the motion to carry.
2. For a period of no less than 5 years after the effective date of a club's dismissal from the League, individuals associated with that club may not stand for election to any GWPL role without prior approval of the GWPL Board or a vote of approval from the voting membership, with such vote by the membership to be held at any regular or special called meeting of the League.

ARTICLE XI - AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

These Bylaws may be amended or modified at any annual meeting by a two third (2/3) vote of the voting membership of the GWPL present, in person or virtually, or by valid proxy, at a meeting provided that:

1. A proposed amendment shall first be presented in writing to the Board of Directors before submission to the general membership.
 - a. If the proposed amendment is presented to the Board with the endorsement of at least 50% clubs with good standing within the League, the amendment shall be included as an item of business at the next scheduled membership meeting.
 - b. If the proposed amendment does not have the endorsement of at least 50% clubs with good standing within the League, the Board may vote to table the amendment or include it as an item of business at the next scheduled membership meeting.
2. Any proposed amendment, if accepted as an item of business, must be presented to all members in good standing at least five (5) days in advance of the next scheduled Membership meeting.

ARTICLE XII - BUDGET

1. A budget shall be presented to the Board of Directors at a designated time of each year.
2. The following items should be budgeted:
 - a. Retained Revenue
 - b. Equipment
 - c. Tournament Fees
 - d. Travel Cost
 - e. Pool Rentals
 - f. Referees
 - g. Miscellaneous Expenses
 - h. Other expenses within the discretion of the Board of Directors

ARTICLE XIII - INDEMNIFICATION

The GWPL shall indemnify each of its Directors and Officers whether or not then in service as such (and his or her executor, administrator and heirs), against all reasonable expenses and any judgment, settlement or other payment actually and necessarily incurred by him or her in connection with the defense of any litigation to which the individual may have been a party because he or she is or was a Director or Officer of the League. The individual shall have no right to reimbursement, however, in relation to matters as to which he or she has been determined by the remaining Directors and Officers, in their sole discretion, for dereliction in the performance of his or her duty as Director or Officer by reason of willful misconduct, bad faith, gross negligence or reckless disregard of the duties of his or her office. The right to indemnity

for expenses shall also apply to the expenses of suits that are compromised or settled if the court having jurisdiction of the matter approves such settlement. For the right to indemnity for any judgment, settlement or other payment relating to litigation to apply, approval of any settlement or other payment, other than defense costs and expenses, shall be subject to the approval of the other members of the Board of Directors. For indemnity for defense costs to apply, choice of counsel and rates charged for attorneys' fees shall be subject to the discretion and consent of the Board of Directors, which consent shall not be unreasonably withheld.

The foregoing right of indemnification shall be in addition to and not exclusive of, all other rights to that which such Director or Officer may be entitled.

ARTICLE XIV - DISSOLUTION

In event of dissolution of the GWPL, any assets remaining after payment of all proper claims and demands then existing against the GWPL shall be distributed to and among one or more corporations, trust funds, foundations which shall qualify as tax exempt organizations of the type described in Section 501(C) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of the United States. Except in their capacities as members as provided in this, no Director or any other individual has, or shall have, any right, title, or interest of any kind in or to such remaining assets. The organization or organizations to which such remaining assets shall be distributed shall be selected at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

CHANGE LOG

Date	Rev#	Change
8/21/24	0	Adopted by the Board
12/17/24	1	Addition of language for admission/dismissal of teams. Added language on qualification of offices. Editorial corrections.

