



Lower Ontario Ringette League

Annual General Meeting Minutes
 May 22nd, 2025 @ 7:00pm
 via Teams Conference

1. Welcome & Call to Order – **Shelley Handley**
2. Roll Call – **Shelley Handley**

Association	Present	Association	Present	Association	Present	Association	Present
President-Shelley Handley	✓	Ajax-Pickering	Chris Walker	Guelph	Satinder Chane	Oshawa	Erin Munro
VP - James Van Lierop	✓	Barrie	Ashley Collins	Hamilton		Paris	Ashley Dinsmore
Divisions - Scott Walker	✓	Burlington	JP Riley	Kitchener	Peter Johnson	Richmond Hill	Paul Collins
Competitions - Michelle Linton	✓	Caledonia	Sarah Calder	London	Shawn Reidy	St. Catharines	Courtney Cusick
Secretary - Wendy Stibert	✓	Cambridge		Markham-Stouffville	Gerald Lamoureux	St. Marys	
Treasurer - Bethany Van der Kooy	✓	Chatham	Krissy Crow	Mississauga		St. Thomas	Steve Bengert
Officials - Emma Bragg-Smith Jessica Mezenberg	✓	Dorchester	Nicole Lindsay	Mitchell	Janelle Schoonderwoerd	Sunderland	Holly Smith
Adult - Janet in't Veldt	✓	Elora Fergus	Avery Smith	Muskoka	Brenda Mannings	Tillsonburg	Matt Frieelen
Scheduling - Chris Ouellette	✓	Etobicoke	Karen Webber	Newmarket	Alyssia Byers	Waterloo	Rachel GonDorsch
Communications - Jason Routley	✓	Forest	Rachel Orvis	Niagara Falls	Tony Royston	Whitby	Sheryl Manoharan
		Goderich	Brian Hess				

3. Establish a vote count and verification – **Shelley Handley**

Bylaw 3.8 - 50% quorum

Bylaw 3.13 – 1 vote per member

4. Motion to approve [AGM Agenda](#) – **Shelley Handley**

Motion: Caledonia Second: Barrie

All in favour

5. Motion to approve [Minutes for AGM 2024](#) -**Shelley Handley**

Motion: Ajax Second: St Thomas

All in favour

6. Reports (2024 – 2025) and Proposed Budget (2025 – 2026)

President Report: Shelley Handley

Treasurer Report: Bethany Van Der Kooy

Division Director Report: Scott Walker

Scheduling Director Report: Chris Oulette

Adult Director Report: Janet in't Veldt

Officiating – Have associations access to Arbiter, easier to calculate milage and not overlap,

Motion to approve Reports

Motion: Caledonia Second: London

All in favour

Budget Proposal for 2025 - 2026

- Last year we came very close to the budget
- This year there will be a slight increase cost for arbiter, for referee milage and to build up the slush fund
- Some of the costs will roll over, some costs are estimated, LORL will carry forward the \$5,000
- Some etransfers bounced so we need to ensure that LORL has the correct email addresses
- Team fees will be \$250

Questions

- JP Reiley / Rachel – confirmation that team fees for LORL next year is \$250 and fees to RO will be \$100
- Alyssia – What is the compensation for referee travel costs: at the end of the year LORL pays for a portion of the travel fees clubs paid to referees for travel costs
- Gerald – Request to move submission for referee travel information to a later date. The date is difficult to change because books need to be balanced for year end
- Emma - Clubs may not need to submit mileage because arbiter will be able to track referee milage
- Aaron – What happened to the money from the Western Ringette League (WRRL) fund? The money was forwarded to LORL, around \$2,000. WRRRA funds are going back to the Western Region Associations.

Motion to Approve Budget Motion: London Second: Paris

All in favour

7. 2025 Elections – **James Van Lierop**

- All positions are for 2-year term except for Communications Director which is a one-year term.
 1. VICE PRESIDENT – James Van Lierop (willing to stand)

No nominations, approved

2. TREASURER – Bethany Vanderkooy (willing to stand)

No nominations, approved

3. DIRECTOR - COMPETITIONS – Michelle Linton (willing to stand)

No nominations, approved

4. DIRECTOR - SCHEDULING – Chris Ouellette (willing to stand)

No nominations, approved

5. DIRECTOR - ADULT DIVISION – Janet in't Veldt (willing to stand)

No nominations, approved

6. DIRECTOR – COMMUNICATIONS – 1 year term - open

Steve Bengner from St. Thomas, approved

8. New Business – See Below - **Shelley Handley**

9. Adjournment – **Shelley Handley**

Motion: Caledonia Second: London

All in favour

NEW BUSINESS

LORL Team Fees:

- FUN2: \$150 (\$100 for teams starting in January)
- FUN3 to U19: \$250
- Adult teams: \$30

Communication

- We are looking at purchasing BASECAMP for ourselves to keep communication flowing and possibly sharing with GLRL

Year End Tournament

- We are still looking for applications to host the year-end tournament. These are due June 1st. See the requirements here: [LORL 2025-2026 Year End Event Package](#)

Other Year End Tournaments:

- o March 5-8 AA Championships
- o March 12 – 15 A Championships
- o March 16 – 20 Ontario March Break for schools
- o March 27 – 29 18+ Championships
- o March 29 – April 4 Canadian Ringette Championships (Ottawa)
- o April 3-6 Easter Weekend
- o April 9-12 U12 Championships
- o April 16-19 Eastern Canada Championships (in Ontario)

Division Convenors

- We will be asking for Division Convenors at our first general meeting in September. If you are interested or know somebody who would be good for this job, please reach out to Scott Walker at divisions@lorl.ca.

Team Formation:

- There is no longer the requirement to wait for September to run U12 evaluations. These can be completed in August. The number of teams a club intends to host at each level must be submitted to LORL by Sept. 15 so the schedule can be made. (TRF do not need to be finalized by this date.) Please close registration and schedule ice with this date in mind. FUN2 registration can close later.
- Information required by Sept 15: ice availability, blackout dates, teams a club will host.
- Concern that some clubs don't get ice in early Sept.

Officials:

- LORL will be using Arbiter to schedule refs. This will be a major improvement allowing for greater visibility regarding referee availability, travel costs, and referee development etc.

Bylaw Changes vs Rules & Procedure Changes

Rules and Procedure changes are voted on by the board; bylaw changes are voted on by the membership.

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO RULES

1. **Championship Tournament:** change terminology to year-end tournament as this is not a championship tournament. Multiple gold medals are given in each age division. It is a seeded tournament.
2. **Year-End Tournament** – Any team can join if they pay tournament fees, have paid appropriate RO fees and are a registered team with RO or an association. This includes, but is not limited to, FUN2 teams that have not played in league, tournament teams at any age group that have played in at least 2 tournaments, or teams formed from “house league”. These teams will be seeded in the appropriate groupings at the year-end tournament based on available statistics, or evaluation by LORL members and associations. **Tournament teams wishing to enter the year end tournament need to declare their intentions by January**
 - It is common for tournament teams to join in the Year End Open 18+ event
 - Concerns:
 - o Niagara Falls U19 didn’t feel heard at the seeding before the year end tournament. There were some oversights, and everyone needs to continue to work for better communication
 - o How do we protect U19B from becoming exclusively tournament teams? Overall, the goal is to encourage as many players to continue playing ringette at each age level. Tournament teams allow U19 players who want to play ringette but can’t play at the university level remain connected with their clubs. We want to provide opportunities to play where possible.
3. **League Champions:** Will be recognized at the year-end tournament or other venue (depending on age group) and will be awarded with a league banner or something similar. More details to come on this.
 - Some teams have nowhere to hang their banner, a non banner option might be good as well
4. **League Play:**
 - a. U16 and up will have a schedule made for the entire season - no reseeding in December. Reseeding will happen at the year-end tournament. The goal will be to have all teams play each other at least twice throughout the season within a reasonable geographic distance.
 - b. For U14 and lower, LORL will be divided by geography (3 areas or 2 areas based on number of teams - 12A may be the exception) with reseeding in December.
5. **Team Formation:** In associations that have multiple teams at the **same age and level**, teams **MUST** be **balanced**. If teams do not appear to be balanced, LORL will request evidence of the process followed (evaluation sheets, results of exhibition games etc.) If the proper process is not followed, associations can be fined and teams may not be able to participate in the year-end event. LORL may also request that players be redistributed to make the teams more balanced. Teams can be tiered for U12 and up - but must be identified as such (U12A, U12B and U12C as an example).
 - Ottawa has a “stages” program. Evaluate this program to see if it is a fit for LORL
6. **Blackout Dates:** Blackout dates are for tournaments only or other events at your home arena. Blackout dates will not be accepted for either end of March break or Family Day weekend. This is what substitution requests are for.
 - Suggestion: Limit the number of blackout dates that a team can submit or rank them.
7. **Overage Players**

- a. Overage player MUST be approved by LORL. LORL will send requests for RO for final approval
 - b. Overage players may be from one age group older and female – exceptions will only be made for very rare circumstances
 - Generally two overaged players on a team are acceptable. Overage players still need to be declared and approved. LORL will be reviewing overagers more diligently than last year.
8. ***Males in Ringette:*** This continues to be a big topic in our sport. Ringette Canada, and as a result, Ringette Ontario are not addressing issues or providing leadership to leagues or associations on how to work through the complexities of the issue. LORL is proposing the following:

Creation of a Diversity Committee

- a. This committee would be situated under LORL including at least one (1) member from the LORL leadership
- b. The committee members would be approved by the board and represent different perspectives in the gender spectrum
- c. The committee would deal with all complaints regarding gender issues
- d. The committee would address, provide ideas and solutions to address gender issues
- Anyone interested in participating in the Diversity Committee can submit their interest to participate [HERE](#)

Mixed and Female only Leagues

- a. LORL will work towards creating a mixed league and a female only league starting as early as FUN 3. We believe if we establish separate leagues at the younger ages and move up through the years, the idea of mixed Ringette will grow and allow for better competition. It will also encourage girls to join as Ringette will offer both female only and mixed ringette giving girls more choice.
- b. Currently the rule is 50% of all players on the ice must be female. We will be changing this to 51% of all players (including the goalie) must be female, regardless if teams are playing in the mixed or female only leagues. This will apply to all teams FUN 3 and up.
- Comments and Questions: There are a number of teams that rely on the participation of male players to make a team viable. Adding roadblocks for male players discourages male participation.
- The bench activity on FUN3 teams is very busy, it will be difficult to also keep track of the number of male players on the ice. Consideration will be given to apply the 51% rule to age U14 and older.
- With the introduction of Female Only and Mixed leagues may result in lots of travel. The goal for the younger age groups would be to keep travel as close to home as possible.
- Start the diversity committee in June.