

The Annual Meeting of Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania was held at Camp Shelly Ridge on Saturday, May 7, 2022.

Call to Order

The Meeting was called to order by Board Chair Debbie Hassan at 10:13 am.

Opening Ceremony & Mission Moment

Girl Scout Senior Anika S. of Troop 7288 led the flag ceremony, with other Girl Delegates serving as the flag holders and color guard.

The Mission Moment was the presentation of the Governance Award. Debbie Hassan explained that this Award recognizes a volunteer who has provided outstanding and consistent dedicated service to the policy area of the Council. Board Treasurer Rick Perkins was recognized for his seven years of service on various Board committees and as a member of the Board of Directors.

Overview of Parliamentary Rules

The presiding Parliamentarian, Dave White, provided an overview of the rules of parliamentary procedure.

Board Secretary Deb Walters delivered the report of Quorum, noting that Quorum was achieved by a count of 72 voting delegates. GSEP Bylaws require 40% or 68. In addition, 135 Girl Scouts and interested members were in attendance.

The next order of business was to approve the Agenda for the meeting. The agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

Approval of Minutes Committee

The Delegates, by unanimous consent, approved a Minutes Committee to review and approve the Minutes of the Annual Meeting on behalf of the entire Delegate Body. The committee is comprised of Girl Scout Ambassador & Girl Delegate Elliot House-Kelly and Girl Scout volunteers Nya Cherry, Bridget Powell, and Scott Laudenslager.

Appointment of Tellers

Board Chair Debbie Hassan appointed Service Unit Delegate Linda Mills as Head Teller and Girl Scout Ambassador Paris Graves and 2020 National Council Session Delegate Raquel Lopez to serve as Tellers for the meeting.

Governance Report

Board Chair, Debbie Hassan presented the Governance Report, which included:

- A report on the 2023 National Council Session. GSEP's Delegate Council discussed possible proposal topics to submit to GSUSA at the Fall meeting and voted on the top 3 choices at the Spring meeting. The dates of the 2023 NCS were announced; and all members were encouraged to attend as visitors at this triennial event.

- Special acknowledgements to the two outgoing Board members (Clare Freimuth and Emily Turner), thanking them for their service and to the three Girl Advisors (Lizzy Q., Christian R. and Devyn S.), sharing the entire Board’s appreciation of their dedication, interest, and growth over the past year.

Treasurer’s Report

Chief Financial Officer Mike Vanic presented the Treasurer’s Report. He gave an overview of the financial statements for the year ended September 30, 2021 and the year-to-date as of March 31, 2022. The highlights included:

- The Fiscal Year 2021 Audit was favorable.
- A review of the year-end results for the past five years. Between 2016-2020, the Council ended with a surplus, which offset and covered the year-end deficit during FY2021.
- FY 2021 Revenue was \$13.5 million, which was less than the previous year by 12%. The primary factor in the decreased income was the all-virtual Cookie Program; however, this decrease was partially offset by: the addition of a Fall Product Program in 2021, which generated net revenue of \$300,000, the \$1.588 million federal PPP1 Loan, and an increase in camp revenue of \$900,000 in 2021 over the prior year due to holding in-person camp (unlike the virtual Camp at Home experience in 2020).
- FY21 Expenses were \$14.1 million, which were less than the prior year by 3%. Mr. Vanic pointed out that 81% of the Council’s expenses were spent directly on programs and services for girls (compared to only 72% of expenses toward girl programs in 2015).
- In the current fiscal year (FY22), the budget reflected an anticipated return to somewhat “normalized” operations, with total revenue of close to \$16 million (which is more than the previous two years, but not quite back to pre-pandemic levels). The 2022 budget also included \$1.2 million of a PPP2 Loan and an expected year-end deficit of just over \$374,000.
- For the first half of this fiscal year (from October 2021 – March 2022), actual results have been better than budget for both revenue and expenses. The cookie program has been extremely successful and will exceed the budget by \$1 million. The Council will continue practicing prudent money management and the staff anticipate closing the anticipated deficit.

Management Report

CEO Kim E. Fraites-Dow presented the Management Report, reporting on the operations of the Council for Fiscal Year 2021. She prefaced her remarks with a reminder that during 2021, much of the work of the Council was hybrid, moving from all-virtual efforts (including three virtual Take the Lead events) to in-person Summer Camp, with a continued emphasis on safety and respect for our members’ varied experiences and preferences.

Highlights of her presentation included reports on each of GSEP’s Pillars of Excellence:

- Strategy & New Markets
 - The Council focused on Daisy and Brownie recruitment, with special attention on using data and information about our members and the girl population at the almost 1,250 schools in our footprint. However, because schools remained virtual for most of the year, our access was extremely limited. We relied on marketing and communications efforts to reach new and lapsed members.
 - GSUSA launched a complete refresh of the Girl Scout Brand, which GSEP incorporated into our marketing and communications tactics.
 - The Spring 2021 Renewal and Extended Year campaign was very successful, resulting in 9,161 girls and 2,681 adults renewing their membership (and 250 new lifetime members).

- GSEP migrated to GSUSA's Volunteer Systems 2.0 and gsEvents during Membership Year 2021. Technical difficulties on GSUSA's end presented some challenges for our Council during membership recruitment in the fall of 2021, but we persevered.
- Member & Community Excellence:
 - The pandemic's impact in MY21 was illustrated with a 34% drop in Girl Membership and a 7.5% decrease in Adult Membership. However, in a reverse of the previous year, GSEP was able to resume summer programs at community sites and served 580 girls.
 - GSEP, unlike most of its sister Girl Scout councils, ran all seven of its camps (4 resident and 3 day) serving more than 3,500 Girl Scouts in summer 2021.
 - The Council re-organized its Community Engagement Team, which was mapped to accommodate similar numbers of schools. Team members live in the respective communities they serve, to increase a personal investment and connection to success.
 - All three Take the Lead events were virtual in FY21 and we reached 97% of our fundraising goal. Individual giving, corporate grants, and foundation grants all surpassed their fundraising goals.
 - Adult Camping Weekend was held in-person in August 2021, and the committee surpassed their budgeted goal by \$6,500.
- Operational Excellence
 - For the first three quarters of FY21, GSEP ran virtual programs through Girl Scouts at Home and provided support for troop leaders and service unit volunteers to troubleshoot challenges and brainstorm virtual programs.
 - The Fall Leadership Program for Volunteers brought together 145 participants from all over GSEP for a virtual day of learning, networking, and fun.
 - The Girl Scouts' 55th National Council Session was held virtually for the first time October 23-25, 2020. GSEP's 25 NCS Delegates and three Alternates, along with more than a dozen visitors, attended more than 30 hours of business meetings during the 2020 NCS.
 - The Volunteer Awards ceremony was held virtually on December 1, 2020, with 150 attendees, 66 awardees, and the ceremony featured both pre-recorded videos and a live emceed event.
 - In MY21, GSEP celebrated 463 Bronze Award Girl Scouts and 141 Silver Award Girl Scouts. GSEP was also able to offer a hybrid Gold Award Ceremony for the 80 Gold Award Girl Scouts.
 - Additionally, the 500 Club event for Top Cookie Sellers was held at Camp Laughing Waters and culminated with a fantastic fireworks display.
- Functional Excellence
 - For the first time, GSEP created two budgets for FY 21, a likely scenario and pessimistic scenario, to accommodate the unpredictable pandemic environment. The Council closed the year successfully in between the likely and pessimistic scenario budgets.
 - GSEP was successful in securing commitments from New Hanover Township and Upper Frederick Township totaling close to \$700,000 in support of a conservation easement on Camp Laughing Waters.
 - The Girl Adventure Place Campaign and Capital Improvements at Camps Shelly Ridge and Mountain House continue to make significant progress.

CEO Kim E. Fraites-Dow concluded her Management Report with a status update on various projects and events that have happened in the first half of Membership Year 2022, including:

- GSEP successfully secured a \$500,000 grant from the State's Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to assist with the Camp Laughing Waters easement. DCNR's grant was the final financial piece to securing the \$4 million conversation easement (in addition to Montgomery County's commitment of \$2.7million, New Hanover Township donating \$480,733, Upper Frederick giving \$79,768 as well as GSEP's \$289,500 investment).
- A Ribbon Cutting ceremony immediately following the Annual Meeting will celebrate Smith Lodge's new commercial kitchen, a state-of-the-art Trombe wall with shade awnings to provide a passive solar system for heating and cooling for the lodge, a new deck rounding out the beautiful Sun Dial Room, 3 walk-in refrigerators, and lots of hand washing stations. Additionally, our Property team designed, cleared, and built a brand new tent platform unit with 8 platform tents.
- In April 2022, GSEP hosted close to 400 senior management professionals from GSUSA and more than 100 councils across the country...including our new national CEO, Sofia Chang. Ms. Chang grew up in Philadelphia, so we were proud to welcome her home.

Board Development Committee Report

Board Development Committee Chair Debbie O'Brien presented the report of the Board Development Committee, which included listing the committee members, the processes behind their work, the slates, and a Bylaws amendment. Prior to introducing the slate for the Girl Delegates, Ms. O'Brien presented aggregated demographic profiles of both the applicants and the nominees; the nominees are very reflective of the applicant pool. For example, we had applicants from every county in our footprint and eight of the nine counties are represented by the nominees; girls in grades 8-12 applied and those grades are represented on the slate; and more than a third of the nominees are girls of color.

The 2022-2023 Slate was presented to the Delegate Council, including:

- 7 Board Members-at-Large:
 - 1st Term: Judy Freyer and Ellen lobst
 - 2nd Term: Jennifer Dempsey Fox
 - 3rd Term: Joanne McFall, Debbie O'Brien, Shelley Smith, and Alison Snyder
- 3 Girl Advisors: Olivia Bell, Alexandra Scott, Kaitlyn Wahl
- 2 Board Development Committee Members:
 - 2nd Term – Laura Azzalina
 - 3rd Term – Miriam Shou
- 30 Girl Delegates: Anika Chaudhary, Honor Crosby, Natalia De Freitas, Katelyn Fernandez, Katilyn Gershen, Kaitlynn Harrington, Senae Harris, Allison Hughes, Layla Jamo-Cohen, Kimberly Jeon, Grace Krakauskas, Anna Lazewski, Annie Lordi, Hannah Lowry, Avika Mundra, Maura Murphy, Srsti Niceorgaw, Lilah Rich, Ishitaa Saxena, Maryn Schellenberg, Emma Smirk, Emyrson Smith, Devyn Stek, Ma'Niyah Stewart, Anika Suresh, Stella Tucker Reagan Ward, Sarah Wiegand, Delia Winas, and Norah Youngblood

The Vote

- **Board of Directors: Members-at-Large** -- This election was uncontested and the slate, as presented, was approved.

- **Board of Directors: Girl Advisors to the Board** -- This election was uncontested and the slate, as presented, was approved.
- **Board Development Committee Members** -- This election was uncontested and the slate, as presented, was approved.
- **Girl Delegates** -- This election was uncontested and the slate, as presented, was approved.

The BDC also recommended an amendment to the Bylaws to add the phrase “serve as a Delegate to the National Council Session” to Article III, Section 11 and Article IV, Section 3.a. BDC Chair Debbie O’Brien explained that the GSEP has had a long-standing tradition of including the Board Chair and CEO as NCS Delegates, but GSUSA recommended officially changing our Bylaws to formalize this good governance practice.

The Vote

The vote on the motion to amend the Bylaws was approved.

Top Cookie Sellers

Board members and Membership Strategy Committee Co-Chairs Terri Boyer and Joann Gonzalez-Generals recognized the top cookies sellers.

The top cookie sellers in each grade level are as follows:

Daisy:

- Laila Marie Kango of Troop 9609 in Buttons and Bows Service Unit - 4,013 boxes
- Rabiya Jennings of Troop 71159 in Mill Creek Service Unit - 3,009 boxes
- Khalie Connolly of Troop 285 in Bensalem Service Unit - 2,735 boxes

Brownie:

- Valentina Lauria of Troop 9712 of South Philadelphia Service Unit - 9,234 boxes
- Olivia Kibler of Troop 902 in Delrich Service Unit - 2,798 boxes
- Maci Brown of Troop 9161 in Three Leaves Service Unit - 2,764 boxes
- Mia Bianco of Troop 2782 in Richland Service Unit - 2,550 boxes
- Annalise Shalkowski of Troop 9712 in South Philadelphia Service Unit - 2,500 boxes

Junior:

- Gia Panza of Troop 9589 in South Philadelphia Service Unit - 14,827 boxes
- Scootaloo Laudenslager of Troop 6169 in Allentown Service Unit - 6,512 boxes
- Kennedy Fiorelli of Troop 21793 in Tohikanee Service Unit - 3,195 boxes

Cadette:

- Diahna Stubbs of Troop 91326 in Three Leaves Service Unit - 4,654 boxes
- Stella Perez of Troop 9934 in North Central Service Unit - 4,523 boxes
- Maya Kearns of Troop 21041 in Neshaminy Service Unit - 3,751 boxes

Senior:

- Samantha Baker of Troop 902 in Delrich Service Unit - 3,000 boxes
- Natalie Di Crosta of Troop 21603 in Oxford Valley Service Unit - 3,000 boxes
- Abigail McKeever of Troop 7063 in Moreland Service Unit - 2,766 boxes

Ambassador:

- Lydia Ermer of Troop 97234 in Oxford Valley Service Unit - 2,427 boxes
- Melanie Theron of Troop 9020 in Three Leaves Service Unit - 2,077 boxes
- Cydney Brown of Troop 91504 in Caryl McNeill Service Unit - 2,050 boxes

Scholarship Awardees

Board members and Adult Camping Weekend co-chairs Ann Donley and Deb Walters recognized the GSEP scholarship awardees. There were 11 girls who were nominated for The Union League of Philadelphia Good Citizenship Award. The scholarship committee reviewed 53 applications from girls who applied for 10 different scholarships. GSEP will be awarding scholarships to 22 girls totaling \$23,100.

The following scholarships/awards were presented:

- Reneé Carol Harper Memorial Scholarship – Melanie Theron
- Maurice Seltzer Science and Math Award – Tatiana Davis
- Margaret Glen Estey Award – Abby Plichta, Shaiyan Feisal, Skye Scarlett, and Cydney Brown
- Muriel E. Lehman Award – Melanie Theron
- Janet and Solomon Eshner College Scholarship – Cydney Brown
- Elizabeth G. Dorsett Memorial Scholarship – Ariel Abbott
- Dotti Martin Educational Scholarship/Destination Fund – Hayley Gable
- Judy Borie Award – Jessica McCurry
- Kiwanis Award - Jessica McCurry
- Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania Graduating Senior Scholarship - Ariel Abott, Cydney Brown, Sanai Allen, Jeleah Bowman-Blanton, Nicole DeWald, Shaiyan Feisal, Elayna Frost, Hayley Gable, Jessica Hall, Sarah Hamer, Martina, Kernosh, Erin Klotz, Lydia Masimore, Jessica McCurry, Amanda Nichter, Christian Roach, Nicole Rozanski, Skye Scarlett

Additional Notes:

Before the end of the meeting, Board Chair Debbie Hassan recognized Lifetime Members in the audience. She also asked that all Bronze, Silver, and Gold Award Girl Scouts stand and be celebrated as well.

Debbie Hassan gave a few reminders to the attendees, including the need for more camp staff, the upcoming Spring membership renewal deadlines and incentives, and an invitation to stay for the Ribbon Cutting of the new camp improvement at Camp Shelly Ridge, immediately following the adjournment.

Adjournment of the Annual Business Meeting

Board Chair Debbie Hassan adjourned the meeting at 12:06 pm.

These minutes were recorded by Nya Cherry, Elliot House-Kelly, Scott Laudenslager, and Bridget Powell and approved by the Minutes Committee on June 30, 2022.