

The Annual Meeting of Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania was held at Camp Shelly Ridge on Saturday, May 4, 2024.

Call to Order

The Meeting was called to order by Board Chair Nicole LeVine at 10:13 a.m.

Opening Ceremony

An opening flag ceremony was conducted by Girl Delegates.

Mission Moment: Governance Award Presentation

Board Member Ellen Iobst and CEO Kim Fraites-Dow presented this year's Governance Award to Nicole Levine and Ann Donley. They were recognized for their commitment to our Mission and long-standing Board service. Additionally, their leadership as the immediate Past Chairs of the Property Committee helped guide the Council to a successful multi-level partnership, resulting in a conservation easement of Camp Laughing Waters and preserving this open space for Girl Scouts in perpetuity.

Overview of Parliamentary Rules

The presiding Parliamentarian, Mary Scout, provided an overview of the rules of parliamentary procedure.

Board Secretary Joann Gonzalez-Generals delivered the report of Quorum, noting that Quorum was achieved by a count of 83 voting delegates. GSEP Bylaws require 40% or 66. In addition, 172 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 Beth Gutierrez, Linda Lane, and Phebe Anne Wagner.

Appointment of Tellers

The Board Chair, Nicole LeVine, appointed Linda Mills and Mikayla Havers to serve as Tellers for the meeting.

Governance Report

Board Chair Nicole LeVine presented the Governance Report, which included reports on:

- **2023 National Council Session**
 - GSEP sent 16 Delegates and three Alternates to the NCS in July 2023 in Orlando.
 - GSEP's proposal on allowing virtual attendance was approved, along with three other proposals:
 - Creation of a donor-restricted fund to support Gold Award scholarships

- GSUSA confirming the number of NCS Delegates for each Council based on girl membership figures from the Membership Year two years prior to the NCS
 - Addition of proactive anti-racism language to the Girl Scout Constitution.
 - Plus, the NCS Delegates voted on new National Board members (including a new National Board President) and new National Board Development Committee members (including GSEP's former Board Chair, Debbie Hassan).
 - The group also participated in breakout room discussions on national governance topics.
- Recap of Governance Year 2023-2024 Delegate Council Meetings
 - The Fall Delegate Council Meeting in October 2023 focused on the 2023 National Council Session, with a more comprehensive report from the NCS Delegates.
 - GSEP added a new Winter Delegate Council Meeting, held virtually in January 2024, because the Service Unit Delegates and Girl Delegates requested more information about the Board and governance. An overview of all the Board Committees was presented, as each Committee Chair shared the respective work of their committee.
 - Last month's Spring Delegate Council Meeting featured a "meet the candidates" virtual presentation, with each nominee for Board Member-at-Large and Girl Advisor sharing a short video introducing themselves to the Delegate Council.
- Special Acknowledgements
 - Outgoing Board Members were recognized for their service and dedication: Joanne McFall, Susan Mucciarone, Shelley Smith, and Alison Snyder.
 - The Girl Advisors for GY23-24 were also celebrated: Layla Jamo-Cohen, Emma Smirk, and Anika Suresh.

Treasurer's Report

Chief Financial Officer Mike Vanic presented the Treasurer's Report on behalf of Board Treasurer Marlene Beers who was unable to attend. He gave an overview of the financial statements for Fiscal Year 2023 and the first half of Fiscal Year 2024 (October 1, 2023 - March 30, 2024). He reported that the Auditors issued an unmodified (or favorable) report on the Council's financial statements.

Highlights included:

- A review of the Revenue and Expenses for the past five years. GSEP ended with a surplus each year, except for 2021 due to the pandemic. However, the surpluses in 2018-2020 and 2022-2023 were more than the sufficient to cover the deficit from 2021.
- A detailed explanation of the revenue sources for FY23, which saw an operating revenue of \$19.5 million, a 7.7% increase over the prior year. This was mainly attributed to a highly successful Cookie Program, as well as other revenue lines exceeding budget.
- The FY23 expenses totaled \$18.7 million (an increase of 10.6% from the previous year).
- Over the past eight years, funds spent on direct girl programming increased from 72% in 2015 to 83% of the total expense budget in 2023.

Mr. Vanic then reviewed the current state of the FY24 budget. A shortfall for the first half of this year is a result of the Cookie Program falling short of expectations, but the staff will act on planned contingencies and manage expenses prudently with the goal of ending this year with a surplus.

Management Report

Chief Executive Officer Kim Fraites-Dow presented the Management Report, reporting on the operations of the Council. Highlights of her presentation included reports on each of GSEP's Pillars of Excellence:

- **Strategy & New Markets**

- The Council started MY23 with 55% of its annual Girl Membership already registered.
- After analyzing current membership and potential market shares in all three regions, the community that was identified as having the greatest need was the city of Philadelphia.
 - The staff was restructured, and additional team members were recruited who live in the respective community they are serving.
 - MY23 saw 41% growth in girl membership in Philadelphia, compared to last year.
 - The first ever Girl Scout Day Camp in Philadelphia was launched successfully, with 500+ spots filled and a waiting list of an additional 100 girls.
- In January – March 2023, a council-wide recruitment campaign was initiated with a focus on girls in grades K-3, since they may not have had the same opportunities to join Girl Scouting due to the pandemic. The goal was 1,500 new girls, and 2,066 girls ended up joining and 22 new troops were formed.

- **Member and Community Excellence**

- In MY23, girl membership increased by 12% from MY22, and the Council served 25,178 girls. Adult membership was up 6%; GSEP ended the year with slightly more than 13,000 adult members.
 - With this growth in membership, GSEP became the sixth largest Girl Scout Council in the country, serving 5.5% of the girl population in our footprint.
- A new focus on regional programming was developed. Programs were planned proportionally, based on the number of girl members in an area and the four pillars of programming: Outdoors, STEM, Life Skills, and Entrepreneurship.
- The FY23 Fall Product Program exceeded goal by almost 14%, with Girl Scouts selling \$644,305 worth of nuts, candy, and magazines, a 24% increase over the previous year's gross sales.
 - More than 2,370 Girl Scouts took part, an increase of 16% over the prior year.
- The Cookie Program saw a record high \$19,307,276 in gross revenue, \$903,474 above budget.
 - The Per Girl Average (PGA) was 269, slightly below 2022's number of 294.
 - 77% of registered Girl Scouts participated, or 14,313 girls. By comparison, in the previous year, 75.7% of registered Girl Scouts participated.
 - The Cookie Program did present some challenges, including a new cookie – the Raspberry Rally – being available only online, which caused confusion and frustration for the consumers and Girl Scouts.
- Fundraising met 95% of its goal.
 - Take the Lead fundraising reached 118% of its goal.
 - GSEP hosted its inaugural Golf for Girl Scouts event at Stonewall Golf Club in Chester County, which raised almost \$42,000 and introduced the organization to many new members of the community.
 - GSEP was chosen to participate in a workforce development grant, along with five other Girl Scout councils, through the Department of Labor to increase employment opportunities for historically underserved populations at our camp properties.
 - Corporate and Foundation grants missed their combined goal by 40%.

- Retail introduced two new concepts: Luella the mobile shop van and a Build-A-Bear Workshop at Shelly Ridge.

- **Operational Excellence**

- GSEP celebrated 572 Bronze Award Girl Scouts and held in-person award ceremonies for 135 Silver Award Girl Scouts and 63 Gold Award Girl Scouts.
- Philly Camp, the pilot day camp program, was held in four locations in Philadelphia: Northwest, Center City/South, Northeast, and North. GSEP served more than 500 girls with this initiative.
- GSEP's four resident camps and three-day camps served close to 3,700 Girl Scouts during summer 2023. There were 1,502 registrations for day camp, and 2,164 registrations for resident camp.
- Girl Scouts Beyond Bars (GSBB), a program for girls whose mothers are or were incarcerated, served 27 girls in 2023.
- The Women's Leadership Summit was held in April 2023, and 75 volunteers attended a day of inspiration and collegiality.
- GSEP volunteers, girls, and staff attended GSUSA's 56th National Convention in Orlando in July 2023. The Council group included sixteen Delegates, three Alternates, eleven staff, and the Top Six Cookie Sellers.
- Adult Camping Weekend, organized by GSEP's Alum Association, saw 150 participants enjoying a weekend of relaxation, good food, and other activities at Camp Laughing Waters in August. The event raised more than \$23,000 for older girl scholarships.
- The annual Fall Adult Leading and Learning event held at Camp Laughing Waters served 124 participants from all over GSEP for a day of learning, networking, and fun. There were more than 30 workshops for the attendees.
- The Volunteer Awards ceremony recognized 52 Volunteers and 13 Service Units for their exemplary service to Girl Scouting. There were 12 numeral guard pins awarded, totaling 585 years of collective service to Girl Scouts. Eight Service Units received the CEO Award.

- **Functional Excellence**

- The Operating Budget was bolstered by the success of the Cookie Program and the three Take the Lead events surpassing goals.
 - GSEP camps did not reach their budgeted attendance goal; however, corresponding costs were also lower so the financial impact was able to be absorbed.
- The Human Resources department was very active in FY23, with the majority of new staff being hired in the first half of the year.
 - The Senior Management Team was expanded with two new positions: GSEP hired Sophia Lee as Chief Administrative Officer overseeing Human Resources and Property, and Michael Pompey, Chief Information & Transformation Officer managing IT, Business Analytics, and Member Support.
- Technology was a primary focus in FY23. One notable achievement was the completion of major projects outlined by the Board's IT Strategy Committee. These projects, emphasized Microsoft Cloud technologies and improved security offerings. Plus, renewed attention to both Member and customer support applications and processes has led to real improvements and has strengthened collaboration among staff teams, increasing opportunities for troop placements in local areas.
- Several capital projects were completed at GSEP camps in 2023, including:

- Mosey Wood -- two large decking systems for four platform tent sites
- Laughing Waters – new Horse Barn and renovations to the Health Center
- Shelly Ridge:
 - a new roof for the Service Center
 - a Clivus Multrum bathroom facility at the new platform tent unit
 - a new picturesque window in the loft space of Smith Lodge
- Other maintenance projects were performed at Valley Forge, Wood Haven, Mosey Wood, and Shelly Ridge. A maintenance vehicle was also purchased.
- GSEP secured a commitment of \$125,000 for the Girl Adventure Place Campaign at Camp Mountain House from State Senator Nick Miller. Additionally, solicitations are pending for Camp Shelly Ridge for a second phase of the capital campaign to access the southwest area of the property, for a new well and swimming pool at Camp Wood Haven, and for the ongoing Girl Adventure Place campaign for Camp Mountain House.

Ms. Fraites-Dow ended her report with the good news that the conservation easement at Camp Laughing Waters was completed in December 2023 and the state Department of Environmental Protection approved plans for projects at Camp Mountain House. She also thanked the Board, Board Development Committee, the Delegates, volunteers, and staff for their hard work and efforts toward the betterment of the Council.

Board Development Committee Report

Board Development Committee Chair Debbie O'Brien offered the report of the Board Development Committee, which included listing the committee members and the processes behind their work.

She then presented the following 2024-2025 Slates to the Delegate Council:

- 8 Board Members-at-Large
 - Crystal Ashby (1st term)
 - Harris Bock (1st term)
 - Stacy Broad (1st term)
 - Diana Cortes (1st term)
 - Judy Freyer (2nd term)
 - Ellen Iobst (2nd term)
 - Jennifer Dempsey Fox (3rd term)
 - Christy Barnhart (1st term), a nomination from the floor by the BDC
- 3 Girl Advisors
 - Girl Scout Senior Lindy Arnold
 - Girl Scout Ambassador Myah Derer
 - Girl Scout Ambassador Marisa Maisano
- 1 Board Development Committee Member
 - Laura Azzalina (3rd term)
- 30 Girl Delegates:

Sarah Awadalla, Folasade Beckett, Ketorah Burns, Gina Burtulato, Hailey Califano, Briana Culbreath, Sarah Davis, Ashley Eiss, Margot Ferrara, Charlotte Hiscott, Rachita Jain, Hayden Jebitsch, Mila Kent, Lily Kinnon, Lisa Malone, Bhavika Marabathula, Mairead Menarde, Anwita Monnanda, Katelyn Orkin, Leah Pontzer, Miranda Read, Jade Robinson, Ishitaa Saxena, Saanvi Shah, Katherine Speece, Anika Suresh, Sydney Vance, Katelyn Wascavage, Alexa Weatherwax, Madeline White

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 Member**
This election was uncontested and the slate, as presented, was approved.
- **Girl Delegates**
This election was uncontested and the slate, as presented, was approved.

Top Cookie Sellers

Board members Terri Boyer and Bunmi Ojikutu recognized the top cookie sellers.

The top three cookie sellers in each age level are as follows:

Daisy:

- Charla Graham of Troop 91477 in Three Leaves Service Unit - 2,142 boxes
- Aria Smart of Troop 9115 in Three Leaves Service Unit - 1,851 boxes
- Liliana Croul of Troop 9576 in Delrich Service Unit - 1,500 boxes
- Amarri Thomas of Troop 919 in Buttons and Bows Service Unit - 1,500 boxes

Brownie:

- Kourtney Love-Braswell of Troop 9689 of Buttons and Bows Service Unit - 4,002 boxes
- Lily DiCrosta of Troop 2531 in Oxford Valley Service Unit - 3,515 boxes
- Jordan French of Troop 5408 in Radnor Service Unit - 2,533 boxes

Junior:

- Kyra Thompson of Troop 5115 in Friendship Hollow Service Unit - 5,578 boxes
- Maci Brown of Troop 91200 in Three Leaves Service Unit - 2,403 boxes
- Emily Henry of Troop 1315 in Kutztown Service Unit - 2,287 boxes

Cadette:

- Diahna Stubbs of Troop 91326 in Three Leaves Service Unit - 8,378 boxes
- Scootaloo Laudenslager of Troop 6169 in Allentown Service Unit - 5,933 boxes
- Amber Thompson of Troop 548 in Friendship Hollow Service Unit - 5,585 boxes

Senior:

- Chloe Thompson of Troop 5130 in Friendship Hollow Service Unit - 5,497 boxes
- Brianna Califano of Troop 5047 in Inter-Delco Service Unit - 3,500 boxes
- Sydney Brown of Troop 768 in Norrington Forge Service Unit - 2,244 boxes

Ambassador:

- Kayla Everett of Troop 9629 in Three Leaves Service Unit - 5,854 boxes
- Sanari Herbert of Troop 9020 in Three Leaves Service Unit - 3,478 boxes
- Kiera McCarron of Troop 5913 in Inter-Delco Service Unit - 2,000 boxes

Scholarship Awardees

Adult Camping Weekend Co-Chairs Ann Donley and Deb Walters announced the GSEP scholarship awardees. There were 18 girls who were nominated for The Union League of Philadelphia Good Citizenship Award. The scholarship committee reviewed applications from 28 girls who applied for seven different scholarships. GSEP will be awarding scholarships to 19 girls totaling \$22,000.

The following awards/scholarships were presented:

- Union League – Good Citizenship Award
 - Rowan Carmichael
 - Olivia Darrohn
 - Myah Derer
 - Anjali Ghanta
 - Virginia Hayes
 - Maya Hudson
 - Monica McKnight
 - Emily Mullin
 - Tanishtha Pawar
 - Emma Scheivert
 - Kaelyn Stek
 - Giana Stoltzfus
 - Anika Suresh
 - Stella Tucker
 - Vashti Valentine
 - Ruchi Vibhandik
 - Faith Washington
 - Charlotte Williams
- Dotti Martin Educational Scholarship/Destination Fund
 - Mary Leshinskie
- Kiwanis Scholarship
 - Emma Smirk
- Janet and Solomon Eshner Scholarship
 - Ashlie Johnson
- Elizabeth G. Dorsett Memorial Scholarship
 - Ashlyn Haymes
- Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania Graduating Senior Scholarship
 - Mia Adams
 - Abigail Betz
 - Kellyann Catagna
 - Andela Dozier

- Kayla Everett
- Annika Grasso
- Leah Gray
- Ashlyn Haymes
- Ashlie Johnson
- Sarah Kelly
- Isabella Krautheim
- Mary Ann Leshinskie
- Cami Merrigan
- Sienna Powell
- Charlotte Rismiller
- Grace Skeete
- Emma Smirk
- Caroline Wark
- Brynn Wisniewski

Additional Notes

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

Nicole LeVine gave a few reminders to the attendees, including the Spring membership renewal deadlines and incentives, a request for families to send their girls to camp this summer, and a reminder to Service Units that now is the time to hold elections for Service Unit Delegates and Alternates for the 2024-2025 Governance Year.

Adjournment of the Annual Business Meeting

Board Chair Nicole LeVine adjourned the meeting at 11:58 am.

These minutes were recorded by Beth Gutierrez, Linda Lane, and Phebe Anne Wagner and approved by the Minutes Committee on June 5, 2024.