

## **Board of Directors Meeting**

Monday, January 27, 2025

8 – 9:30 p.m. (virtual only)

### **Opening & Board Development Committee Report**

Board Chair Nicole LeVine called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

Board Development Committee Chair Debbie O'Brien reminded the Board that that a Member-at-Large seat is open, due to a resignation in November. The Bylaws require that the BDC recommend a candidate for Board approval. She then presented the Rev. Dr. Lorina Marshall-Blake from Independence Blue Cross as the nominee, whom the Board voted unanimously to approve as the newest Member-at-Large.

### **Mission Moment**

Gold Award Girl Scout Stella T. shared her Gold Award project via video. She created a creative writing and public speaking club at her neighborhood elementary school, after noticing her little sister and friends struggling with the language arts, in particular reading and writing, after learning online during the pandemic.

### **Management Report**

CEO Kim Fraites-Dow announced that for the first time since the Council established a goal of having 90% of girls in troops by December 31, we hit the goal this year. As of today, the overall girl membership figure is up almost 7% YOY.

The Cookie Season kicked off on January 16, and the Council received very positive media coverage. Kim explained that although this year we have more girls in troops, our initial order was down year over year. We have been offering new incentives to boost participation and calling leaders of non-participating troops and new troops to encourage participation. To combat the possible budget impact of a less than budgeted Cookie Program, budget contingency plans for the remainder of the year have been initiated and there is a 10% reduction in food and beverage expenditures (except for summer camp).

On the first day of summer camp registrations in December, a new record was set, with over 1,500 girls signing up. We are currently at 74% of our goal of 3,530 girls.

Kim also reminded the Board of the dates and locations of the three upcoming Take the Lead fundraising events.

### **Calling All Girl Bosses Update**

This month's CAGB programming focused on mentorship. More than 35 leaders from various companies (including PECO, Lockheed Martin, FS Investments, and more) participated in workshops at the five Philadelphia hubs on January 11. Four Board members also joined the girls. During the event, girls had the opportunity to present their Take Action project ideas and receive constructive feedback from mentors to help refine and elevate their work. We also received positive media coverage from three local Philadelphia TV news outlets, which resulted in many emails from parents inquiring how to get their daughters involved and from adults who want to volunteer.

### **Finance Committee Report**

Committee Chair Rick Perkins explained that GSEP's Bylaws require us to have an external audit partner review our financial records, and CliftonLarsonAllen has conducted audits for GSEP for the past nine years. CLA issued an unmodified/clean opinion, which is the highest an auditor can offer. No significant disagreements or difficulties were encountered.

CFO Mike Vanic ended the report by sharing the year-to-date Statement of Operations from December 31, 2024. We are currently tracking ahead of budget at the end of Q1.

### **Board Engagement Discussion - GSUSA's Strategic Plan**

Kim Fraites-Dow explained that this topic was covered at the recent Winter Delegate Council Meeting and thanked the eleven Board members who attended. She shared GSUSA's overarching strategic objective ("more girls and families choose Girl Scouts") and the four supporting strategic objectives (increased diversity; principles of belonging and engaging; widely understood value proposition; financial stability). She also reviewed examples of the current state and the future state for each of the supporting objectives.

Since GSUSA's strategic plan informs and influences GSEP's strategic planning process, she then asked the Board to consider how our local communities view Girl Scouting and how GSEP can impact our region. The Board broke into small groups to discuss further. The groups focused on discussing GSEP's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

Our strengths include our long history, committed volunteers, brand recognition, and our strong reputation. Weaknesses include being better known most for the Cookie Program, lack of awareness/weak perception of highest awards, older girl programming and our mission, our local size because different areas have unique needs, and evolving family structures and commitments and other activities that may limit participation. Opportunities include the success of CAGB and how we can expand that program, creating stronger messaging and messages (social media, grass roots, etc.) regarding our mission, and assisting volunteers with more collaborative opportunities. Threats include Scouting America and the myriad other extracurriculars available, reliance on very busy moms to volunteer, and the lack of diverse funding sources.

### **Board Chair's Remarks**

Nicole LeVine thanked Board Chair Nicole LeVine congratulated Loraine Ballard Morrill on being inducted into the Broadcasters Hall of Fame and Stephanie Kosta on being recognized as one of the City & State's Impact Award winners.

She also thanked Kathy Killian for arranging the Cookie Mega-Drop at Citizens Bank Park; Crystal Ashby, Kathy Killian, and Judy Freyer for volunteering as Mentors for a Day for Calling All Girl Bosses; Anne Baum for being the cookie media spokesperson on WFMZ during Kickoff; and Crystal and Kathy for attending TTL-Philadelphia's Cookies & Cocktails event.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:33 a.m.