

MINUTES OF THE GIRL SCOUTS OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS (GSNI)

ANNUAL MEETING

April 29, 2023

Call to Order

The yearly meeting of the Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois (GSNI) membership was held on Saturday, April 29, 2023. The meeting convened at 9:12 a.m., Board Chair, Dana Vierck, presiding.

In Attendance

Members of Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois and visitors. Karen Layng, Girl Scouts of the USA's National Board President, was introduced as a guest speaker.

Pledge of Allegiance and GS Promise

Kaitlin Liu, Associate Board Member, called attendees to attention, and asked that everyone recite the Pledge of Allegiance and the Girl Scout Promise.

Land Acknowledgement

GSNI Board Member, Ramona "Monie" Burns, presented GSNI's Land Acknowledgement.

The Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois acknowledges that our Camps and Resource Centers are located on the ancestral lands of many Native Nations including the Fox & Sauk, Meskwaki, Peoria, Kickapoo, Ho-chunk, and the Potawatomi.

GSNI is dedicated to the preservation of traditional lands. We seek to support Native American heritage by paying our respects to Indigenous peoples and are committed to honor their connection and care for the Land.

Introductions and Welcome

Board Chair, Dana Vierck, welcomed attendees to the 2023 Annual Meeting and introduced GSNI CEO, Kari Rockwell, First Vice-Chair, Michael Campbell, Second Vice-Chair, Jennifer Archer, and Treasurer, Scott McCleary. The purpose of the Annual Meeting is to reflect on fiscal year 2022, elect our council board members, and update GSNI's bylaws.

2021 Community Partnership Awards

The board of directors established Community Partnership Awards to recognize businesses or organizations that have significantly supported GSNI to better serve our Girl Scouts and volunteers. The following partners were in attendance. A full list of Community Partners was included in the recognition program.

- Crown and Cross Lutheran Church
- Kane County Sheriff's Department
- Thompson Pipe Group
- Wesley United Methodist Church

Teller's Report

Dana Vierck presented the Teller's Report and noted that according to our bylaws, a quorum must be present to conduct business. Our council has a "one member, one vote" governance system, meaning that all Girl Scout members 14 years of age and older are voting members of the council.

A quorum for the Annual Meeting is 75 members in attendance. There were 161 voting members in attendance at the meeting to establish a quorum. The Teller's Report was approved by consensus.

Dana Vierck noted that an updated agenda was included in the folder members received at check-in. The meeting was conducted following *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*.

FY2020 Annual Meeting Minutes

Dana Vierck stated that included in the white folder distributed to voting members is a copy of the minutes from GSNI's 2022 Annual Meeting for approval.

MOTION: Scott McCleary moved to approve the FY2022 Annual Meeting Minutes as presented. Jennifer Archer seconded. Members were asked to raise their hand to cast their vote. 161 Yes votes were cast. **Motion Carried.**

Board Development Committee Report

The Board Chair introduced Michael Campbell, First Vice-Chair and Chair of the Board Development Committee. He reported that the responsibility of the Board Development Committee is to identify and build relationships with potential board members and committee members. Information on each of the nominees presented was included in the white folders provided to the members.

Michael Campbell presented the slate for the Board of Directors.

Board Officer Nominee – Remaining 1-year of a 3-year term expiring in spring 2024

Ramona "Monie" Burns - Secretary

Director-at-Large Nominee – 3-year term expiring in spring 2026

Elizabeth Boyd

MOTION: The Board Development Committee presented for approval nominations for election to the GSNI Board of Directors. No second is required. Our bylaws allow for a 2/3rds vote by affirmation. Members were asked to raise their hand to cast their vote. 161 yes votes were cast. **MOTION CARRIED**

The slate for the Board Development Committee for the remaining 2-years of a 3-year term expiring spring 2025 was presented.

Vicki Kolbacher

Angie Schmidt

Lois Wollney

MOTION: The Board Development Committee presented for approval nominations for the GSNI Board Development Committee. No second is required. Our bylaws allow for a 2/3rds vote by affirmation. Members were asked to raise their hand to cast their vote. 161 yes votes were cast. **MOTION CARRIED**

Board appointed Associate Directors were announced. They will serve a 1-year term expiring Spring 2024.

Anna Bower
Myah Loria

Investiture and Rededication

Michael Campbell noted that the Investiture and Rededication part of the meeting is meaningful and reminds us how important it is to model our values and ideals to today's Girl Scouts and recommit our efforts to provide opportunities for them to develop leadership skills. Michael asked all newly elected Board members and continuing Board members, all Associate Directors, and Board Development Committee members to participate in the ceremony.

Dana Vierck congratulated the newly elected members of the GSNI Board, and the newly elected committee members. She also thanked the outgoing board members, Dana Crosby, Karin Podolski, and Angie Schmidt.

Bylaws Amendments

Scott McCleary presented the proposed bylaws amendments to the members as noticed to membership in the Call to Meeting. The amendment with corresponding rationale is listed below:

Article VIII-Meetings, Board of Directors, Section 1. Composition, Paragraph B

The Board of Directors is proposing to reduce the size from 21 adult members to 15. Currently the Board has 11 adult members, and it has been a task to find people to fill periodic vacancies let alone to fill all 21 positions. Reducing the size to 15 will leave 4 vacancies which the Board feels will be reasonable to fill in the next 12 to 18 months.

Motion: Scott McCleary moved to adopt the proposed bylaw amendments as presented. Michael Campbell seconded. Our bylaws allow for a 2/3rds vote by affirmation. Members were asked to raise their hand to cast their vote. 161 yes votes were cast. **MOTION CARRIED**

Status of the Council

The Board Chair, Dana Vierck, and GSNI CEO, Kari Rockwell, gave the report on the status of the council. Dana shared that we typically talk about the State of the Council by looking back at the past fiscal year October 2021 to September 2022. The Status of the Council report included the following areas:

Change in Leadership

During this time period, GSNI had a change in leadership. On August 1, 2022, Dr. Kari Rockwell became GSNI's third CEO. Kari came to GSNI with decades of education leadership as a former Superintendent of Schools. Growing up, Kari found her favorite place and activity to be Girl Scouts—she loved going to Girl Scout camp, especially any session with horses!

Camp Improvements

The New Horizons High Ropes course opened at Camp McCormick in May 2022. This course was made possible with funding from the sale of Camp Far Horizons.

Girl Scouts working on their Bronze, Silver, and Gold Awards, are now encouraged to complete their highest

awards at our camps. This led to the addition of a number of projects at our camps including:

- A sling shot range, tomahawk throwing range, and Monarch way station for butterflies at Camp McCormick.
- A slingshot range at Camp Dean.
- New trails at Mary Ann Beebe Center.

Additional camp projects included:

- An Air Rifle Range at Camp Dean was built thanks to the efforts of the camp's Counselors-in-Training Class of 2022.
- Mary Ann Beebe Center received a new slingshot range.
- The Michael Guy family gave unparalleled donations of labor at Mary Ann Beebe Center, which included updates to the Screen Pavilion and nearby latrine, installing a concrete pad under the Bunny Shelter, and removing the deck from the zipline tower.

After two years of offering only family camping, our traditional summer camp programs at Camp Dean and Camp McCormick returned. Six weeks of camp, including overnight camps, day camps, troop camps, and family camps, were held in the summer of 2022. In total, 598 campers attended summer camp programs.

Camp Dean celebrated its 75th Anniversary with a dedication of Charlie's Lodge in honor of long-time Girl Scout employee Charlie Qualls' retirement in March of 2023.

Membership Report

GSNI saw an improvement in both girl and adult membership during the 2022 Membership Year. GSNI's Recruitment Team created a saturation strategy for the 2021-22 year to reach the premium number of potential Girl Scouts and their families through in-person events for fall recruitment.

Connecting with families of kindergarteners and first graders was the priority for the recruitment team's winter push. Along with in-person events, virtual "pop-ins" were held. These provided online activities to keep families active while troops were forming. A "Get Going with Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois" Facebook group was also created and provided an opportunity for non-Girl Scout families to learn about becoming involved with Girl Scouts.

The Recruitment Team's biggest success was the unveiling of Unicorn Parties. Each party taught the Girl Scout Promise and Law, and every participant received a unique unicorn headband. Over 80 parties were held across northern Illinois. These allowed for new troops to start in the spring and over the summer.

Community Programs

The Community Programs teams strived to engage and support current and potential Girl Scouts and their families by offering increased access to participation, particularly in communities historically underserved by Girl Scouts. After COVID-related challenges the previous year, programming rebounded substantially in 2022 membership year, with new program partners coming on board as well as the return to past program locations. Overall, 1,050 Girl Scouts participated through staff-led and staff-supported troops, including programs led by GSNI's AmeriCorps members in Aurora, DeKalb, Elgin, Hanover Park and Streamwood, staff-led Project Opportunity troops in Rockford, and staff-supported troops focused on the Hispanic communities in Elgin and Aurora. This is up 660 girls over the 2021 membership year.

Fall Product & Girl Scout Cookie Programs

Goals were exceeded in our 2021-22 Fall Product Program over last year, even though there were less Girl Scouts participating in the program. GSNI realized an 11% increase over the 2021 Fall Product Program.

The Girl Scout Cookie Program was beset with challenges. Our cookie baker experienced production and labor issues that impacted the availability of some cookie varieties. GSNI's Product Program team worked hard to overcome these obstacles and offered a multi-modal cookie program. This led to a 12% increase over the 2021 Cookie Program.

Action Teams

Action Teams and Task Forces, formed during the Appreciative Inquiry process conducted in the 2020-2021 membership year, continued to evolve and take action to help GSNI grow. Some significant actions include:

- The Older Girl Action Team developed a Cadette Recruitment flier with input from current Cadettes. Ten service units provided fifth grade retention events with support from current Cadettes. A Troop Directory was created for Cadette, Senior, and Ambassador troops to provide an easy method for older girls and their troops to connect with one another.
- The Older Girl Action Team and the Communications and Brand Awareness Action Teams have joined together to make a bigger impact at GSNI.
- The Hiring for Diversity Action Team reviewed and updated the processes and documents used for recruiting new staff to increase the number of diverse candidates received for open positions within GSNI. The team then refreshed its focus to include incorporating the diversity work being done to the entire employee experience, not just hiring.
- The Community Engagement Action Team focused on building and expanding relationships with religious leaders and houses of worship. They have developed a "road map" for building and supporting faith partnerships and increasing awareness of religious awards and recognition.

In 2023, the following task forces and action teams combined to make GSNI's Belonging Group:

- Native American Task Force
- LGBTQ+ Task Force
- Latina Engagement Task Force
- Engaging Black Families Task Force
- Recruitment Action Team
- Community Engagement Action Team

GSNI Volunteers

GSNI volunteers experienced more normalcy in 2022 than they had in the past three years when it came to volunteer resources and support.

- In-person First Aid and CPR classes were offered once again, and 85 volunteers renewed or became certified.
- A new volunteer onboarding process was developed, and implementation began in July 2022.
- GSNI now provides First Year Volunteer Toolkit webinars once a month and new Volunteer Resource Office Hours twice a month. Office hours began in August of 2022 with 25 volunteers jumping on to ask questions during the first two months of the new format.

Resource Centers

The Resource Center team came back strong after the pandemic with a successful 2022 membership year.

They returned to camp for a full season of Trading Post, took the Travel Store to various council-wide events, and collaborated with several service units and communities for regional events. Online sales saw continued growth with GSNI shipping orders worldwide. In-person sales also increased during 2022 as more volunteers and families were shopping in-person again.

GSNI's Highest Awards

GSNI was proud to honor 107 Bronze Award Girl Scouts, 60 Silver Award Girl Scouts, and 10 Gold Award Girl Scouts in the 2022 membership year. All combined, GSNI Girl Scouts contributed over 6,000 hours of taking action in their communities in one year.

One of our Gold Award Girl Scouts, Amelia Humphrey, was awarded a \$2,005 national scholarship from GSUSA. Emily's project brought awareness to her community about the environmental impact of disposing of non-biodegradable school supplies in the trash.

Over the Edge

GSNI's final Over the Edge 4 Girl Scouts fundraising event was held in June 2022 at Supply Core in Rockford. GSNI is grateful to Supply Core for the use of their facilities, their volunteerism, and financial support of this event. GSNI also appreciates all the Over the Edge rappellers who demonstrated courage by both rappelling and fundraising to ensure current and potential Girl Scouts can enjoy increased access to participation in Girl Scouts.

Facing Challenges

Two major challenges facing our council and strong focus areas in Membership Year 2023 are communications and inclusivity.

GSNI has worked to improve communications by engaging with Rallyhood, a one-stop tool providing messaging, photo storage and sharing, file storage and sharing, calendaring, and online payments. Numerous Service Units and Troop Leaders have already joined Rallyhood.

The first step in prioritizing inclusivity across our council was to appoint GSNI employee Kris Trusk as Chief Belonging and Brand Officer. In this new position, Kris is working with multiple action teams and task forces to purposefully create and ensure GSNI properties, programs, recruiting, and retention are distinctly focused on providing a place of Belonging for all Girl Scouts.

Belonging Statement

Associate Board Member Nadia Shaaban was invited to come forward and read GSNI's Belonging Statement:

Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois draws inspiration from our Girl Scout Promise and Law in our Belonging Statement. Being a member of Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois means you are part of a community of diverse races, ethnicities, gender identities, sexual orientations, abilities, and religions. We commit to providing an equitable and accessible Girl Scout Leadership Experience to all Girl Scouts in our council. We are champions for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access.

These are our promises to you:

- We will listen and seek to understand from **diverse voices and experiences**. We will act on what we have learned.

- We will offer a **culture of welcoming and belonging** to all members, potential members, and community partners of Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois.
- We will provide **brave and safe spaces** for Girl Scouts to participate with us. Members can expect to be themselves in a secure and respectful environment.
- We will incorporate **the principles of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility** at all levels of our movement.
- We believe every member (youth and adult) of Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois should have **respect and acceptance** in our organization.
- We commit to a journey of being an **anti-racist and anti-oppressive** organization.
- We **welcome** you to join us in our movement and mission.

You belong here.

Treasurer's Report

The Board Treasurer, Scott McCleary, reviewed the financial report of the 2022 fiscal year, which ended September 30, 2022. He reported that for our FY2022 Financial Audit, GSNI received another clean opinion this year. This means that our auditors believe our financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois, and the changes in net assets and cash flows.

Statement of Financial Position FY '22 & '21

The GSNI Statement of Financial Position, also referred to as our balance sheet, provides a snapshot of the health of the council. When comparing FY2022 to FY2021, our total assets changed by 1.2 million from one year to the next. Our Current Liabilities for FY2022 are about half compared to FY2021 because in FY21 our current liabilities included a PPP loan which was forgiven and converted into a grant. No PPP loan was included in our FY2022 activities.

Breakdown of Income and Expense FY '22

In FY2022, 48% of our income was from our Product Programs, that includes Cookies and Fall Product sales; and only 3% of our income was from Program Fees. The biggest change to our income was under "Other" as it was 37% of our income. Included under Other Income are asset sales of wetland credits and the sale of Camp Far Horizons. Our expenses in FY2022 were consistent with our FY2021 expenses.

Statement of Activity for FY '22 and '21

In total we received over \$8 million in income and had \$6.3 million of expenses so we ended the year with a surplus of over \$1.7 million, which is a significant improvement over the previous year. It is important to note, however, that if we had not received income of \$2.7 million from asset sales, we would have had a deficit budget of around \$1.5 million.

Adjournment

Dana Vierck asked for a motion from the floor to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION: Scott McCleary moved to adjourn the Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois Annual Meeting. Jennifer Archer seconded. 161 votes were cast. **MOTION CARRIED**

The meeting adjourned at 10:11 a.m.

Ramona "Monie" Burns, Board Secretary