

## **MINUTES OF THE GIRL SCOUTS OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS (GSNI)**

### **ANNUAL MEETING**

**April 27, 2024**

#### ***Call to Order***

The yearly meeting of the Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois (GSNI) membership was held on Saturday, April 27, 2024. The meeting convened at 9:08 a.m., Board Chair, Dana Vierck, presiding.

#### ***In Attendance***

Members of Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois and visitors. State Senator Chistina Castro was introduced as a guest speaker.

#### ***Pledge of Allegiance and GS Promise***

Anna Bower, 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 2024 Annual Meeting and introduced GSNI CEO, Kari Rockwell, First Vice-Chair, Jennifer Archer, Second Vice-Chair, Jessica Hirsch, Treasurer, Scott McCleary, and Secretary, Monie Burns. The purpose of the Annual Meeting is to reflect on fiscal year 2023 and elect our council board members.

#### ***2023 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.

- Sycamore United Methodist Church
- Geneva Public Library

### ***Teller's Report***

Dana Vierck informed the attendees 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 183 voting members in attendance at the meeting to establish a quorum. The Teller's Report was approved by consensus.

Dana Vierck noted that the meeting agenda is available by using a shared QR code. The meeting was conducted following *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*.

### ***FY2023 Annual Meeting Minutes***

Dana Vierck stated that using the QR code, a copy of the minutes from GSNI's 2023 Annual Meeting could be found for approval.

**MOTION:** Scott McCleary moved to approve the FY2023 Annual Meeting Minutes as presented. Jennifer Archer seconded. Members were asked to raise their hand to cast their vote. 183 Yes votes were cast. **Motion Carried.**

### ***Board Development Committee Report***

The Board Chair introduced Jessica Hirsch, Second Vice-Chair and Chair of the Board Development Committee. She 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 folders provided to the members.

Jessica Hirsch presented the slate for the Board of Directors.

#### Board Officer Nominees - 3-year term expiring in spring 2027

Dana Vierck, Board Chair  
Jennifer Archer, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-Chair  
Ramona Burns, Secretary  
Scott McCleary, Treasurer

#### Director-at-Large Nominees - 3-year term expiring in spring 2027

Mark Barckley  
Kelly Erboe  
Mel Margason  
Diane Saber  
Kay Flavin

**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. 183 yes votes were cast. **MOTION CARRIED**

Dana Vierck presented the nominee for the Board Development Committee Chair for a 1-year term expiring spring of 2025.

Jessica Hirsch

The slate for the Board Development Committee to serve a 3-year term, expiring spring of 2027 was presented.

Jennifer Archer  
Sandra Gonzalez-Adamski

**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. 183 yes votes were cast. **MOTION CARRIED**

Board appointed Associate Directors were announced. They will serve a 1-year term expiring spring 2025.

Anna Bower  
Myah Loria  
Quinn Blevins

### ***Investiture and Rededication***

Dana Vierck 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. Dana 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.

### ***State of the Council***

The Board Chair, Dana Vierck, and GSNI CEO, Kari Rockwell, gave the report on the state of the council. Dana shared that we typically talk about the State of the Council by looking back at the past fiscal year October 2022 to September 2023. The State of the Council report included the following areas:

#### **Camp Improvements**

Many successful grants, private donations, and gift-in-kind donations made it possible to improve GSNI's three camp properties, including much-needed metal roofs for multiple buildings. Additional improvements included:

- A new Adventure Walk was created at Mary Ann Beebe Center to replace the previous Low Ropes Course.
- A space was cultivated for a new Yurt Unit at Camp McCormick.
- Camp Dean expanded its current solar panel array to cover two additional lodges near the pond, further offsetting the utilities cost of camp and using renewable energy.

A celebration for Mary Ann Beebe Center's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary was hosted in September. Girl Scouts, families, volunteers, former and current campers, and community members were invited to go hiking, participate in activities, and enjoy refreshments at the event

#### **Membership Report**

GSNI's Recruitment Team invited new individuals to join the Girl Scout Movement through a national membership program. The team focused on potential Girl Scouts in kindergarten through third grade, especially in communities where GSNI already had a strong presence.

Through GSNI's three phases of recruitment, the team provided resources for back-to-school nights, community events, parades, school activities, and trunk-or-treat gatherings throughout the fall recruitment season.

In May 2023, GSNI applied and was one of fourteen Girl Scout councils chosen across the country to participate in a national pilot program for new Daisy level leaders. New Daisy troop leaders in participating pilot councils received a monthly supply box filled with step-by-step instructions and ready-to-go supplies to help deliver first year Daisy troop meetings. This complimentary resource started in Fall 2023, followed the Daisy First Year Troop Plan, and was shipped directly to new troop leaders.

### Community Programs

GSNI's Community Programs Team strived to make Girl Scouts accessible to diverse populations across northern Illinois, particularly in communities historically underserved by Girl Scouts. Programming continued to grow in Membership Year 2023, with 1,070 young people participating through staff-led and staff-supported troops. This included programs led by AmeriCorps members in Aurora, 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. Troops completed badge work on topics like mental health and wellness, using GSUSA's Resilient. Ready. Strong. Program, financial literacy, space science, and more.

### Fall Product & Girl Scout Cookie Programs

GSNI Girl Scouts participated in the 2022-23 Fall Product Program by selling nuts, candy, and magazine subscriptions. Through participation in product programs, these Girl Scouts practiced and honed their life skills, including goal setting, decision making, money management, people skills, and business ethics. Girl Scouts also collected donations locally for 8,550 cans of honey roasted peanuts which were donated to active military and veterans.

The 2022–23 Cookie Program faced several challenges for GSNI Girl Scouts, parents, and volunteers. The Digital Cookie platform was not available for customers to place shipped orders until the end of February. Even with this challenge, GSNI was able to offer a multi-modal cookie program. The Digital Cookie platform provided the opportunity for Girl Scouts to learn more about e-commerce and running a business in today's world, as well as earn entrepreneurial badges. Additionally, GSNI Girl Scouts distributed almost 40,000 packages of donated cookies to first responders, essential workers, community organizations, and military and veteran organizations through the Gift of Caring initiative.

### GSNI Belonging

GSNI's multicultural action teams and task forces came together in Spring 2023. Our Community Engagement, Engaging Black Families, Hispanic Engagement, LGBTQ+, Native American, and Recruitment teams started meeting together to share resources and ideas. The group also joined together to write our Belonging Statement, which establishes expectations for current and potential members and community members to be welcomed by GSNI.

### GSNI Volunteers

In 2022-23, the Member Support Team made a commitment to streamline processes to help volunteers. The team simplified the Service Unit Planning Packet, the Year-end Financial Report process, and with other departments began development on the GSNI Volunteer Policies Guide. A centralized Service Team Kick-off Event was offered at Camp Dean to share council information and to provide our Service Team members the opportunity to network with one another.

### Resource Centers

The biggest update to our Resource Centers in FY23 was the addition of a Build-A-Bear Workshop inside our South Elgin location. GSNI hosted a Grand Opening event for Build-A-Bear on September 23, 2023.

This new partnership offers the signature Build-A-Bear Make-Your-Own experience, with an assortment of furry friends that appeal to kids and adults alike. With the help of a trained GSNI associate, each guest chooses a furry friend, stuffs it, and participates in the signature heart ceremony.

### GSNI's Highest Awards

GSNI was proud to honor 17 Bronze Award Girl Scouts, 11 Silver Award Girl Scouts, and 10 Gold Award Girl Scouts in the 2022-2023 membership year. All combined, GSNI Girl Scouts contributed over 1,690 hours of taking action in their communities in one year.

One of our Gold Award Girl Scouts, Sara Rothenbaum, was awarded the \$10,000 GSUSA Gold Girl Scout Scholarship. Sara's project brought awareness and sparked motivation in her community about the importance of reducing plastic usage.

### ***Treasurer's Report***

The Board Treasurer, Scott McCleary, reviewed the financial report for the 2023 fiscal year, which ended September 30, 2023. He reported that for our FY2023 Financial Audit, GSNI received another clean opinion. 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 '23 & '22

The GSNI Statement of Financial Position, also referred to as our balance sheet, provides a snapshot of the health of the council. When comparing FY2023 to FY2022, our total assets changed by 1.2 million from one year to the next. Our Current Assets increased by \$580,000 in FY2023 which is attributed to the gain on our investments for last year. Our Non-current Assets increased by \$630,000 over FY2022 which reflects the value of the operating right of use of our leases that are now required to be included on our balance sheet. Our Current Liabilities for FY2023 are about double compared to FY2022 because in FY2023 we are now required to show the long-term operating lease liability for the value of our leases.

#### Breakdown of Income and Expense FY '23

In FY2023, 56% of our income was from our Product Programs, that includes Cookies and Fall Product sales, 27% of our income was from Other which includes asset sales, and 10% of our income was from Public Support. Our expenses in FY2023 were consistent with our FY2022 expenses.

#### Statement of Activity for FY '23 and '22

In total we received over \$6.88 million in income and had \$6.43 million in expenses, so we ended the year with a surplus of approximately \$446,000. While still a surplus amount, it is less than the previous year. It is important to note that if we had not received income of \$1.8 million from asset sales, we would have had a deficit budget of around \$1 million.

### ***Adjournment***

Dana Vierck asked Associate Board Member, Myah Loria, to 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.**

Dana shared that Fiona Cummings, former GSNI CEO, has donated funds to GSNI that are being used for the creation of a Belonging Award. The award was created by a belonging team sub-committee and detailed award information will be available in June 2024.

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. 183 votes were cast. **MOTION CARRIED**

The meeting adjourned at 9:57 a.m.

Ramona "Monie" Burns, Board Secretary