



Board of Directors of GSHPA statement on Camp Furnace Hills, August 18, 2017

On August 17, 2017, the Board of Directors of the Girl Scouts in the Heart of Pennsylvania (GSHPA) voted on the future use of Camp Furnace Hills, a camp owned by GSHPA and located in Denver, Pennsylvania. Specifically, the Board unanimously voted to:

- Retain ten acres of the camp located to the east of Girl Scout Road, to be used for outdoor experiences, including day camp and the continued offering of the Foxfire program.
- Develop a master plan to clean-up, repair, renovate and invest in the retained ten acres to enable the revised footprint to successfully support enhanced outdoor experiences.

The Board of Director's vote was mandated by GSHPA's insurance provider following significant storm damage to the property incurred in February 2017; and was informed by the research and assessment work conducted by the Long-Range Property and Program Planning Committee.

Camping remains one of the most distinctive Girl Scout experiences and GSHPA appreciates the deep ties that Girl Scouts and volunteers have to Camp Furnace Hills. A safe outdoor experience will continue to play a key role in GSHPA efforts to help today's girls become tomorrow's leaders. The best interests of the all of the girls in the council continue to guide GSHPA efforts.

GSHPA has an opportunity and obligation to allocate resources so that they best serve all girls in the council membership. Camp is an important program offering but not the only program of interest as girls communicated through a membership survey and focus groups. GSHPA remains committed to the outdoor experience while balancing upkeep and operating costs of camps with diminished utilization rates, the demand for innovative new programs and the resources required to better support adults as troop leaders and volunteers.

The role of the Long-Range Property and Program Planning Committee is to implement a transparent assessment process that recommends a sustainable investment in GSHPA's outdoor programs and properties for future use. Extensive public comment has been invited from girls, adult members and volunteers related to the LRPPPC's evaluation of all properties and programs offered by GSHPA.

Background on the storm's impact to CFH

On Saturday, February 25, 2017, Lancaster County experienced two storm systems with recorded wind speeds ranging between 75-90 miles per hour causing an estimated \$7 million dollars in damage throughout Lancaster County. Camp Furnace Hills, owned by Girl Scouts in the Heart of PA and located in Denver, Pennsylvania sustained significant damage from these storms. As a result of this incident, the property was closed for safety reasons and, since that time, GSHPA has worked with its insurance adjustor to assess the damage and determine next steps.

Background on the Long-Range Property and Program Planning Committee (LRPPPC) process

In 2016 and with a new CEO at the helm, the status of the seven camps in the GSHPA footprint became a priority for careful review. The GSHPA board authorized a volunteer committee made up of 15 community experts, volunteers and board members to conduct a thorough and council-wide analysis of outdoor programs and properties.

This is part of our long-range planning initiative to strengthen the mission of Girl Scouts and develop a girl-focused blueprint to meet the program needs of today's and tomorrow's girls. In addition to the review of financial considerations, it was important to collect feedback from girls in order to develop a girl-focused blueprint for the future. The LRPPPC has taken a thoughtful approach to ensure that recommendations will position the council to provide girls, leaders and families with an optimal Girl Scout experience going forward. The committee utilized a variety of research methods including surveys, focus groups and town hall meetings to collect feedback from girls, volunteers and families. All participants were invited randomly and self-selected. The committee also benefited from outside research and planning expertise, online webinars and other relevant data collection points.

Members of the LRPPPC and GSHPA staff have been dedicated to a transparent and girl-focused process. GSHPA has sought to communicate regularly with members, solicit their input throughout the process, and explore all options that keep girls interested and active in scouting. The Committee currently is forming their recommendations related to all properties and programs operated by the council, based on member input and extensive research conducted, to present for GSHPA board decision on November 2, 2017.