



**Girl Scouts in the Heart of Pennsylvania**  
**16<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting**  
**April 19, 2023**

The 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of Girl Scouts in the Heart of Pennsylvania (GSHPA) Council was held virtually and broadcast from the Council Headquarters at 350 Hale Avenue, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, online as a Hopin webinar on Wednesday, April 19, 2023.

Meeting called to order at 7:05 PM

Quorum announced at 7:15 PM

**Present:**

*Board of Directors Members:* Adrienne Vicari, Jeshanah Fox, Elizabeth Dilullo Brown, Tena Maurer, Ami Zumkhawala-Cook, Barbara Green, Kathryn McCorkle, Daren Russ, Gina Suydam, Renee Montgomery, Deborah Vereen, and Jayne Huston.

*Absent/Excused\*:* Daniel Sheaffer\*, Judith Windom\*, and Alison Bernhardt\*.

*Delegates in attendance:* 40 delegates

Adrienne Vicari, GSHPA Board Chair, opened the virtual meeting and welcomed the attendees to the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of GSHPA. She reviewed the Hopin platform to inform attendees of the features used to vote or ask a question during the meeting. Staff shared a video of the Girl Scout flag ceremony conducted by Girl Scouts from Troops 71152 and 71266. Meeting attendees recited the Girl Scout Promise.

Adrienne Vicari acknowledged all current GSHPA Board members and the troop and service unit level volunteers for their service and commitment to the mission of Girl Scouts. She thanked the GSHPA staff members for their behind-the-scenes work to ensure this meeting was a success and the national and service unit delegates for their participation.

**GSHPA Financial Report – Barbara Green, Board Treasurer**

Barbara Green presented the financial results for the fiscal year from October 1, 2021–September 30, 2022. GSHPA engaged an independent accounting firm to perform an audit of financial statements, and after the audit was completed, staff would post the 2021 Form 990 to [gshpa.org](http://gshpa.org).

There were several items of note in the review of the finances through the past fiscal year, October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022. GSHPA girls generated \$9.8 million in product revenue against \$8 million in the prior year.

Fundraising efforts generated \$1.3 million in contributions during this time, which increased from \$774,000 compared to the previous year.

GSHPA continued to reconnect with past donors and established new relationships with individuals, businesses, and community foundations to grow and diversify revenue sources.

During the current membership year, the Council extended almost \$89,000 in Financial Assistance to 1,067 members throughout the year. GSHPA also awarded \$41,638 in GO!Dough to 1,059 girls as product program rewards and early bird renewal incentives, which, in turn, would encourage the girls to continue engaging in more Girl Scout activities and programming as they develop through the entire Girl Scout Leadership Experience.

The PPP Loan application was approved for full forgiveness by the Small Business Administration.

Lastly, while there had been a turn in the investment markets in recent months, our conservative and long-term investment strategy continued to allow our Council to maintain a healthy operating reserve to protect the organization in difficult economic times.

### **Volunteer Honors – Gina Suydam, Board of Directors Member-at-Large and Volunteer Strategy Committee Chair**

Gina Suydam noted the importance of honoring and recognizing all of our dedicated volunteers who bring Girl Scouts to life for so many. A long-standing tradition dating back to the beginning of Girl Scouts, Volunteer Awards acknowledge peer-nominated volunteers to receive honors for their outstanding dedication and service to Girl Scouts.

There were 84 volunteers nominated to receive a Volunteer Appreciation Award. The Volunteers Awards Selection Committee was thanked for reviewing nominations. Now that the annual meeting had returned to April, which is also Volunteer Appreciation Month, it was important for there to be an opportunity for award winners to be notified in April and May locally by the individuals who made their nominations. A formal announcement would be made at the annual council gathering in October to further recognize these volunteers for their service.

Gina Suydam thanked all of the dedicated volunteers.

### **Strategic Plan Report – Daren Russ, Board of Directors Member at Large and Strategic Planning Committee Chair**

Daren Russ shared the updates on the 2023-2026 strategic plan, designed to build back and make GSHPA stronger coming out of the pandemic. From April to August, 2022, Girl Scouts in the Heart of Pennsylvania partnered with Crescent Leadership to develop a council-wide, multi-year, evolving strategy. The intent was to create a plan to guide the council into the future.

One of the first things that Crescent Leadership did was to go on a listening tour of our council and hold focus groups for our members so that their ideas would be woven into the fabric of the strategic plan. They offered five in-person focus groups and four virtual focus groups. All of this information gathered from focus groups and research was then used to draft a strategic

plan, which went through several revisions by our Board of Directors and leadership team until it was approved by our Board of Directors in August of 2022.

The vision was to be the preeminent girl leadership organization in central and northeast Pennsylvania where every girl has a supported place to discover her unique path.

The guiding principles of the plan were: mission focused, fun-infused, ethically driven, engaged leadership, and a resilient council.

Three focus areas were established with four strategies for each.

The first focus area was to deliver an inclusive, distinctive, full life-cycle experience for girls. This included strategies that would offer a variety of council and partner programming across the footprint, empower girl members to be long-term Girl Scout advocates, cultivate partnerships that would allow us to expand into new markets, and explore new program delivery models that enable girls to continue their experience with Girl Scouts.

The second focus area was to expand pathways to engage volunteers in a variety of high-quality experiences, and included strategies to help with volunteer recruitment, training and support, effective communication, and volunteer recognition.

The third focus area was to align the Girl Scout brand experience and awareness with our brand promise, and included strategies to show our communities the impact of Girl Scouting, enhance awareness of our highest awards programs, showcase successful Girl Scout alumnae, and ensure that the four pillar Girl Scout Leadership Experience was the standard for every girl's experience.

The Foundational Elements were a big focus area for the first year to make sure we created and maintained a strong and resilient Girl Scout council.

The first element of a strong foundation for GSHPA was to recruit and retain volunteers, staff, and board and committee members who reflect the diversity of the communities served, embody the Girl Scout promise and law, and support every girl in her Girl Scout Leadership Experience.

The second element was to educate and train our staff and volunteers to meet the evolving needs which will in turn maximize the Girl Scout journey for every girl.

The third element was a focus on promoting organizational wellbeing, which included a commitment to using best practices in board governance, finance, fund development, human resources, operations, and public relations in order to maintain and grow a high-performing nonprofit organization.

The leadership team had been hard at work developing tactics with specific measures of success for each of the strategies and foundational elements in the plan. The work of every single department in the organization directly correlated to the strategies outlined in the plan,

so that GSHPA could maintain a laser focus on achieving the vision to better serve our mission of building girls of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place.

### **56<sup>th</sup> Annual Girl Scout National Council Session**

The 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Girl Scout National Council Session (NCS), the Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) triennial business meeting, was slated for July 17-20, 2023 in Orlando, Florida and included voting upon seven proposals. National delegates and alternate delegates were previously elected to represent GSHPA and would attend to actively engage in this governance process.

Three of the GSHPA National Delegates, Brylea Starr, Carol Thornton, and Brandi Yagle, shared information regarding the NCS proposals.

The first proposal was to allow the possibility of virtual attendance for National Council Sessions and for Special Sessions of the National Council. This proposal would build on the 55th NCS which was virtual in 2020 during the peak of the pandemic – the first ever virtual NCS. The proposal would build flexibility into our governing documents by amending the Constitution to allow for, but not require, virtual sessions which reflect a more efficient and agile meeting format.

The second proposal concerned timing of delegate allotment. This proposal would amend the Constitution to simplify the process for councils as they choose National Council delegates. Changing the date on which delegate allocations (calculated using council membership size) are based would allow councils to more efficiently plan for and select their delegates.

The third proposal concerned the formula for delegates. This proposal would create a Constitutional Amendment to help keep the number of delegates as close to 1,500 as possible while ensuring the number of delegates allocated to councils remains proportional to the council's girl membership.

The fourth proposal concerned council representation on the National Board. This proposal would require the composition of the National Board to include three council CEOs. Recognizing implementation complexities including the National Board Development Committee (NBDC) effort required to assess the capabilities, geographic representation, diversity, etc. needed for an effective Board slate and then identifying, cultivating, and screening candidates relative to these requirements, this proposal included a 2026 effective date.

The fifth proposal was a request to amend the Girl Scout Promise and Law. The wording of our Promise and Law is deeply meaningful to Girl Scouts of all ages. This proposal provides the opportunity to debate and decide whether to remove the words “try,” “to,” and “do my best.”

The sixth proposal was a request to amend the Preamble to the GSUSA constitution to insert the word “anti-racist” in the Preamble to the Constitution to the existing language that states, “Girl Scouts advance diversity and pluralism in our Movement and in the communities in which we live.”

The final proposal was to establish a donor restricted Girl Scout Gold Award scholarship fund that invests in the post-high school education of Gold Award Girl Scouts. In response to overwhelming delegate support for Gold Award Girl Scouts voiced during NCS 2020, the National Board had been proactively fundraising to ensure scholarships are available to girls who earned the highest award in Girl Scouting.

The National Delegates noted they were honored to represent GSHPA at the National Council Session and join National Delegates across all 50 states to review and debate these proposals that govern Girl Scouts. Any members who had questions or wanted to provide feedback regarding the proposals were encouraged to complete the National Council Session Proposals Feedback form at [www.gshpa.org](http://www.gshpa.org)

### **Quorum Report – Jeshanah Fox, Board Secretary**

Jeshanah Fox delivered the quorum report at 7:15 PM and noted that the Annual Meeting was being held pursuant to Article 1 of the GSHPA Bylaws. Section 10 of Article 1 states that a quorum is met if at least 25% of the corporation's delegates are present AND a majority of the service units are represented. This year, the total number of delegates was 63, and there were 40 delegates present. Out of the 67 Girl Scout Service Units, 34 were represented. Accordingly, both provisions in the bylaws were met, and there was a quorum.

Since the Annual Meeting last year, the GSHPA Board of Directors held official meetings in person or by conference call on three separate occasions during this consolidated board year as the council transitioned again to spring Annual Meetings. Additionally, the Executive Committee met three times. There was a quorum at all of these board meetings.

At the most recent Board of Directors meeting on February 1, 2023, the Board approved an editorial amendment to the bylaws, which was proposed by the Board Development Committee. Changing the word “election” to “appointment” in Article 5, section 8.A, corrected a clerical error in the document and allowed this section to be consistent with the composition of the Executive Committee as outlined in the bylaws. The updated bylaws were made available on the GSHPA website on the GSHPA Delegates and Governance page.

### **Presentation of GSHPA Board of Directors Board Officers, Members-at-Large, and Board Development Committee Nominations – Kathryn McCorkle, Board Development Committee Chair**

The Board Development Committee, elected by the council delegates, was pleased to announce the following nominations:

- GSHPA Chair for a Second Term
  - Adrienne Vicari, Board of Directors Chair
- GSHPA Vice Chair for a First Term
  - Jayne Huston, Member at Large
- GSHPA Secretary for a First Term

- Alison Bernhardt, Board of Directors Vice Chair
- GSHPA Members-at-Large for a First Term
  - Sara Anne Boddery
  - Kate Dieffenbach Firestine
  - Betsy Keefer, GSHPA Fund Development Committee Chair
  - Amy Beamer Murray, Volunteer Strategy Committee Member
- GSHPA Board Development Committee for a First Term
  - Karen Best, Fund Development Committee Member
- GSHPA Board Development Committee for a Second Term
  - Kathryn McCorkle, Board Development Committee Chair
  - Tena Maurer, Member at Large
  - Daniel Sheaffer, Jr, Member at Large

Adrienne Vicari then asked GSHPA delegates to vote on each nomination as well as the 2022 Annual Meeting minutes.

**Mission Moment – Adrienne Vicari, Board Chair**

Adrienne Vicari shared a mission moment, which highlighted the good work of Girl Scouts throughout the council, while votes were being tabulated.

**Results for the Vote for Approval of Minutes and Presented Slates – Jeshanah Fox, Board Secretary**

Jeshanah Fox thanked the delegates for participating in the Council elections. She shared the Annual Meeting minutes from July 30, 2022 were accepted. She also made the official announcement that the slates of the GSHPA Board of Directors Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Members-at-Large, and GSHPA Board Development Committee passed. Newly elected members received congratulations from Adrienne Vicari and the membership:

- Jayne Huston on her first term as Vice Chair.
- Alison Bernhardt on her first term as Secretary.
- Sara Anne Boddery, Kate Firestine, Betsy Keefer, Amy Beamer Murray on their first terms as Board Members-at-Large.
- Karen Best on her first term and Kathy McCorkle, Tena Maurer, and Daniel Sheaffer, Jr. on their second terms as Board Development Committee members.

Adrienne also noted she was honored to be continuing in her role as Board Chair.

## **CEO Remarks and Report – Janet Donovan, GSHPA President and CEO**

Janet Donovan presented the CEO report to the membership and congratulated the newly elected board members.

She went on to remark on the end of the multi-phased process to return the Annual Meeting to spring in order to ensure that GSHPA National Delegates were elected in a timely fashion and had plenty of time to properly train, process the proposals, and seek feedback from membership. The current National Delegates were well prepared and had already taken part in several training sessions.

Janet then went on to highlight the Women of Distinction event which took place on September 14, 2022 at the York Country Club. The following honorees represented each of the pillars of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience:

- Pamela Gunter-Smith, President of York College, representing STEM
- Kim Lemon, former Senior Anchor for WGAL-8, representing Life Skills
- Betsy Hamm, CEO of Duck Donuts, representing Entrepreneurship
- Shannon Gority, owner and principal consultant for Raindrop to River Consulting, representing Outdoors

The legacy of Marion Nivert was also recognized at the celebration through the Generational Award that honored her as an individual who lived by and shared the values of Girl Scouts with her community and future generations.

She then referenced the purchase of a new building in Hampden Township, in which headquarters would transition into. GSHPA was thrilled to partner with JEM Group, a woman-owned construction firm for the renovations. This new space was slated to also include a museum in which staff and volunteer archivists were working to conceptualize the space.

Janet Donovan then reported that membership numbers were up and thanked the many volunteers who support the mission of Girl Scouting. She then went on to report that last fall GSHPA honored Silver Award recipients in the first council-wide virtual Silver Award ceremony. The Gold Award ceremony was planned for June at Bucknell in which 60 Gold Award recipients would be honored. In addition, three Gold Award recipients would be awarded a scholarship through GSHPA, while one Gold Award recipient would be awarded a scholarship through GSUSA.

Janet then spoke about the importance of the Girl Scout Voices Count Surveys and that the final surveys would be released in May. She thanked everyone who took the time to complete these surveys as they provide valuable feedback.

In conclusion, Janet Donovan took a moment to remember those who we had lost in our Girl Scout family.

### **Concluding Chair Remarks – Adrienne Vicari, Board Chair**

Staff shared a video highlighting the impressive Girl Scout year for GSHPA.

Adrienne Vicari expressed appreciation for all the work by staff in preparation for the Annual Meeting and thanked the delegates, volunteers, and members for their commitment to GSHPA.

The next Annual Meeting would be held on Wednesday, April 17, 2024, at 7:00 PM.

The Annual Meeting closed at 7:47 PM.