

Delegate Council Meeting Overview

Delegate Council Meeting – Spring 2023

March 22, 2023, 7-9 pm

~ in-person @ Shelly Ridge and virtual over Zoom ~

Invited: GSEP Board of Directors, Girl Advisors, Board Development Committee Members, Girl Delegates, Service Unit Delegates & Alternates, 2023 National Council Session (NCS) Delegates & Alternates, and Interested Members

Meeting Opening

Board Chair, Debbie Hassan, opened the Delegate Council Meeting by welcoming all attendees, both those in-person and those on Zoom. A group of Girl Delegates facilitated the opening flag ceremony.

Introductions

Debbie Hassan then recognized the respective cohorts in attendance: Board, Girl Advisors, Board Development Committee (BDC), Service Unit Delegates and Alternates, Girl Delegates, and Interested Members. She also specifically acknowledged the 2023 National Council Session Delegation and thanked them in advance for facilitating the Strategy Café discussions later in the meeting.

Board Development Committee Report

Debbie O'Brien, Chair of the BDC, first reminded the Delegate Council of the responsibilities of the BDC. This Committee is tasked with identifying, cultivating, and recruiting people to become members of the Board of Directors and the Board Development Committee. Debbie O. shared that during the BDC Retreat earlier this year, the Committee analyzed the demographic profile of the current Board members and determined an "ideal state" of the Board to work toward as a goal while pursuing candidates.

Deb Walters, member of the BDC and the Girl Governance Subcommittee, presented an overview of the work of that Subcommittee. They started their tasks in fall, by reviewing and editing the Girl Advisor & Girl Delegate application as well as the scoring rubric. This year for the first time, they held two virtual Help Sessions in early January to assist girls as they completed the online application. The four Subcommittee members individually scored the 58 applications that were submitted, which they reviewed collectively as a group. During their discussion, they also considered geographic representation, race/ethnicity, grade, past governance experience, and any unique life situations. New this year was also the consideration of whether girls had applied previously. The Subcommittee emphasized that serving as a Girl Delegate was not a reward to recognize already high performing girls but rather an opportunity for leadership experience for all girls. The Subcommittee created a suggested slate for the BDC to evaluate and approve.

Debbie O'Brien also offered an overview of the slates being voted on at the upcoming Annual Meeting. Specifically, she shared that due to Debbie Hassan finishing her third and final

term on May 6, a new Board Chair will be on the slate. The Delegate Council will also be voting on four new Board members, new members of the BDC, three new Girl Advisors and 30 Girl Delegates. The Official Notice of the Annual Meeting (with the full slate and bios of each nominee) will be emailed to Delegate Council members on April 6.

National Governance News from Girl Scouts of the United States of America (GSUSA)

Debbie Hassan reported that the GSUSA has a new CEO, Bonnie Barczykowski, who is the former CEO of Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri, another Top Ten Council. GSEP's CEO, Kim Fraites-Dow, shared that she personally knows Bonnie and feels strongly that she will be an incredibly effective leader for our Movement.

Debbie H. recapped the timeline for the upcoming National Council Session. We are currently in the "education season." GSUSA has recently published the seven proposals that will be voted on in July, and the NCS Delegation has been reading, researching, and discussing each proposal as they consider how they should vote. This includes learning from other Councils. Last month, GSEP and three sister Councils hosted an NCS girl-only virtual meet-up, which was co-emceed by one of our own NCS Delegate girl members, Devyn S. Debbie H. explained that the work of the NCS Delegates does not end in July; they will be helping with the implementation of outcomes from Orlando, as well as preparing for the 2026 NCS.

Debbie H. reminded all attendees that tickets for the National Council Session and Phenom (the girl-centric experience immediately following NCS) are still available. She hopes that more members from GSEP will consider attending, since NCS happens only every three years.

Strategy Café

Debbie Hassan introduced the Strategy Café portion of the meeting by offering the plan for this section (introductions of each NCS proposal, small group discussions, and large group report-out). She then turned the podium over to GSEP's NCS Delegation to present each proposal:

- 1) Allowing virtual attendance at National Council meetings and allowing Official Notices to be delivered electronically
- 2) Amend the GS Promise & Law by deleting the word "try" in the Promise and "do my best" in the Law
- 3) Changing the timing of NCS Delegate allotment (i.e., the number of NCS Delegates allotted to each Council will be determined by girl membership two years before NCS, rather than the current year preceding NCS)
- 4) Changing the formula for determining number of NCS Delegates (from the current formula of one Delegate for every 3,500 girls to one Delegate for every 1,000 girls)
- 5) Having at least three Council CEOs serve on the National Board of Directors
- 6) Affirming the creation of a Gold Award Scholarship Fund by including it in the Blue Book
- 7) Adding the words "anti-racism" to the Preamble of GSUSA's Constitution to emphasize that our Movement advances diversity, pluralism and anti-racism

All attendees broke into small groups to discuss the proposals. Each small group was assigned three random proposals and encouraged to talk about any others they were interested in, if there was time.

After twenty minutes, each small group then offered feedback on the respective proposals to the larger group. Debbie H. reminded the attendees that there is no right or wrong way to think about each proposal; the goal of this exercise was to provide the NCS Delegates additional perspectives to consider. After each group shared some thoughts on the proposals, Debbie H. thanked everyone for participating.

Closing

First, Kim Fraites-Dow reminded the participants of the Strategy Café discussions that were held during the Fall Delegate Council meeting last September. The attendees discussed how to enhance and evolve the work of the Delegate Council. She shared a short list of the most practicable and impactful suggestions that the Governance team will work on, including creating an annual work plan (that could include the addition of another Delegate Council meeting to the calendar), working with the Mission Delivery and Marketing & Communications teams to improve communications about governance, instituting “meet the Board” interviews, and creating a Governance patch program.

Before adjournment, Board Chair Debbie Hassan offered a few reminders. She invited everyone to attend the Women’s Leadership Summit on April 16, which is a free event for adult members. She also asked all Delegate Council members to mark May 6 on their calendars, the date of the Annual Meeting. She shared that the Council still has openings for camp staff, so she encouraged attendees to consider applying or to share with their friends and family. Finally, she reminded the participants to share what they heard tonight with their Service Units, troops, and Girl Scout friends and to bring back any additional thoughts and perspectives on the NCS proposals to the Annual Meeting, where GSEP’s NCS Delegation will have a table for further discussion.

Debbie H. adjourned the Spring Delegate Council Meeting at 9:00 p.m.

If you would like to suggest a topic for the Fall 2023 Delegate Meeting, please email governance@gsep.org.