

Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts  
Annual Council Meeting  
June 23, 2021

*Due to the continued COVID-19 Emergency, the meeting was held virtually as a Zoom webinar with voting conducted through on-screen polls.*

**Call to Order**

The annual meeting of the Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts (GSCWM) was called to order at 6:30 PM by Joan Bertrand, President/Board Chair.

**Opening Flag Ceremony**

The opening flag ceremony was presented by Troop 64639 from Easthampton in video form.

**President/Board Chair Report – Joan Bertrand**

The year 2020 was a year that pushed us to new ways of delivering program with volunteer troop leaders employing a variety of methods to keep girls engaged. Unable to meet in person to recognize outstanding volunteers, signs were placed in award recipient yards to let all passing know an amazing Girl Scout volunteer lives in their neighborhood.

We also employed new ways of keeping the business of Girl Scouting strong. The annual meeting was held virtually with voting by proxy, as allowed in the Bylaws, and board of director meetings were also held virtually throughout the year. Committed to maintaining a strong staff, we applied for and received a Payroll Protection Program loan that was 100% forgiven.

Maintenance and capital improvements continued at our camp properties. We appreciate the leadership of Jill Paul and Judy Wise in expanding the Camp Bonnie Brae Endowment Fund.

Looking forward, we have begun work on a strategic plan to focus our work for the next three years. Our focus areas include increased membership, enhancing the volunteer experience, and building a more robust culture of diversity, equity and inclusion.

**CEO Report – Pat Hallberg**

COVID came upon us quickly and our staff members were prepared with laptops and necessary software to move from office to home. Working virtually has pointed out some efficiencies we haven't taken advantage of in the past but we are looking forward to more in-person work in the coming year. Our national organization negotiated an excellent rate with Zoom to make full licenses available at a significantly reduced rate for staff and volunteers.

Troop leaders delivered on-line programs, delivered program materials to girls' doorsteps, did lots of outdoor activities, and helped girls find ways to help their communities. Girl Scout troops provided a sense of normalcy and a place to be with friends.

Despite initial strong membership recruitment results, we finished membership year 2020 with an 8.7% decline in girl membership and 4% decline in adult membership. Girl Scout program was strong with a 7% increase in the cookie sale program and, prior to March 13, successful programs with the Springfield Thunderbirds, the Worcester Railers, and our signature STEM event – Geek is Glam. We also successfully delivered a program for girls and their parents to explore social media. This was the first year of a \$225,000 three-year grant from the Fred Harris Daniels Foundation with GSCWM serving as the lead organization with the YWCA of Worcester and Girls Inc. of Worcester. Unfortunately, we were not able to hold 2020 summer camp programs.

It was important to find a safe and healthy way to recognize Girl Scout Gold and Silver award recipients. Our ceremony outdoors at the Northfield Drive-in Movie Theatre received national recognition with girls masked, social distancing, girls on the big screen and car horns cheering. Each girl also received local media coverage and yard signs acknowledging their accomplishment.

Recent GSUSA research features Girl Scout alumnae who assert Girl Scouts set them on a path for achievement, connecting with something bigger than themselves, and developing their passions and interests.

#### **Neliana Ferraro – Girl Scout Alum/Gold Award Girl Scout**

Neliana provided a keynote address on the topic, “Serving God and Helping Others”. She received her Girl Scout Gold Award in 2012, was a former girl member of the GSCWM Board of Directors, and represented GSCWM at the GSUSA 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in Washington, D.C. Neliana spoke of the many ways the Girl Scout Promise has been a driving force in her life.

#### **Treasurer’s Report – Chris Mendoza, Treasurer**

Chris reported on the fiscal results of operations and announced that the Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts is in good financial standing at the end of fiscal year 2020.

Total Revenues:	\$3.57 Million
Total Expenses:	\$3.63 Million (including depreciation expense of \$232,000)
Total Assets:	\$11.1 Million
Total Liabilities:	\$1.79 Million (including long-term debt of \$1.22 Million)
 Net Assets:	 \$9.33 Million

The audit firm of Stowe & Degon, LLC, provided a clean, unqualified audit for the period ended September 30, 2020. A copy of their full report is posted on our website.

#### **Credentials Report – Jennifer Johnson, Secretary**

GSCWM has a double quorum requirement for the transaction of business. A total of 63 voting members representing all five counties we serve were required for this meeting. A quorum with 89 members present and representing all five counties was established.

#### **May 5, 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes – Jennifer Johnson, Secretary**

MOTION: to accept the May 5, 2020 Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts Annual Meeting Minutes as written. (Jennifer Johnson/Chris Mendoza). The motion passed with one Nay vote and one Abstention.

#### **Presentation of Slate – Casey Freeman, Board Development Committee**

COMMITTEE MOTION: to adopt the slate of nominees, as presented, to fill at-large positions on the GSCWM Board of Directors, girl members of the Board of Directors, and Board Development Committee positions. No additional nominations were received. The motion is made by the Board Development Committee and does not require a second. The motion passed with three Abstentions.

#### **Recognition of Outgoing Board Members & Board Development Committee Members– Joan Bertrand, President/Board Chair**

Joan thanked board members and members of the board development committee who have completed their service. Each was presented a token of our appreciation.

## **55<sup>th</sup> National Council Session Report – Jennifer Johnson**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the GSUSA National Council Session was held virtually. Jennifer reviewed actions taken related to the six motions including establishing a task force to explore creating a National Gold Award Scholarship Foundation, National Board communications with councils regarding membership dues increases, and fees for Lifetime Membership. A constitutional amendment on consistency in delegate terms (Article IV) was passed and will required action by GSCWM to implement.

## **Timing of Election of Delegates to the National Council Session – Joan Bertrand.**

### **President/Board Chair**

MOTION: to amend Article II, Section 5b of the GSCWM Bylaws (Board Development Committee Responsibilities) to read, “At the meeting of the Council held in the year prior to the regular meeting of the National Council of Girl Scouts of the USA, the Board Development Committee shall present to the membership a single slate of nominees for delegates to the National Council.” (Jennifer Johnson/Shirley Konneh) The motion passes with a 2/3 positive vote, two Nay votes and three Abstentions.

### **Adjourn**

MOTION: to adjourn the annual meeting of the Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts at 7:15 PM (Chris Mendoza/Casey Freeman). The motion passed unanimously.

### **Closing Flag Ceremony**

The opening flag ceremony was presented by Troop 11087 from Shrewsbury in video form.