

2014 National Council Session/53rd Convention

Delegates attending the 2014 National Council Session will be voting on three proposals, summarized as follows.

Flexibility of Dues and Registration Practices

This is a series of constitutional amendments submitted by the Task Group to Study National Dues Structure and Registration Practices. The National Board appointed the Task Group in follow-up to 2011 National Council Session action after the topic of more flexible dues and registration practices was referred for study. The Task Group, including a board task group and an operational task group comprised of council CEOs, COOs, and GSUSA staff, met regularly between April 2012 and May 2013. The Task Group conducted internal and external research and tested feasibility of options. Research included 31 focus groups in 89 councils, including 240 Girl Scout staff members, 75 volunteers, 40 parents of Girl Scouts, and 60 parents of non-Girl Scouts. The Task Group submitted a report of its findings to the National Board at its May 2013 meeting.

As the Task Group noted; the Constitution of Girl Scouts of the USA permits only annual and lifetime membership. Their recommendation was to amend the Constitution to insert more flexible wording. As technology advances and other systems changes occur, new options will be generated, which will in turn sustain membership growth. The National Board concurred in placing this proposal on the National Council agenda with the ultimate goal of making it easier for members to join. Please note that annual and lifetime membership will remain as options. The National Board recommends adoption of the proposal.

Reporting Relationship of the Chief Financial Officer

The National Board also placed on the agenda a proposal entitled "Reporting Relationship of the Chief Financial Officer." The change permits the Chief Executive Officer of GSUSA to appoint the Chief Financial Officer, a practice consistent with the hiring of any other senior staff member. This series of amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws of Girl Scouts of the USA is consistent with best practices for effective not-for-profits. This change was recommended to Girl Scouts by BoardSource and our auditors, Grant Thornton, among other governance consultants. The National Board recommends adoption of the proposal.

Role of the Past Presidents

A third constitutional amendment placed on the agenda is entitled "Role of the Past Presidents." Past Presidents of Girl Scouts of the USA are currently designated as non-voting ex-officio members of the National Board and are not subject to reelection by the delegates each triennium. Studies of best practices indicated that the role of the Past Presidents is not generally delineated in the governance documents of other major not-for-profits. This proposal would amend the constitution to remove this ex-officio designation of Past Presidents to the National Board. Past Presidents could continue to be called upon to represent the national organization at local, national, and international events, as appropriate, and would remain voting members of the National Council. The National Board recommends adoption of the proposal.