



Heart of New Jersey

Congratulations! Your peers in Girl Scouting think highly of you and elected you to be their Service Unit Delegate. They chose you to facilitate the constructive exchange of ideas and viewpoints in your Service Unit, to vote on their behalf on the future leadership of Girl Scouts Heart of New Jersey and to participate in Council meetings. They are also relying on you to keep them informed of major decisions affecting the governance of our organization.

Thank you for accepting this position. We hope you will feel great satisfaction in using your skills to represent volunteers and influence decisions benefiting all of the girls in the Heart of New Jersey's jurisdiction. After all, all decisions are based on the girls we serve.

Introduction

This document is designed to prepare you for your role in the Heart of New Jersey's organization. The following materials are available for your review and reference:

- Delegate position description
- Girl Scouts Heart of New Jersey Bylaws
- Heart of New Jersey Jurisdiction Map
- Basic Blue Book of Documents, 2006

Several of these documents may be familiar to you from other training opportunities; as you review them again, please focus on *governance-related aspects* since in your role as a delegate your function is primarily related to governance (as a policy influencing volunteer).

Instructions

Ideally, you should set aside one hour to complete this training. Begin by reviewing this information:

- Girl Scout Heart of New Jersey Bylaws – Articles III, IV, V and VI establishes the definition of Members, and the procedure to elect the Board Officers, Board Members and Board Development Committee, of which you will be an integral part. Article XII highlights Delegates responsibility in the election of National Council Delegates/Alternates. Article XVI details your role in the event there is an amendment to the Bylaws that changes or alters the rights of the members.
- Governance and Operations – the role of the Board of Directors, key staff members and delegates.
- Policy-Influencing Process

To ensure Heart of New Jersey operates legally, we must have the required number of delegates attend the annual meeting.

What is Governance? What is Operations?

What is the democratic process in Girl Scouting?

Girl Scouting holds the basic belief that in the Girl Scout Movement, girls and adults can influence decisions and activities in matters of governance and operations, and have access to those responsible for decision-making.

Why should a delegate be concerned with whether something is governance or operations?

To benefit all of the girls in Heart of New Jersey's jurisdiction and to make the most of the delegates' volunteer skills and experience it is important to understand which role they are playing when, and to speak and make judgments according to that role. Simply put, policy-influencing volunteers rely on their experiences as operations volunteers. To be most effective however, they must consider their role and be aware of what role they are playing in each setting.

Policy Influencing Volunteers

Delegates have three areas of responsibilities:

A. Electing the:

- Board of Directors
- Board Development Committee members
- National Council delegates

B. Influencing policy:

- Delegates participate in Service Unit Meetings
- Facilitate the constructive exchange of ideas and viewpoints in their Service Unit to ensure our volunteers' feedback is informed and appropriate.
- Attend Council meetings to articulate the views of volunteers while respecting the democratic process is effective and efficient.

C. Demonstrating leadership:

- Support decisions made at Council meetings and report information back to the Delegate Region constructively and positively
- Mentor girl delegates, ensuring that they understand and have an opportunity to carry out their role
- Promote and support the Family Partnership Campaign and Heart of New Jersey's product sales program activities.

At Heart of New Jersey, Council meetings are held on major issues and give guidance to the Board of Directors. This feedback will assist the Board of Directors in making the most appropriate policy decisions. Active and informed participation in discussions is a primary role of the delegate as a policy influencer.

With the exception of the adoption of the agenda, elections, and amending the bylaws, there are few items that require voting by delegates at the annual meeting or any Council special meetings.

Governance Volunteers

The Board of Directors is elected by the delegates who are elected by volunteers in their Service Unit. The Board of Directors has the ultimate authority and fulfills its responsibility for furthering the Girl Scout mission by: hiring the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), providing over-sight of Girl Scout programming within its jurisdiction and financial stewardship, and strategic leadership direction for Girl Scouts Heart of New Jersey..

It is also responsible to GSUSA for compliance with charter requirements, the New Jersey state government for adherence to state corporate law, and the federal government in matters relating to legislation affecting nonprofit organizations.

Delegates are policy-influencing volunteers and report to the Board of Directors. Council meetings, to provide input and discussion, may be implemented by Heart of New Jersey's staff and lead by a member of the Board of Directors.

Operations Staff and Volunteers

The CEO as a paid staff member is accountable to the Board of Directors for developing and implementing a system and processes to carry out the strategic direction set by the Board; providing leadership and direction to staff and operational volunteers in carrying out the day-to-day operations of the Girl Scouts Heart of New Jersey and for supporting the Board of Directors in carrying out its governance responsibilities. The CEO is responsible for the hiring of and the work of Heart of New Jersey's' paid staff.

Service Unit volunteers are people sought out by the CEO to assist the staff by initiating and participating in two-way conversations within communities on behalf of Heart of New Jersey as well as building and maintaining relationships with individuals.

Operations Volunteers carry out assignments focused on the operations of Heart of New Jersey. They are selected by their Service Unit and appointed by staff and are ultimately accountable to the Chief Executive Officer. Some examples of an Operations Volunteer include: Troop Leader, Service Unit Manager, Organizer/Recruiter, Council Trainer.

Operations Task Forces are created to work on specific projects that are operational. Examples may be: Financial Assistance Task Force; Cookie Task Force; Family Partnership Advisory Committee; and Outdoor Program and Properties Task Force. Volunteers make up the majority of the members in any task force and play a crucial role.

Examples of the difference between Governance and Operations

Governance – Policy

Approve policy communicating training policies for volunteers.

Approve strategic and annual business plans and budgets.

Approve operational policies including: Personnel, Development policies.

Oversee financial condition by approving annual budgets and monitoring financial statements

Create task forces to address strategic issues. For example: Properties

Approve board awarded recognitions

Hires and evaluates CEO

Operations

CEO hires and supervises staff

Volunteers and staff design training curriculum and conduct training sessions

Volunteers and staff partner on Family Partnership Campaign

Determine the process and application for Financial Assistance.

Determine the need for task forces and supervise their work. For example: cookies

Review applications for volunteer recognition awards and approve appropriate applications

Governance–Policy Influencing

(Delegates)

Elect Board Members, National Council Delegates, and the Board Development Committee

Forums

Every year the Board of Directors may draft questions on topics on which they would like direct feedback from volunteers except during years of a National Council Session, when additional questions used are from the National Board of Directors.

Questions may be sent to delegates prior to Council meetings that will enable delegates to discuss questions with Service Unit members and provide feedback from volunteers in Service Units. (Refer to Policy-Influencing Process for more information on how this process works.)

At Council meetings, delegates from across the Heart of New Jersey area discuss questions the Board of Directors have sent to the Service Unit. Service Unit discussions should precede the annual meeting and are presided over by a delegate or in tandem with a member of the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors uses volunteers' feedback to plan the priorities for upcoming program years or it may create an operational task force charged with sifting through feedback and gathering more information before making recommendations in a final report for the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors would make a final decision.

When creating the task force, the Board of Directors will allot Heart of New Jersey's resources and include a list of expectations including a timeline.

Heart of New Jersey Annual Meeting

The Heart of New Jersey annual meeting is held once a year and is devoted to:

- Reporting the previous years' Girl Scout program accomplishments
- Electing Board members and the Board Development Committee
- Discussing audited financial statements
- When there is a National Council Session, National Council Delegates are elected

Electing Board Members

If there is a quorum present to conduct the annual meeting.

Heart of New Jersey's Board Officers, Board members and National Council Delegates are elected as a slate put forth by the Heart of New Jersey's Board Development Committee.

Following Roberts Rules of Order, a motion will be made by Heart of New Jersey's Chair of the Board Development Committee. The motion will be seconded by another member of the Committee. Before calling the vote, there will be a call for discussion. After the discussion, delegates will be asked for their vote.

Policy Influencing Process

Delegates have a responsibility to be informed prior to Council meetings, Service Unit meetings, and Heart of New Jersey's Annual Meeting. Responsibilities and their timelines are listed in the Check-off List and can be divided into three categories:

Prior to the Annual meeting:

1. An information package will be mailed to each delegate between 60 and 10 days in advance of the Annual meeting. The package will include the date, time and location of the Annual meeting as well as the proposed slate for election. It will also include an agenda which will list questions for feedback, or in the years of National Council session, the slate of National Council Delegates.

2. Review the materials and become familiar with the issues to be presented at the meeting. Delegates are responsible for gathering feedback from their Service Unit concerning the posed question.
3. If there is a question requiring feedback from the Service Unit, contact the Service Unit Manager to request time on the meeting agenda to present the issues for discussion. The Service Unit Manager will need to know what the issues are so that together you can determine how much time is needed for discussion.
4. Discuss the question with volunteers. It may be helpful to have a second person recording feedback. A flip chart works best because it communicates transparency to all volunteers. Summarize orally what you have heard.
5. Remember to consult with volunteers not in attendance who may feel strongly about the question.
6. Consider all viewpoints, and synthesize information. Be ready and prepared to represent the views of your Service Unit.

Arrival at the Heart of New Jersey Annual Meeting:

1. Casual business or business attire should be worn; uniforms are always appropriate.
2. Since there is a minimum number of delegates required to conduct the Annual meeting, check-in at the registration table. You will be given a name tag with your name and Service Unit and any other materials that you might need to participate in the meeting.
3. Punctuality is appreciated; no official action can be taken unless there is sufficient delegate representation.

During Service Unit meetings (held if there is a question posed or important information needs to be communicated):

1. If there is a question posed to the delegates, Board members may assist in the process to communicate with Service Unit volunteers.
2. Information should be recorded and used for future Board discussions.
3. Volunteers will be thanked for ensuring that the democratic process as outlined in the Basic Blue Book of Documents has been fulfilled. .

During Heart of New Jersey Annual Meeting

1. Typically the Annual meeting will be held on or before March 15th, following the completion of the audit and annual report. Heart of New Jersey's Board Chair will call the meeting to order and ask for a quorum report. Usually there will be an opening flag ceremony, recitation of the Girl Scout Promise, and introductions.

2. The meeting will consist of agenda items sent out with the call to meeting. Delegates will have an opportunity to vote for the slate of candidates for Board officers, Board members and the Board Development Committee. There may be the rare opportunity to vote on the Heart of New Jersey Bylaws if there is a change in the rights of members (Article XVI).
3. If it is a year of a National Council Session, delegates will vote on the slate of National Council Delegates.

After the Heart of New Jersey Annual Meeting:

1. Additional Council meetings could be called within the year by the Board of Directors.
2. Questions and instructions would be included in the call to meeting.

This completes the Delegate annual cycle