

## Notice of the Special 57<sup>th</sup> National Council Session

### For GSOFCT Membership

#### **GSUSA Special 57h National Council Session**

On July 25, Girl Scouts of the USA's National Board decided to call the first-ever special session of the National Council. The purpose of the Special Session is to consider and vote on proposals from the National Board to implement a membership dues increase for youth and adult members, beginning in the 2025-2026 membership year.

To execute the investment and Movement strategy work proposed by the National Board, additional financial resources would be required, including an increase in revenue from many areas, including fund development, new and expanded partnerships, and membership dues. We need a strong and sustainable national organization that invests in where we are and prioritizes initiatives that support where we're headed as a Movement.

The decision on whether to pursue an increase in membership dues will be considered and voted on by the National Delegates and other members of the National Council.

The currently elected slate of GSOFCT National Delegates and Alternates will continue to serve as representatives of our council at the upcoming Special 57<sup>th</sup> National Council Session to vote on the membership dues proposals. The Special Session will be held virtually on Saturday, October 19, 2024.

#### **Girl Scout Governance Overview**

Girl Scouts of the USA serves as the national organization charged with stewarding the Girl Scout Movement across the nation and in Girl Scouts Overseas. Collectively, the national organization, Girl Scout councils, and the National Council are responsible for sustaining the existence of Girl Scouting in the USA.

This relationship is governed by a federated, democratic model that provides for local councils to elect National Council Delegates to represent their councils at a national convention (the National Council Session).

The National Council is the membership body charged with giving broad policy direction to the future of the Girl Scout Movement in the United States. The National Council convenes every three years, and is responsible for:

- Electing the officers and other members of the National Board and National Board Development Committee,
- Amending the Girl Scout Constitution as needed,

- Establishing requirements for certificates of membership, council charters, and all other Credentials, and
- Acting on proposals to foster and improve Girl Scouting, receiving reports of the National Board of Directors, and giving guidance to the National Board upon general lines of direction of the Girl Scout Movement and Girl Scout program.

Voting members of the National Council include:

- National delegates elected from chartered Girl Scout councils,
- National delegates elected from USA Girl Scouts Overseas,
- Members of the National Board of Directors,
- Members of the National Board Development Committee,
- Past Presidents of Girl Scouts of the USA, and
- Other persons as may be elected by the National Council.

Girl Scout councils are entitled to delegates based on the number of youth members within their jurisdiction based on a formula and timing set out in the *Blue Book of Basic Documents*.

### **Special 57<sup>th</sup> National Council Session Agenda**

The Special 57<sup>th</sup> National Council Session will gather the National Delegate voting body to consider two proposals:

- A proposal to consider an annual dues increase for youth members; and
- A proposal to consider an annual dues increase for adult members.
- The National Board recommends youth membership dues be \$85 and adult membership dues be \$45 in order to meet the needs of our members and the financial realities facing the organization.

The National Council will debate and vote on whether this amount, or some other amount, is the appropriate level for annual dues nationally.

- The current cost of annual dues for both youth and adult members is \$25. This amount was set by the National Council Session and has been the cost since 2012-2013.
- All revenue from annual membership dues goes to GSUSA.
- Councils are permitted to charge an additional amount for membership dues (a “Council Service Fee”) that is equal, but not greater than, the amount of national dues. Those funds go directly to the council as revenue and are put toward council operating expenses.
- The GSOFCT Council Service Fee is currently \$15 for youth members only.

- In 2024-2025, the total annual membership dues are \$40 per youth member and \$25 per adult member.

### **Background on the Special Session**

In July 2023, GSUSA commissioned research among families to better understand what parents and caregivers want for their daughters and what girls want for themselves. Many girls struggle with confidence, self-esteem, and building the skills necessary to successfully navigate today's world and lead happy and fulfilling lives.

We know that Girl Scouting is the solution to many of the challenges facing today's girls. Through a variety of experiences and with the support of mentoring adults, Girl Scouts helps girls develop skills, build confidence, and become ready for life's challenges – today and tomorrow.

To be relevant and provide the experiences and support that volunteers, girls, and families need, GSUSA developed a strategy designed to invest in our future together. To execute the strategy, initiatives were developed with the following focus areas in mind:

- Simplifying the volunteer experience and making it more rewarding,
- Making the older Girl Scout program more visible and engaging,
- Ensuring relevant programming for all Girl Scouts, Daisy through Ambassador,
- Improving technology to make it easier for volunteers and girls to participate,
- Ensuring that we are a welcoming organization where girls from all backgrounds belong,
- Ensuring financial assistance is available to those who need it,
- Publicly sharing Girl Scouting's value and broadly communicating what Girl Scouts do, and
- Enabling more families to join and participate.

### **GSOFACT Council Impacts & Membership Feedback Opportunities**

The proposed increase in national membership dues would impact the financial outlook and membership for Girl Scouts of Connecticut and each local council. In order to fully represent the voices and perspectives of our members, it is critical that we hear your input on this important issue.

The GSOFACT executive staff and National Delegates are currently reviewing the financial implications of various dues models, the impact on individual members and membership numbers overall, and the potential impact on our operating ability and resources.

Register to attend one of the upcoming GSOFCT Membership Listening Sessions to learn about the Girl Scout governance process and to offer feedback to council leadership and the GSOFCT National Delegate group as they review the proposed changes to annual membership dues and weigh the impacts on our council, members, and families:

- Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2024 – 7:00-8:00 PM: GSOFCT Membership Listening Session  
[https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_6bjwCPFdRJC1dxyQVSr54g](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_6bjwCPFdRJC1dxyQVSr54g)
- Monday, Oct. 7, 2024 – 7:00-8:00 PM: GSOFCT Membership Listening Session  
[https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_u8rTYc4BSWa1OxK48NcqIA](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_u8rTYc4BSWa1OxK48NcqIA)

Members are also invited to submit their feedback via the below survey link. Please complete the survey by October 11 to share your opinion.

[https://girlscoutsusa.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_295Shzzh1QM1EY6](https://girlscoutsusa.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_295Shzzh1QM1EY6)

We hope you will partner with us as the National Delegate group engages in this important governance process and works to represent Girl Scouts of Connecticut in a comprehensive and thoughtful manner.