

## **Executive Summary**

### **NYPENN Board of Directors Meeting – March 21, 2026**

The NYPENN Board of Directors met at the Syracuse Service Center and via Zoom. The meeting focused on governance updates, financial sustainability, property management, membership growth, diversity and inclusion initiatives, and strategic planning for the future of the council.

#### **Key Governance Actions**

The Board approved the Consent Agenda and unanimously approved the proposed slate of board nominees for presentation at the Annual Meeting on May 2, 2026. Leadership transitions were acknowledged, including the upcoming departure of long-time board member Katie MacIntyre and the resignation of Tiffany Campau following her relocation out of state. The Board also noted ongoing vacancies, particularly a need for representation from Northern New York and additional members for the Board Development Committee.

#### **Financial Highlights**

The Finance Committee reported that the council remains financially stable with no major concerns at this time. Cookie season continues to be the council's primary revenue source and is performing exceptionally well; the council is at 110% of its sales goal with several weeks still left in the season.

A major financial milestone was the successful buyout of NYPENN's GSUSA pension obligations. The buyout cost approximately \$700,000—significantly less than the original estimate of \$1.3 million—and is expected to save the council roughly \$400,000 annually in operating expenses. NYPENN also received additional reimbursements and equity payments totaling approximately \$180,000.

Board members discussed the importance of determining how future operational savings should be allocated, including the possibility of rebuilding financial reserves.

The council also completed the sale of unused property in Corning for \$120,000, with safeguards in place to protect proceeds.

#### **Property and Camp Operations**

The Property Task Force shared several positive operational updates:

- Jen Allwood was promoted to Director of Property Management and will lead efforts to increase property revenue through rentals and improved marketing
- Camp Hoover welcomed a new ranger, Jakob Allwood
- NYPENN expects all four camp properties to achieve American Camp Accreditation this summer
- Summer camp registrations are currently at approximately 33% capacity, with additional marketing efforts planned

The group discussed plans to reduce annual maintenance expenses and create long-term investment opportunities to strengthen council finances.

## **Membership and Revenue Diversification**

Leadership emphasized the council's need to reduce dependence on cookie revenue, which currently represents approximately 85% of annual income. NYPENN's long-term goal is to diversify revenue streams through fundraising, retail operations, and property rentals to reduce reliance on cookies to around 60% of revenue. Cookie sales remain strong despite national declines. NYPENN has already exceeded its sales goal at 108% with several weeks remaining in the season.

Membership recruitment and volunteer retention were identified as critical strategic priorities. To address barriers to troop formation, the council has successfully launched "starter troops," where staff temporarily lead new troops before transitioning leadership to parents and volunteers.

## **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (DEIB)**

The Board continued its ongoing DEIB education initiative with a presentation on Indigenous land acknowledgment practices. The discussion explored the purpose and importance of acknowledging Indigenous communities and history, including the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and Conestoga Susquehanna peoples connected to the region.

Leadership also discussed efforts to improve outreach and visibility in underserved urban communities, including Syracuse, Utica, and Binghamton. Upcoming engagement initiatives aim to strengthen partnerships and address perceptions that Girl Scouts primarily serves suburban populations.

## **National Council Session Preparation**

Board members reviewed proposals that will be considered during the 58th Girl Scouts National Council Session this July, including:

- Allowing Bronze and Silver Award candidates to solicit donations for projects
- Limiting future national membership fee increases
- Restricting the sale of Girl Scout-branded food products during local cookie seasons

## **Community Engagement and Upcoming Events**

The Board discussed opportunities to improve community visibility and participation at regional events such as parades and the State Fair. Members also encouraged broader participation across NYPENN's 26-county service area.

Board members were invited to attend volunteer appreciation dinners and support upcoming fundraising efforts, including a June 8 golf tournament benefiting travel programs.

The meeting concluded with discussion of potentially moving the annual board retreat from September to June to better accommodate personal scheduling needs and the onboarding of new board members.