

Service Unit Delegate Meeting
January 26, 2026
7 – 8:30 pm
Via Zoom

Notes

Council staff provided an overview of Girl Scouts governance structure (PowerPoint attached):

- NYPENN has about 8,000 youth members and 3,500 adult members across 100 service units in 26 counties
- There are about 45 delegates from 39 service units, with many more youth delegates than ever before
- Service unit delegates serve as a bridge between troops and the board of directors, with delegates having the power to elect board members and provide feedback
- The annual meeting is scheduled for Saturday, May 2nd 2026 in Seneca Falls, NY

The annual meeting will include governance activities for delegates, as well as programming for adults and youth. All activities will be open to all members, with delegates required to attend the afternoon business meeting.

The group discussed the roles of delegates and alternates, the process for making proposals, and the distinction between operational and governance changes. Staff introduced resources available on the council's website, including the board page, bylaws, and member proposal forms. Attendees were encouraged to use these resources to stay informed and participate.

The group discussed the National Council Session (NCS) scheduled for this July 2026, with proposals for membership consideration to be released at the end of January. Service unit delegates play a role in disseminating information and gathering feedback on these proposals. Among many opportunities for members to provide feedback on the NCS proposals, council will offer a private Facebook page ([GSNYPENN: NCS Info & Insights](#)) for NYPENN members to facilitate discussions on national-level proposals.

Staff addressed delegate questions submitted prior to the meeting, with the following discussion highlights:

- Scholarships (formerly known as Sunshine Funds) for uniforms, memberships (including for caregivers during Early Bird), and camp are funded through a number of local organizations including the United Ways. GSUSA may also provide some funding beginning next year. Although funds have never run out, the council is monitoring these resources due to increasing membership fees and greater need.
- While the council strives to hold meetings at their properties, they sometimes need to rent spaces due to limited capacity, accessibility, or location constraints, often securing significant discounts or free use.

- NYPENN does not receive any funding from sales by companies using the Girl Scout name/logo. All those proceeds go to GSUSA.
- A calculator to assist in coming up with a recommended number of cookies for troops to order at the beginning of the season is available in eBudde (Help Section >> Council Info). Service Unit Cookie Coordinators also have it.
- Amahami will not have a residential camp this year. Residential camps are being rotated between NYPENN Camp locations due to low girl interest and cultural shifts post-COVID.
- Friends of Amahami (FOA) is an informal group of supporters, not an entity within the council. Events at the camp need to be hosted by a Service Unit and its background checked volunteers who are covered under NYPENN liability insurance. FOA can provide support & resources for the event.
- The Volunteer Toolkit (VTK) is created by GSUSA and cannot be easily reconfigured, although updates are expected by 2027. Julie has joined a group formed by GSUSA that is focusing on making volunteering easier and will include these concerns in her feedback. Troop leaders can also reach out to Membership Managers for temporary tools.
- A member proposed a volunteer liaison committee to enhance communication with the board of directors, which Julie agreed to bring up at the board level. The board is having ongoing discussions about balancing committee commitments with opportunities to attend service unit events and engage directly with members.
- Board members are available to attend service unit meetings to engage with members and listen to feedback. Tamara, specifically, offered to attend in person if possible or virtually if not.
- Julie will look into our liability agreements with regard to council and service units running concurrent activities at camp facilities, noting previous certification issues with day camps in the northern tier.
- Jennifer Allwood (jallwood@gsnypenn.org) serves as the primary contact for camp usage, with Liz Schmidt (lschmidt@gsnypenn.org) as a backup. Service units should contact these staff for any day outing requests during the summer months.
- Delegates/alternates are invited to share ideas for adult programming at the annual meeting.

Members are invited to share any questions or concerns they did not wish to discuss here directly with Julie at listening@gsnypenn.org.

The next delegate meeting will be scheduled for a different evening of the week so that those who had a Monday conflict will be able to attend the next one.

Service Unit Delegate and Alternate Meeting

January 26, 2026

Welcome



Julie Dale
CEO
GSNYPENN



**Tiffany Alvarez
Smith, Ed.D**
Chair
Board of Directors



Tamara Harris
Chair, Annual
Meeting Task Force
Board of Directors



Kim O'Brien
Delegate Liaison
GSNYPENN

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Girl Scout Promise

On my honor, I will try,
To serve God* and my country
To help people at all times,
And to live by the Girl Scout Law

*Members may substitute for the word
God in accordance with their own
spiritual beliefs.

Girl Scout Law

I will do my best
to be honest and fair,
friendly and helpful,
considerate and caring,
courageous and strong,
and responsible for what I say and do,
and to respect myself and others,
respect authority,
use resources wisely,
make the world a better place,
and be a sister to every Girl Scout.

Service Unit Delegate and Alternate Meeting

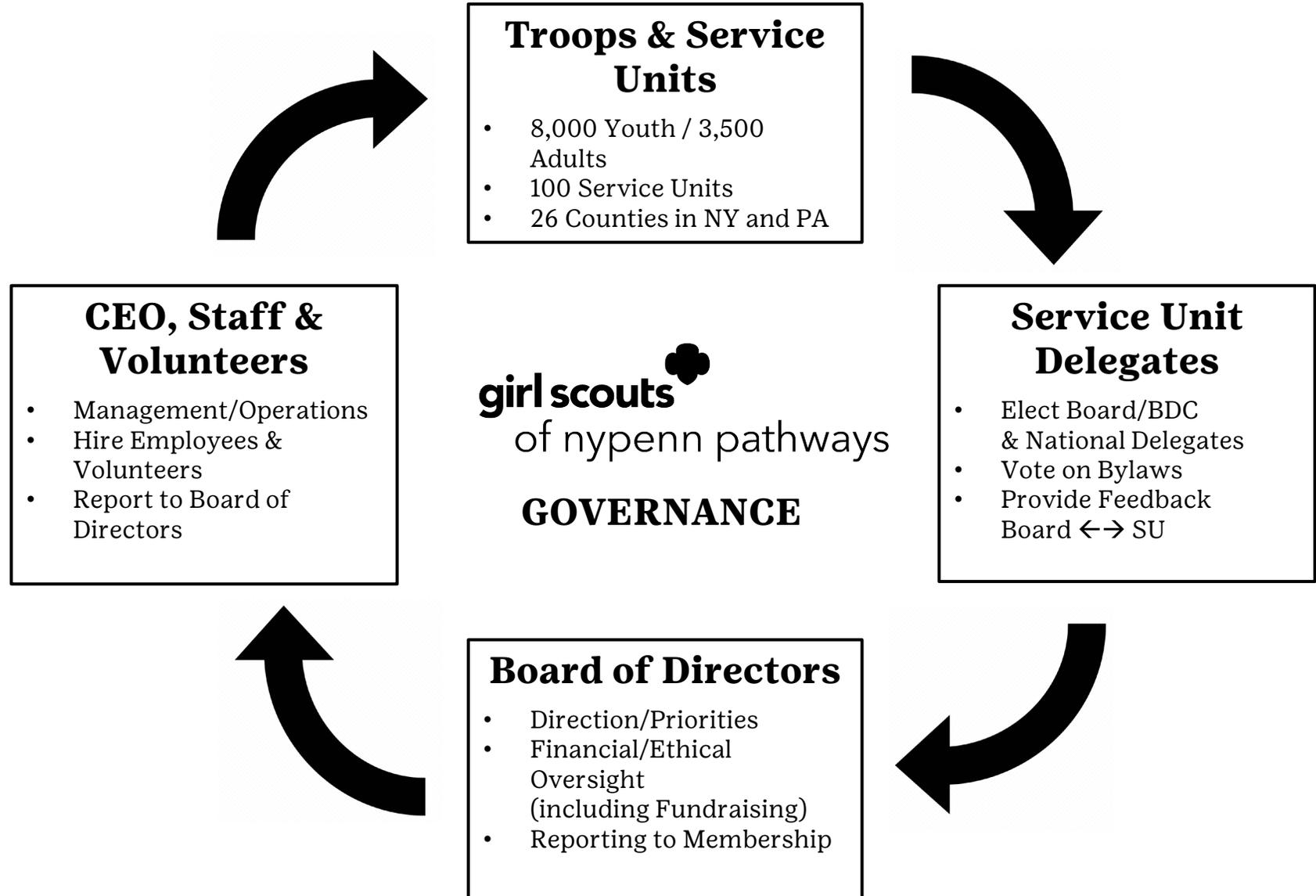
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AGENDA

- Introduction to Girl Scout Governance & Delegate Role
- National Council Session 2026 – Proposal Feedback Opportunities
- Answer Questions Submitted Before Meeting
- Discuss Our Meeting Schedule and Topics

Service Unit Delegate and Alternate Meeting

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Delegate & Alternate Responsibilities

- **Complete Trainings**
gsLearn – see “Getting Started Checklist”
- **Attend Service Unit & (Virtual) Delegate Meetings**
Share information both ways
- **Attend Annual Meeting**
Saturday, May 2nd 2026 | Seneca Falls, NY
- **Be a Sister to Every Girl Scout**

Only Delegates vote. Alternates remain informed and ready to step in if needed.

Service Unit Delegate and Alternate Meeting

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Annual Meeting Saturday, May 2nd – Seneca Falls, NY ***Will have Friday Overnight Option***

For **Delegates/Alternates**:

- **Morning:** State of the Council & Discussion Sessions
- **Afternoon:** Business Meeting (*required for Delegates*)
 - State of the council recap and financial report
 - NCS Delegation report (for 2026 NCS)
 - Vote - new board members and council proposals (if any)

The Annual Meeting is open to **all NYPENN members**.

- Programming for adult & youth members all day
- Delegates required to attend the afternoon business meeting
- Anyone can attend business sessions; only delegates can vote

Service Unit Delegate and Alternate Meeting

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		MEMBER PROPOSAL	
Service Unit Number: <input type="text"/>			
WE PROPOSE THAT: <input type="text"/>			
REASON(S) FOR THE PROPOSAL: <input type="text"/>			
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: <input type="text"/>			
Name of Service Unit Lead <input type="text"/>		Date of Service Unit Meeting <input type="text"/>	
Name of Resource Person for the Annual Meeting <input type="text"/>		Phone Number <input type="text"/>	
Email <input type="text"/>			

Submission:

E-mail, with the subject line, **Member Proposal**, to boardofdirectors@gsnypenn.org

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Operations vs. Governance

Operations

- What we do day-to-day
 - Meetings & events
 - Hiring staff & recruiting volunteers
 - Creating and delivering member programming, summer camps, etc.
- Changes do not require a vote
 - Two member proposals in 2025: evaluate cookies, expand badge offerings

Governance

- Rules for how we make decisions together – **By-laws**
- Changes require a vote
 - Annual Meeting - Delegates, Board and BDC

Board of Directors & Governance



Governance structures are part of every Girl Scout Council and are defined by council bylaws.

GSNYPENN's governing body is its Board of Directors. Under the leadership of the chair, the board maintains the integrity and purposes of Girl Scouting within the council's jurisdiction.

The board's responsibilities include influencing policy regarding council goals, issues affecting youth members, issues affecting the business of the organization, strategic planning, financial oversight and fund development.

Interested in sharing your talents on the GSNYPENN Board? Complete our [interest form](#) today!

For more information or to schedule a meeting with a board representative, email boardofdirectors@gsnypenn.org.

- Board of Directors 2025-2026
- Board Development Committee 2025-2026
- Council Delegates 2026
- National Council Session Delegates 2025-2028
- Board Meeting Schedule & Executive Summaries 2025-2026
- Resources

Resources – gsnypenn.org/board

Board Meeting Schedule & Executive Summaries 2025-2026

2025

May 3: Annual Meeting (Ithaca, N.Y.) - [Meeting Minutes](#)

June 21: Board of Directors Meeting - [Executive Summary](#)

September 13: Board of Directors Meeting - [Executive Summary](#)

November 22: Board of Directors Meeting - [Executive Summary](#)

2026

January 24: Board of Directors Meeting

March 21: Board of Directors Meeting

May 2: Annual Meeting (Seneca Falls, N.Y.)

Resources

[GSUSA Blue Book of Basic Documents](#)

[GSNYPENN Bylaws](#)

[GSNYPENN Board of Directors Member Position Description](#)

[GSNYPENN Delegate & Alternate Position Description](#)

[GSNYPENN Getting Started as a Delegate or Alternate Checklist](#)

[GSNYPENN Delegate Guide](#)

[GSNYPENN Fillable Member Proposal](#)

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National Council Session Delegation

2026 Girl Scout Convention : July 20–25, 2026, Washington, D.C.

The **58th National Council Session (NCS)** is the national business meeting held during the convention. NCS Delegates:

- discuss, debate and vote on issues important to the Girl Scout Movement
- elect national leaders for the next triennium

NCS Delegates & Alternates for the 2025-2028 term (elected at 2025 Annual Meeting):

Kaitlin H.	Kira Reed	<i>Kayleigh Stevens (alternate)</i>
Aarohi R.	Carleen Rhodes	<i>Tiffany Alvarez Smith (alternate)</i>
Rayna R.	Katie Williams	<i>Julie Dale (alternate)</i>
Alex S.		

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National Council Session 2026 Proposals

*GSUSA expects 6 – 8 proposals
to be released by January 31, 2026*

- Email to full membership
 - Feedback via survey or listening@ email (tbd)
- Virtual
 - 1-2 Town Halls
 - Service Unit Meetings on request
- Social Media
 - Post proposals on gsnypenn.org/board
 - Private Facebook page
 - Instagram (tbd)
 - Council socials direct to above
- In Person
 - March Board Meeting
 - Volunteer Dinners (tbd)
 - Annual Meeting – discussion groups

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The screenshot shows a Facebook group page for 'GSNYPENN: NCS Info & Insights'. At the top is a green banner with the 'gsnypenn' logo (a green four-leaf clover) and the text 'NCS Info & Insights'. Below the banner, the group name 'GSNYPENN: NCS Info & Insights' is displayed, along with 'Private group · 7 members'. There are buttons for '+ Invite' and 'Share'. A navigation bar includes 'Discussion', 'Members', 'Events', 'Media', and 'Files'. The main content area has a text input field 'Write something...' and options for 'Feeling/activity', 'Check in', and 'Poll'. A 'Featured' section shows '1 new' post. On the right, an 'About' section describes the group as a source for updates on National Council Session (NCS) happenings, with settings for 'Private' and 'Visible'.

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QUESTIONS

Financial Aid/Scholarships:

1. With Membership fees going up, and more youth members needing funding by using the Sunshine funds (scholarships) how does that get funded to cover Membership and what happens if the funds run out?
2. Can a youth member's caregiver apply in May when Early birds starts for funding through the Sunshine funds?

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QUESTIONS

Budget:

1. With all our properties and service centers why does Nypenn continue to pay fees for meeting rooms/mixers/cookie wow/volunteer dinners and other Nypenn gatherings? Wouldn't it be cost effective to order food from Wegmans, do a BBQ or small town caterers and set up at one of our owned properties?
2. Do Girl Scouts receive proceeds for companies using Girl Scouts? Example Dunkin Donuts (2023), Wendy's (2025).

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QUESTIONS

Cookie Season:

1. Cookie season length/procedure. Leaders are worried and confused as to how this will go. Some sort of “cheat sheet” or formula for calculating how many cookies to order would be helpful.

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QUESTIONS

Camp:

1. Discuss “rumors” about Amahami not working with Friends of Amahami (FOA)

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TOPICS

1. **Volunteer Toolkit (VTK)** not user friendly. Reconfigure VTK across interests/badges, as opposed to age levels
2. Possible **volunteer liaison committee** for interaction with the Board Of Directors
3. **Camps and Summer Camp** Programs