

September 24, 2024

## Dear Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida Members,

On October 19, Girl Scouts of the USA will host the virtual Special 57<sup>th</sup> National Council Session asking delegates to discuss, debate, and vote on proposals from the National Board to increase membership dues. You may have seen social media posts discussing these proposals, and I would like to provide more context and clarity regarding the upcoming decision-making process.

### Background

Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida (GSGCF) is one of 111 councils that make up the broader Girl Scout Movement under GSUSA. Currently, when a girl or adult joins Girl Scouts, they pay a \$25 membership fee. This amount, called “membership dues,” goes entirely to GSUSA and is used to fund technology infrastructure, data security, program development, and enhancements that support councils and benefit our girls. Girl Scouts has kept membership dues stable for the past eight years, although living costs have risen significantly impacting families, businesses, and nonprofits alike.

GSGCF covers its operational expenses through donations, grants, investment income, property rental, product and merchandise sales, as well as program and camp fees. Changes to membership dues will not impact or change the cost of local programming or product costs, as those costs are budgeted and managed locally.

This summer, GSUSA informed the CEOs of the 111 Girl Scout Councils and Girl Scouts Overseas that it was considering a membership dues increase and set the date for a special National Council Session. The call to meeting with proposal specifics was sent to the National Council Delegates mid-last week.

### What is Being Proposed?

Per GSUSA bylaws, this special session and vote by delegates is required because the National Board is considering a membership dues increase of more than 25% within a triennium (3-year period). Proposals put forth by Girl Scouts of the USA and recommended for approval by the National Board of Directors, asks delegates to consider \$85 for girl members and \$45 for adult members, effective for Membership Year 2026.

While the National Board’s proposals suggest new membership dues of \$45 for adults and \$85 for girls, the final decision will be made using a “Fill in the Blank” approach. Delegates will have the opportunity to propose different amounts, in \$5 increments, before the final vote. GSGCF will have four delegates eligible to vote in this session. **No action to increase dues has been taken, and no final decision will be made until the voting process is completed.** GSGCF’s National Council Delegates and Alternates will attend educational sessions, review the proposals, and gather feedback via the survey and town hall from members before finalizing their positions for the Special Session.

In order to help inform your feedback, we encourage you to review the following resources:

- Review the [Proposals](#) put forth by Girl Scouts of the USA.
- Watch this [video](#) from the GSUSA Board of Directors and CEO explaining the proposal rationale and financial implications. The password to view the video is @vHeA5x0

- For any further questions or background information needed, please refer to the [Blue Book](#) and the [Filling a Blank in a Motion video](#). The password to view the video is Db%5EN\$q

## Potential Impact

We recognize that any increase in membership dues can cause concern, and we are mindful of the financial impact this could have on families. If a dues increase is approved, GSGCF is committed to ensuring that Girl Scouts remains accessible to all, regardless of financial circumstances. Additionally, the National Board acknowledges the importance of equity and access to Girl Scouts and has included provisions for scholarships and council support, including a potential council share (portion that would be returned to councils) should the dues increase meet certain thresholds.

## Share Your Feedback

Your feedback is crucial. While building a better future for girls is a shared goal, it's important that our national delegates hear directly from those who would be affected by this decision. Please take the time to share what is most important to your Girl Scout experience and why.

- Complete the [Member Feedback survey](#) by September 30 so that your input can be summarized and shared with the council delegates.
- [Register](#) for and participate in the Town Hall session on Tuesday, October 1 from 7-8 pm via Zoom. Registration is required. Please note that this session will be to gather member feedback on the membership dues topic. It is important that you review the resources above prior to the session, as a full presentation of the proposals will not be made.

Regardless of the outcome of the vote, please know that Girl Scouts of Gulfcoast Florida remains committed to ensuring that Girl Scouts remains accessible, both to the girls we serve today, and the girls we have not yet met. Working together, we will be able to continue the work of building girls of courage, confidence and character who make the world a better place.

Thank you for your continued support of girls!



Mary Anne Servian, CEO



Richard Cyphers, Board President