

GIRL SCOUTS - BLUESTEM COUNCIL

Delegate Portfolio



For implementation: Spring 2005

Board/Delegate Communication Overview

Board Member Responsibilities

- Attend orientation - learn about the Council Delegate role and the importance of Board/Delegate communication.
- Listen to Delegate concerns at Association Meetings.
- Keep Delegates in mind while doing Board business; consider methods to get Delegate input whenever possible.
- Keep up to date on GS-BC issues through council mailings, and its website and e-mail if possible.
- Board and/or Executive Committee - consider and select topics:
 - on which to get delegate input
 - to report on to delegates

Council Delegate Responsibilities

- Attend training – (or complete the correspondence course) learn about the Council Delegates role and the importance of Board/Delegate communication.
- Discuss governance issues at Service Unit meetings.
- Attend Association Meetings, the Annual Meeting, and any special meetings that may be called.
- Share your Service Units ideas with others.
- Respond to delegate surveys
- Keep up to date on GS-BC issues through council mailings, its website and e-mail if possible

OUR MISSION

**Girl Scouting builds girls of confidence, courage and character,
who make the world a better place.**

Proposed for adoption at National Council Session 10/2005

OUR KEY ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

We believe The Girl Scouts - Bluestem Council must provide an environment within which girls can develop their own:

- Ideals
- Decision Making Skills
- Beliefs
- Abilities
- Leadership Skills

We believe through Girl Scouting girls will learn to understand and value:

- Their own self-worth
- Others' differences
- Their own uniqueness
- Their potential in life

We believe that working in partnership with adult volunteers girls can become responsible citizens who are:

- Honest
- Accepting of others
- Tolerant
- Happy
- Competent

OUR VISION

The Girl Scouts - Bluestem Council is the leading organization in providing innovative opportunities to meet the unique needs and interests of all girls in our council jurisdiction.

OUR 2005 GOALS

- I. While reflecting the diversity of our communities, Bluestem Council will increase membership 10% a year through 2005 and continue to increase membership through 2006.
- II. Bluestem Council will provide a quality, outcome-based program that is responsive to the needs of all girls and allows them to reach their highest potential.
- III. Bluestem Council will provide and maintain its properties to ensure they reach optimum use and meet the needs of our diverse membership.
- IV. Empower the Bluestem Council adult memberships to be a driving force in achieving Council goals while establishing and strengthening community partnerships.
- V. Bluestem Council will be responsible stewards of all resources to ensure the long-term fiscal strength and stability of the council.

CONSTITUTION OF THE GIRL SCOUTS OF THE U.S.A.

Founded by Juliette Low, March 12, 1912

Chartered by a special act of Congress

Preamble

The 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.

The 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.

Beliefs and Principles

We, the members of the Girl Scouts of the United States of America, united by a belief in God and by acceptance of the Girl Scout Promise and Law,

And inspired by the aims of the Founder of the Scout Movement, Lord Baden-Powell, and the Founder of the Girl Scout Movement in the United States, Juliette Low,

Do dedicate ourselves to the purpose of inspiring girls with the highest ideals of character, conduct, patriotism, and service that they may become happy and resourceful citizens.

We believe that the motivating force in Girl Scouting is a spiritual one.

We affirm that the Girl Scout Movement shall ever be open to all girls and adults who accept the Girl Scout Promise and Law.

We maintain that the strength of the Girl Scout Movement rests in the voluntary leadership of its adult members, in the cooperation and support of the community, and in the affiliation with Girl Guide and Girl Scout Movements of other countries through the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts¹

We declare that the democratic way of life and the democratic process shall guide all our activities.

We hold that ultimate responsibility for the Girl Scout Movement rests with volunteers. Reaffirming these our beliefs and principles, we do adopt this Constitution.²

¹ Blue Book, GSUSA, 2000 p. 7

² Blue Book, GSUSA, p. 8

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Council Delegate, A Member of the Council's Corporate Voting Membership^{*3}

Purpose: To participate in the Girl Scout democratic process; to assist the council in determining the direction of the Girl Scout program within its jurisdiction by bringing the concerns and needs of their constituency (Service Unit) before the leadership of the council; and to bring council considerations to the Service Unit for discussion and input.

Accountability: Elected by Service Unit as established by the Board of Directors and accountable to the Association Chair.

Term of Office: Delegates shall serve for a term of one (1) year from the date of their election and can serve for up to four years.

Responsibilities:

1. Complete training for the position.
2. Elect
 - the officers of the council,
 - the members-at-large of the council's Board of Directors,
 - the members of the council Nominating Committee,
 - delegates to the National Council of GSUSA, and
 - persons to fill vacancies among those delegates should they occur.
3. Determine general outlines of direction for Girl Scouting within the jurisdiction of the council by receiving and responding to reports and information from the Board of Directors.
4. Bring important council considerations or questions to the Service Unit for discussion.
5. Take all other action requiring vote by the council corporate voting membership.
6. Bring suggestions and proposals to the Board of Directors of the council.
7. Attend:
 - Annual council meeting
 - Association meetings
 - Special Meetings of the Board of Directors as requested
 - Geographic area and Service Unit meetings

Qualifications:

1. Member of the Girl Scout Movement
2. Registered in the Girl Scouts - Bluestem Council.
3. Fourteen (14) years of age or over

³ See next page for * explanation

Meeting Requirements as a Delegate:

Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Council shall be held in April at such time and place as may be determined by the Board of Directors. Notice of the time and place of the meeting together with the slate of nominees for all officers or positions to be filled according to the Bylaws shall be mailed to each delegate of the Council not less than thirty (30) days before the meeting.

Spring Association Meetings

Regular meetings of the geographic areas will be held as determined by the Board of Directors. Notice of the time, place and purpose of the meeting shall be given to each delegate not less than 10 days before the meeting.

National Delegate Election

A meeting to elect National Council Delegates shall be held before April in the year prior to the meeting of the National Council.

Special Meeting

If it is determined that there is a need for a special meeting, notice must be given not less than 10 days before the meeting.

Preparation Requirements:

1. Participate in initial orientation and periodic workshops.
 2. Become informed about council goals, basic facts about the council's governance and management structure, membership plans, and the financial framework within which the council works.
 3. Be familiar with the Girl Scout ideal goals and purpose and subscribe to the policies of GSUSA.
 4. Become familiar with basic parliamentary procedure.
 5. Act as information gatherers for the members who elected them.
 6. Seek to understand the opinions of those who elect them and weigh own opinions and attitudes when acting as a two way communication channel to the Board of Directors.
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Decision Influencing

A decision influencing process is a planned communication system designed to ensure broad based participation in the direction setting (governance) activities of the council. Being part of the decision influencing process is an investment of time and effort that results in achieving the GS-BC mission. Participation in the process is a necessity in achieving Girl Scouting's full potential in serving the unique needs and interests of girls in our five county jurisdiction.

The goals of the decision influencing process are:

- To gather information from all levels
- To involve girls, parents and the adult membership as well as community representatives with the Board of Directors in an exchange of communications
- To use the expertise and informed opinions of a wide variety of people throughout the council's jurisdiction in the data gathering and data evaluating stages of decision making before the Board takes action

The decision influencing process creates a core of people informed about the decision making process who are able to interpret it to others throughout the council's jurisdiction. Girl Scouting in the community is strengthened by developing a base of community persons interested in and informed about the council and Girl Scouting in general.

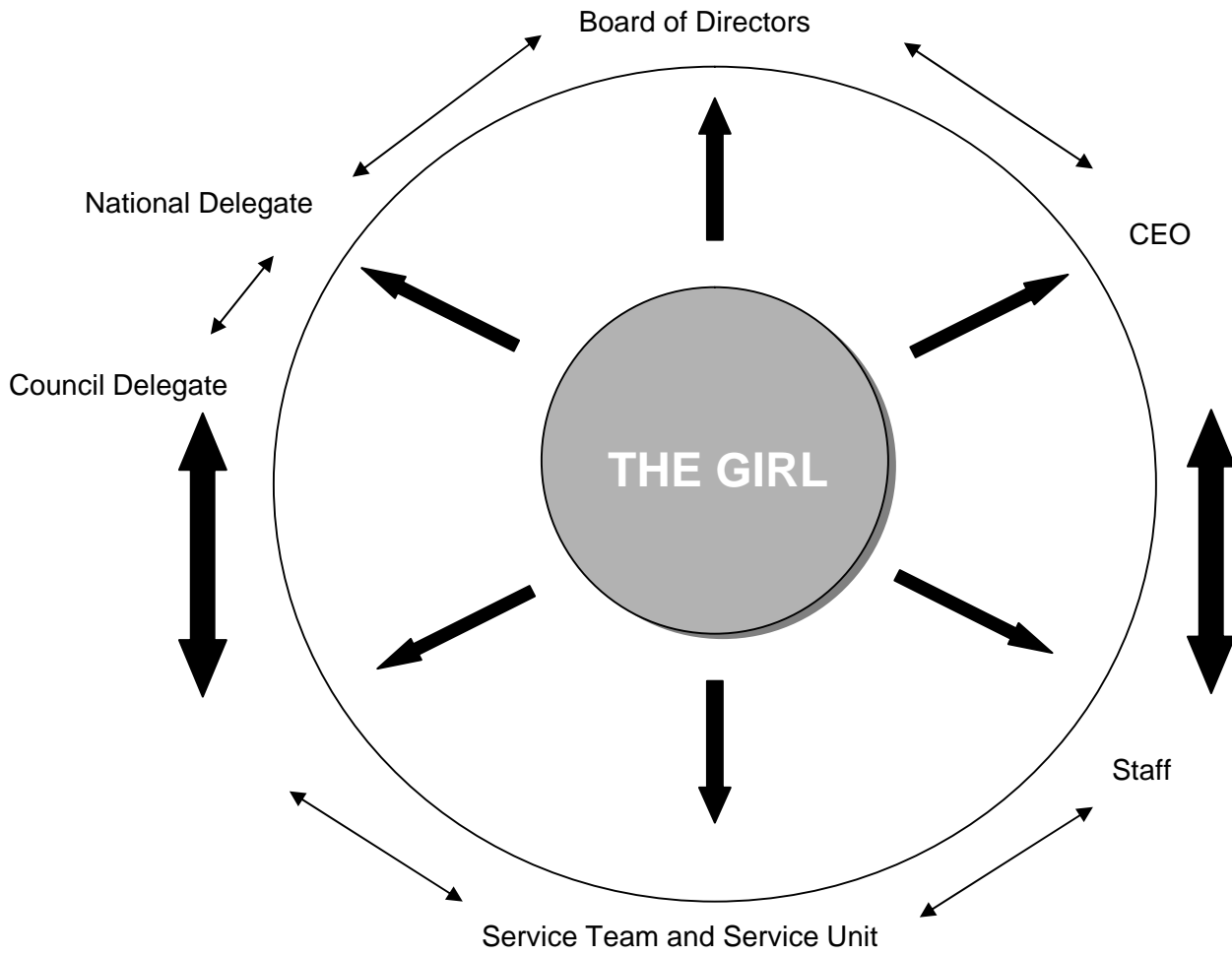
Council delegates are a vital part of the decision influencing process. Council delegates, along with members of the Council Nominating Committee and the Board of Directors provide the corporate structure of the Girl Scouts - Bluestem Council and meet the requirements of incorporation in the State of Oklahoma.

The decision influencing process is more than a way to meet legal requirements of incorporation through a delegate structure. It is a way of work that shows commitment to the beliefs and principles as stated in the preamble of the Constitution of Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.

Voting at the annual meeting and special meetings of the corporation is only one delegate role. Other vital functions are:

- Council delegates are information gatherers;
- Council delegates are a link to the members who elected them;
- Council delegates communicate with the Board, the council membership and the community in general;
- Council delegates are decision influencers.

The Method We Use To Serve the Girl



What A Council Delegate Needs to Know About Governance

Ten Major Functions of a Girl Scout Board of Directors according to GSUSA:

1. Fulfilling Charter and Corporate Obligations
2. Policy Making
3. Selection and Performance of the Chief Executive Officer
4. Strategic Planning
5. Fund Development
6. Fiduciary Oversight
7. Interaction with the Community
8. Oversight of the Management Function
9. Review of the Accomplishments of the Board and Chair
10. Ensuring as system for Policy-Influencing between the Adult Members and the Board

The GS-BC Board normally meets on the fourth Thursday of every other month no less than six times per year. Board agendas include updates by the Chair and CEO, budget reviews, and committee reports. Other agenda items vary.

How can Council Delegates get an understanding of issues the Board deals with so they can ask appropriate questions and give input?

- Think broadly.
- How is GS-BC serving ALL girls and the whole community?
- How is GS-BC meeting the GSUSA Criteria and Standards for Effective Girl Scout Council?
- Are our staff (paid and volunteer) policies fair and equitable?
- What information should be available for delegates on our website?
- Are there state or national issues regarding youth and youth groups we need to be aware of?
- How can we improve our fundraising?

WHY A DELEGATE IS SPECIAL

As a council delegate you act as a bridge between the operational functions of the Service Unit and the governance of the Council. Council Delegate Association Meetings are your chance to present the concerns of your Service Unit to the governing board of the Girl Scouts - Bluestem Council. In this way, you assume part of the function of governance within council and help set the goals of the Council. If you don't always want to be reacting to a 'done deal', you must participate in the process! Your participation is beneficial within Council at many levels:

1. Benefits to Council:

- Gather ideas from the membership on critical issues.
- Submit a *Talk to Your Council Suggestion* form from your Service Unit.

2. Benefits to your Service Unit:

- You present items under consideration by Council so that your Service Unit is heard.
- Issues important to your Service Unit can be brought to the attention of Council.
- You keep your Service Unit informed and give opinions back to our representatives to the National Assemblies.

3. Benefits to your Leaders:

- You are their voice for issues important to their troops - BEFORE they become finalized.
- Leaders are kept informed of Council decisions in a timely fashion.

4. Benefits to the girls:

- You are a role model to girls as a participant in the governance processes of GS-BC. Democracies exist only as long as the governed participate!
- You can encourage older girls to assume leadership as Council delegates. Girls 14 and older are eligible to represent their Service Units. Older girls are always invited to attend Association meetings and observe.



Girl Scouts - Bluestem Council.
511 E. 11th St., Bartlesville, OK 74003

Talk to Your Council Suggestion Form

This form is for sharing concerns and/or proposals with your board of directors. Outline the general circumstances of the issue or the key components of the proposal you wish to discuss. If you have solutions or ideas concerning the issue or proposal, please tell us. This Suggestion Form will be reviewed by a member of the board of directors, who will acknowledge its receipt within 30 days.

Return the completed form to: **Chair, Board of Directors,
Girl Scouts - Bluestem Council.
511 E. 11th St.
Bartlesville, OK 74003**

Submitted by:

Name: _____ Phone #: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

CONCERN OR PROPOSAL

PROPOSED SOLUTION

You should receive a response within 30 days.

Determined to be Management related: _____

Referred to Management: Date _____

Governance Issues

Directed to: _____

Action taken:

Date of reply: _____

Name _____

Service Unit _____

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Annual meeting - A meeting of the corporation held each year in accordance with state corporation laws and articles of incorporation and the bylaws, to ensure the legal business of the corporation is accomplished. The board is responsible for developing an agenda with substantive issues. Agenda items may include the elections of officers and members of the board of directors, the council nominating committee, and the delegates to the National Council session, amending the council bylaws, and financial reporting. Agenda items may also include decisions on major policy issues.

Association Meetings of geographic areas to provide a means for members 14 and over to influence policy making, to initiate discussions of issues related to direction setting and policy making and to give input to the council board of directors regarding decisions on major issues.

Board of Directors - Elected by the corporate membership body and accountable to the membership for governance of the council and the stewardship of the council's critical resources; the board of directors of Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. for compliance with charter requirements; and to the state of Missouri for adhering to state corporate laws. They are accountable to the federal government in matters of legislation affecting not-for-profit corporations.

Bylaws – Rules determining the governance of the council.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) - The chief executive officer employed by and accountable to the board of directors. She/he provides leadership to the

management of all operational work within the framework of the council's goals.

Corporation – A body created by law and authorized to carry out stated purposes. A Girl Scout council becomes a membership corporation when it is incorporated by the state. The membership of GS-BC, consists of the delegates, members of the board of directors, and members of the council nominating committee.

Council Delegate – Any Girl Scout member, 14 years of age or older, elected to a voting position in the council. Delegates are elected by the structure outlined in the council bylaws.

Council Member – Each member of the Girl Scout movement 14 years of age or over affiliated with the council.

Council Membership – Voting members of GS-BC consisting of council delegates, board of directors and nominating committee.

Council Board Chair - The council board chair is the chief corporate officer and is elected by the membership of the corporation. The chair of the board and head of the corporation, leads the officers and the board of directors in the conduct of all corporate affairs of the council, leads the members of the corporation in its business meeting(s), and provides leadership to the council's fund development effort.

Decision Influencing - The process by which the opinions and feelings of a variety of groups are sought and considered by decision makers *before* the decision is made.

Democratic Process - This process has three primary functions: meeting the legal requirements of the corporation, providing effective ways to actively seek input from the constituency and encourage the free exchange of concerns, issues, and ideas among all segments of the Girl Scout membership and community.

Employed Staff - Employed personnel who carry out operational assignments and are ultimately accountable to the CEO who is employed by the board of directors to manage the council.

Governance - Governance is the process by which the board of directors, under the leadership of the board chair and with the support of the chief executive officer, maintains the integrity of the mission and council goals. This is achieved by staying abreast of relevant issues, developing and reviewing policy and monitoring the performance of the organization.

Management - Activities required to carry out the operating objectives of the council. These activities are performed by operational volunteers and employed staff who are accountable to the CEO.

National Delegate – Any Girl Scout member, 14 years of age or older, elected to a voting position to the GSUSA National Council Session.

Operational Volunteers - Volunteers who carry out operational assignments. They are appointed and are accountable to the CEO.

Policy - An established course of action that **must** be followed.

Proposal - Items directed toward the

fostering and improvement of Girl Scouting which are to be acted upon by the local or National Councils.

Service Team – Volunteers working together to support the membership of their service unit.

Service Unit - A geographical subdivision of the council

Strategic Guidelines - Projected governance strategies developed after the board's adoption of the goals. They are direct links between the goals and the board's strategic responsibility. They can be utilized as annual input to the board's work schedule.

Strategic Planning - The process of formulating and adopting long-range goals that support the *ideal goals* of Girl Scouting, and then developing and overseeing the implementation of an integrated strategy for the acquisition, allocation, and stewardship of critical resources to achieve the goals.

Tactical Planning - A major component of the corporate planning process that guides all operational work. It establishes measurable objectives that support the corporate goals and determines the detailed deployment of resources to achieve the objectives. Tactical planning includes the establishment of operating objectives, and the development of action steps and an operating and capital budget for one year of the plan.