

Girl Scout Council of Greater New York  
**Minutes of the Sixty-Eighth Annual Meeting**

Asia Society  
725 Park Avenue  
**March 12, 2009**

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**CALL TO ORDER, WELCOME, AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The sixty-eighth Annual Meeting of the Girl Scout Council of Greater New York, Inc. was held at Asia Society, 725 Park Avenue, on Thursday, March 12, 2009.

Board President Pat Stensrud called the meeting to order at 6:35 P.M. and stated the purpose of the meeting: to consider and act upon the business of the Council and to report on the year's activities. She welcomed all present.

Girl Scouts presented the colors, and all assembled joined in the Pledge of Allegiance and the recitation of the Girl Scout Promise and Law. Two Girl Scouts from our Career Exploration program led the group in singing God Bless America.

Pat then called for additions and corrections to the March 13, 2008 Annual Meeting minutes. Pat mentioned that the 2008 Annual Meeting minutes mistakenly included Marie Raperto as delivering the Treasurer's report when in fact it was Janet Otto. With no additional changes called for the minutes were accepted with this one correction.

Pat asked Kate Maitland to join her at the podium to remember four long-time Girl Scouts whom we lost in the previous year. Kate shared with the audience the passing of Philomene Gates, Edith McElleney, Margaret Hobson and Sandra Mahon. The audience was asked to stand in a Girl Scout circle in memory of these dedicated volunteers.

**QUORUM REPORT**

Kate Maitland, Board Member and Chair of the Credentials Committee, reported there were 48 voting Council members present with at least one duly elected delegate from a majority of the Associations. This met the quorum requirements as specified in Article 1, Section 7 of the Council Bylaws.

**THE IMPACT AWARD**

Pat recognized The New York Community Trust as the recipient of the Impact Award. The Impact Award is the highest honor given by the Girl Scout Council of Greater New York and recognizes a group or organization that has shown its commitment to Girl Scouting through its investment in the development of New York City girls.

Pat explained that The New York Community Trust was founded in 1924 to help individuals pool their resources to support charitable organizations in New York City and elsewhere. It now has more than 2 billion dollars in trust and last year made grants of \$166 million to nonprofit organizations.

The Trust is made up of nearly 2,000 funds set up by individuals and families. One of those funds is the Mildred Anna Williams Fund, which was established in 1940. That fund is dedicated to helping girls and young women by improving conditions and opportunities for those who are poor and disadvantaged.

Our Council has received nearly a half-million dollars in support from the Mildred Anna Williams Fund at the Trust over the last decade or so. Grants from the Trust were for: financial literacy programs, our outreach to Latina girls, our work in public housing projects, and for volunteer training.

More recently, the Trust provided a very substantial grant of \$150,000 to establish the Girl Scout Career Exploration Program, which was launched in the fall of 2008 at five of the most under-resourced middle schools in the City.

On behalf of the board of directors and the entire Council, Pat thanked and acknowledged The New York Community Trust. Pat and CEO Dolores Swirin invited Lorie Slutsky, Joyce Bove and Pat White onstage and presented the Impact Award. Lorie Slutsky thanked Pat and Dolores on behalf of The New York Community Trust and shared a few words about the challenges young women face in the city and how the Girl Scouts makes their lives better.

## **+COUNCIL BOARD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT**

Paula Zirinsky, chair of the Council Board Development Committee, presented the Committee's report. She noted the Committee's current members, including Board Members Luz Allende, Marie Raperto, Betty Spence, Paula herself as well as Non-Board Members Barbara Brodie, Melissa Martin, Ken Roldan and Dominique Saint-Louis. Following a brief description of how the Committee operates, Paula announced the following slate of nominees:

There was only one Nominee for election as Officer of the Board of Directors, Cheryl L. Swiatkowski, for the office of Secretary, for a one year term replacing Barbara Ramirez Spencer, who had relocated out of the area. Nominees for re-election as Board Members-at-Large, for a three-year term expiring in 2012, were: Ifeoma Okoronkwo Aitkenhead, Nancy Glaser, Sherry Matays, Janet Nettleton Otto, and Angelique Mamby Pannell. The new nominees for election as Board Members-at-Large, also for a three-year term ending in 2012, were: Christine Battaglia, Donna Blank, Lynda Davey, Heidemarie Echtermann-Toribio, Amy Kule, and Rachel Skaistis.

Christopher Clark and Bernadette Grey were nominated for election as Non-Board Members of the Board Development Committee for a three-year term expiring in 2012. Patrice Tanaka and Sheri Wilson-Grey were nominated for election as Board Members of the Board Development Committee for a three-year term expiring in 2012.

Paula announced that no further petitions had been received, and that the voting would commence. She asked members of the Tellers Committee to collect the completed ballots and stated that while the ballots were being counted the business portion of the meeting would continue.

Pat thanked Paula and the Board Development Committee for their work this year.

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Pat introduced Marie Raperto, Board Treasurer and Chair of the Finance & Audit Committee, who gave the Finance Committee Report. Marie noted that a year-end summary of the Council's financial position appeared in the Annual Report, which was included in everyone's packet for the evening. She then provided more detail about the Council's current financial standing, as follows:

### **Income**

- **Cookie Sales:** The net revenue to the Council increased 3% in FY2008. As of the date of the meeting the Council had seen a slight increase in this year's cookie sale and hoped that with an active level of troop booth sales, we would meet our goal. Troop rebates in FY2008 totaled \$505,743. That is a more than half a million dollars from the cookie sale going directly to troops for their program needs.
- **Family and Friends Campaign:** We raised \$88,534 last year. So far we had raised approximately \$77,963. It was estimated that we would fall short of the \$92,960 goal by approximately \$15,000.
- **Special Events Revenue:** This category includes the Tribute Dinner, the Women of Distinction Breakfast, and our first annual Golf Outing. In FY2008, we raised \$792,452 in net revenue, which met our budgeted goal. This represents a decrease of \$55,000 from FY2007, which was an unusually strong year for events. Our goal is to raise more than \$800,000 again in FY2009 thanks to a strong slate of honorees at each of our events.
- **Foundation & Government Grant Revenue:** The Council has been very successful in obtaining grants from foundations and from government grants. From FY2007 to FY2008 this revenue stream increased by 20% to \$1,089,927. Please note that the figures on these charts reflect foundation and government grant income actually received in each year. This varies from the audited financial statements, as IRS rules require us to book multi-year grants in the year that the money is pledged. Our budget for the current year is \$1,154,450.
- **Total Support and Revenue:** As stated earlier, the IRS requires us to take credit for pledges in the year the pledges are made. This accounts for the jump in revenue in FY2007, when we received \$1.4 million in multi-year pledges. While we continued to receive payments on those pledges in FY2008 – more than \$668,000 in pledge payments – they are not reflected in our revenue reported on this slide. Our FY2008 revenue also reflects

investment losses and adjustments of over \$1 million. So, although the revenue figure is lower in FY2008 than in FY2007, our fundraising has remained strong and we actually had a balanced operating budget in FY2008.

- **Total Expenses:** In FY 2008 actual expenses came in at \$5,285,512 approximately 3% less than FY2007 expenses. She noted that 82% of FY 2008 expenditures were program related.
- **Total Portfolio Withdrawal:** In FY2003, the Council began implementing measures to reduce withdrawals from our reserve fund, which had been used to cover operating costs. In FY2008, the total withdrawn from the Council's investment portfolio was \$253,750 -- a decrease of \$121,250 from FY2007. Reducing withdrawals is a trend we plan on continuing in the future. In FY2008, we had our first balanced operating budget since 1999, a trend we also plan to continue in the coming years.
- **Portfolio Market Value:** the portfolio market value has declined 16% in FY2008 and 20% so far in FY2009, despite our conservative investment policies. This percentage decline is consistent with other Girl Scout Councils and other NYC non-profits as well as the market as a whole. As of January 31, 2009 the portfolio stood at \$4,173,242. Marie also directed people to the annual report which showed that our trust assets had been adjusted down by about \$800,000. This was because we had been counting the Britenstool Trust as an asset on our books for many years—since the 1960s—but the trustee, JPMorgan Chase, has recently informed us that we are not actually a beneficiary of the Trust, we simply select the recipients, so we can no longer count this as an asset on our books. This has no practical impact on the girls since we will continue to give out the Britenstool scholarships as always.

Pat thanked Marie and the Finance & Audit Committee for working so closely with the Council staff to protect the Council's finances.

## **GIRL SCOUT PRESENTATION**

Pat then introduced Elena Byrne, Amanda Casella, Hannah D'arcy, Ashley Denis, Meagan Derbyshire, Isabella Esposito, Aimee-Denise Gomez, Aminata Jaiteh, Alexis Malone, Stephanie Morales, Danysha Reyes, Lina Schulmeisters, Donna Tinglin, and Priscilla Vazquez. These young ladies each shared their Girl Scout experiences with the audience.

## **RECOGNITION OF RETIRING BOARD MEMBERS**

The following retiring Board members were recognized: Luz Allende and Anne Board. They were thanked for their years of service to the Council.

## **REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO**

Pat invited Dolores to join her for a joint report to the members. Pat and Dolores discussed the Council's vision of reaching 100,000 girls by 2017. Pat added that we expect to jumpstart this growth trajectory over the next three years. The plan lays out six strategic goals. Pat and Dolores gave a report on these six strategic goals.

The first of these six goals is to raise more money so that we will have the resources to realize our vision. By 2010, we hope to raise an annual budget of \$6 million, up from our current \$5.2 million. Dolores mentioned that although the current financial situation will make that more challenging, we know that markets are cyclical and if we take this time to make more and more potential supporters aware of our work, we will be able to continue to increase our fundraising success as the economy improves again.

A big success in the fundraising area was the \$150,000 grant from the New York Community Trust to fund our Career Exploration Program.

In the third year of the Juliette Low Society, we were delighted to induct 11 new members. The Juliette Low Society recognizes those who have named the Girl Scouts in their estate plans. We also introduced Charitable Gift Annuities as a new way for our friends to join the Juliette Low Society and earn interest during their lifetime while helping to make sure that Girl Scouting will be around for another generation. Another important development in our fundraising program was that a fourth board member made a six-figure commitment to our Campaign to Reach 100,000 girls. Our board chair Carmen Dubroc and her husband, Lewis Haber, made a bequest commitment of \$150,000 to the Council. Carmen was

asked to stand and recognized for her generosity. Four other board members, Marie Raperto, Janet Otto, Pat Stensrud and Patrice Tanaka joined the seven board members who were already members of the JLS.

Pat discussed the second goal which deals with visibility. The goal is to convey the relevance of New York City Girl Scouts by enhancing Council fundraising activities. We also need to build locally on the work that our national organization, GSUSA, is doing to revitalize the Girl Scout image. We are taking a big step forward in this area thanks to our friends at Avon, who are contributing a year's free consulting to work with us on our printed materials as well as the look of our website to make sure that we are conveying a contemporary, relevant image. Pat added that we are currently working to update the website and hoping to make it more interactive by possibly incorporating a social networking component.

Dolores talked about the third goal, which is to implement grant-funded efforts to increase Girl membership to at least 24,600 girls by 2010. Dolores reported that we had our third consecutive year of membership growth in 2008. We reached 21,085 girls.

Dolores went on to explain that although we reached more girls last year, troop size fell slightly, and as a result we actually reached fewer girls in traditional troops. 68% of our girls were members of troops, in 2008 vs. 70% in 2007 and 75% in 2006, a trend that is being seen nationally. However, based on a funded initiative begun last year, the number of volunteer-led troops at private independent schools increased to 11, showing that Girl Scouting is appealing to people of all economic backgrounds.

We continued our efforts to reach communities in which we traditionally have not been as successful in recruiting volunteer leadership. We received a number of grants for our School Break Programs, including \$80,000 from the Hearst Foundation.

Overall, 21% of our girls were Latina, which was consistent with the previous year, and 4% were Asian, a slight increase from the previous year. Many more girls identified themselves in the category of "other" or "multi-racial," which is consistent with a growing awareness of multi-culturalism in our society. We also served more than 1,607 girls in New York City Housing Authority sites.

Dolores added that another key to our success in membership in the coming years will be collaborating with other organizations to provide substantive programming to their members. Recently, thanks to introductions from our board members, we have begun working with two organizations serving homeless families in New York City to develop programs for the girls they are serving. We also are starting a volunteer led troop in a detention center in Staten Island.

Pat talked about the fourth goal which is to increase the number of volunteers in our Council to 7,500 in 2010, including volunteers in traditional troop leader roles as well as episodic volunteers. We received a special grant of \$100,000 from the Bodman Foundation to help fund our volunteer development and training program.

Last year, we had 2,036 Leaders, including 739 new Leaders trained and active—ten more than the previous year. From the Basic Leadership Training we offered to get them started to First Aid and CPR to enrichment classes, through the efforts of our 60 Council Trainers, we provided 7,728 hours of training last year. At least as important as recruitment of new leaders, our retention of leaders increased by 4% (from 59% to 63%) percent, meaning that our volunteer workforce had less turnover and more experience.

Dolores spoke on the fifth goal which is to provide fun, compelling programming to meet the needs and challenges faced by girls in our diverse urban environment. Our goal is for strong programming to improve troop-based retention by 2% each year.

Pat explained that in 2007, 17 Senior Girl Scouts received their Gold Awards and 29 Cadette girl Scouts received their Silver Awards. These awards recognize outstanding contributions in community service by our older Girl Scouts. We awarded ten Dr. Harry Britenstool Scholarships. Pat clarified that, although we are no longer carrying the Britenstool Trust on our books as an asset, this does not change the process for our Girl Scouts, and we will continue to award Britenstool Scholarships. The only change is that in the future the checks will be sent directly from the bank to the college, rather than from us to the college. We also awarded six Merrill Lynch Investing Pays Off Scholarships. And, we awarded our second annual Carmen Dubroc Bright Future Award in honor of our beloved board chair.

Dolores talked about launching our Career Exploration Program with The New York Community Trust's extraordinary \$150,000 grant for the first year of this program. The Trust did research into the root causes of the problems facing girls

today, such as high dropout rates, teenage pregnancy, drug and alcohol use. The researchers came to the conclusion that all of these programs were rooted in one thing: poverty. Statistics show that 90 percent of all women will need to support themselves on their own at some point in their lives. Girls need to know that, when they become adults, they will be able to support themselves financially.

Middle school is a critical age where girls who are not given successful role models can lose their career aspirations. We have launched the program in five of the most under-resourced middle schools in the city, which are located in the Bronx, although we hope to eventually expand the program city-wide. The program takes place during the school day, with 32 sessions on different career tracks plus trips to interesting workplaces and visits by professional women in many different fields. Girls are exposed to college-bound careers as well as vocational options, all with the idea of having girls see themselves in careers that will earn a decent salary to lift them and their families out of poverty.

Pat went on to say that Merrill Lynch, our solid supporters and the 2006 recipient of the Impact Award, continued to support our Scholars career exploration/college preparatory program at Long Island University in Downtown Brooklyn, which is just completing its 19th year. We introduced new classes including

- GSI (like CSI on TV), Girl Scout investigations, about the forensics behind solving crimes, and
- The Art of Argumentation, teaching girls to have healthy debates on controversial social topics to help girls increase their self-confidence and public speaking skills.

Dolores reported on the CLUB program, Creative Living Urban Basics, which is a series of workshops conducted throughout the year. Girls can opt to attend just one, a few, or all of them. 377 girls participated in CLUB events last year. New CLUB segments this year included:

- Around the World in 5 Hours!, where girls explore India, Greece, Korea and Egypt by traveling through the most diverse county in the country, the borough of Queens.
- On the Road Again, introducing girls to automotive careers and hands on car maintenance, and
- Law and Order, where girls learned about politics, legislation and legal careers.

Pat talked about Camp Kaufmann. Last year 3,036 girls and adults had outdoor experiences at Camp Kaufmann in 2008. In addition to our traditional programs of summer and seasonal troop and mom-and-me camping, we re-introduced resident camp with the debut of Camp Kaufmann Sleep-Away Adventure, which was greeted with a lot of excitement. Pat announced that we will again have two weeks of resident camp this summer.

Pat thanked our volunteer Camp Site Directors for giving us their weekends throughout the year to support our troop leaders and campers. In May, Pat mentioned, we are going to dedicate our new parking lot, which was built thanks to a generous challenge grant from the Reeves Foundation and through the efforts of Carol Obler, our Staten Island Association Chair and a Camp Site Director, who raised funds in the field to meet the Reeves Foundation's challenge.

Dolores continued with the sixth goal which is about keeping all the behind-the-scenes work at the Council running smoothly and efficiently. This goal is to maintain and enhance the ongoing governance and administrative functions of the Council. A highlight for 2008 was that, as our volunteer retention rate has increased, our staff retention has also improved. Staff retention improved by 9% in 2008.

Dolores reported that the Council attained a balanced operating budget in 2008, our first since 1999, despite the beginnings of a serious downturn in the economy. Dolores thanked Marie Raperto and the Finance Committee for working so closely with the staff to make this possible.

Pat and Dolores opened the floor for questions from the audience, and invited the Council's senior staff to join in responding. After several questions from the audience, Pat introduced Cheryl Swiatkowski to present the President's Awards.

## **PRESIDENT'S AWARDS**

Cheryl Swiatkowski, Chair of the Council Recognition Committee, presented the awards honoring the Council's outstanding service units. The President's Award honors service units that meet all their Council goals and make a substantial difference in their communities. The President's Award was given to three service units as follows:

### **Brooklyn**

Northbrook 2  
Joyce Brisbane and Rhonda Boston

**Queens**

Eastern Queens 5  
Roslyn Sealy and Gillian Murray

**Staten Island**

Crossroads 4  
Fran Socolick and Beth Lewandowski

**ELECTION REPORT**

Pat invited Sharon Walls, Chair of the Tellers Committee, to the podium to share the election results. Sharon reported that, by a majority of the voting delegation, the nominees for members of the Officers, Board of Directors and Council Nominating & Board Development Committee were elected.

Pat thanked Sharon and the Tellers Committee. Pat then led the newly elected in reciting the Installation Pledge. After thanking the staff for their work to make the meeting a success, Pat reminded everyone to fill in the evaluation sheet found in the packet of materials. She then thanked everyone present for attending and announced that, there being no further business, the sixty-eighth Annual Meeting of the Girl Scout Council of Greater New York was adjourned at 7:57pm. p.m.

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Cheryl L. Swiatkowski, Secretary

Note: These are draft minutes, which will be presented to Council Membership for approval at the Annual Meeting in March 2010 according to Girl Scout Council Bylaws.