

TOWN HALL QUESTIONS

MARCH 2026

COUNCIL INITIATIVES

Why were Service Units not given the courtesy to decline the change in the social media policy in the middle of cookie season prior to notice being sent out to all caregivers? By the time the council sent the update, it was too late in the season to do much. Having such defined strict social media rules only hurts the council. This should be left up to the parents to decide what they are comfortable with.

Answer: *Social media rules are designed to keep girls safe. This year we learned that GSUSA updated their rules, so in keeping the GSHG policies mirroring the GSUSA policies, we updated our rules to comply with GSUSA. Council was careful to let Service Unit volunteers know before releasing the information to other volunteers.*

What was the result of the survey from the CEO about Camp Tanglewood?

Answer: *Thank you to everyone who took the time to take the survey. Once the board of directors reviews the results, we can share the report. The feedback from this survey will directly inform us what the future looks like for Camp Tanglewood, balancing preservation, modernization, and long-term sustainability.*

What do Green Tie Guys actually do, and why does it cost \$100 to become one?

Answer: *We are so thankful for our cookie dads, male board members who are volunteers, and all our male advocates. This highlights the men who are advocating for the voice of our girls, for Girl Scouts, and the influence that supports girls and women.*

The program was launched in Savannah as a new initiative, but it will be launched to all our regions next year. It's about building awareness, advocacy and philanthropy; that's where the \$100 nomination fee comes in. The philanthropic nomination lifts up and recognizes men who champion the work of Girl Scouts and the work of women. The recognition matters because currently only about 2% of giving to girl programs comes from men. We have the opportunity to affect a positive change in the giving trend through our Green Tie Guy initiative.

The Green Tie Guy is expected to record a video that brings awareness to what we do, attend events, and fundraise for the council.

Girl Scouts License Plate

We also need to put in a plug for the Georgia Girl Scout license tag. There will be more information in upcoming editions of Five on Friday. There is a \$50 pre-order fee if you want a lower number, and a \$25 pre-order fee if you don't care about having a lower number. Details will be sent soon.

With the increase in dues, what initiatives are the council looking at to keep it affordable to girls and leaders? Any consideration of an endowment?

Answer: *This is not just an issue for our council; it is nationwide. We are focused on expanding the financial assistance program, that's where the Friends & Family campaign came from. We just reviewed our financials for the first 5 months of*

FY26, and we're already spending more than we budgeted for assistance. Through strengthening our partnerships for funding, we're creating a philanthropic culture at every level. You will start seeing a lot more philanthropic movements in our council from board and staffing.

We are exploring how endowments could be part of our long-term strategy to ensure sustainability, so girls in every zip code have access to Girl Scouts.

FINANCE/PRODUCT PROGRAM

How can we get more participation when it comes to cookie booth season?

Answer: Participation in the cookie booth season is one of the most high-profile ways to promote the cookie program and the Girl Scout movement. We want every girl interested in participate. The council works with Service Unit volunteers to ensure troops have access to the selection days. Our staff also works to secure locations throughout our footprint, providing a variety of high traffic outlets for girls in the area. Over the years, we have worked to provide options for troops of every shape and size. However, we welcome suggestions from volunteers and families on ways to increase and improve participation.

Are there other cookie awards the girls can choose from?

Answer: *The girls get to choose the rewards. We put together a list and set up a girl committee. Addie Kelly is lead for the committee and welcomes new members. We would like to have as many girls as possible vote on the number of rewards that will be on the card for the following year.*

There is also an adult volunteer committee, and the application is posted in Five on Friday. If you are interested in having your voice heard, please join the team.

Each year, volunteers continue to experience significant challenges with the technology platforms used for the cookie program. The systems are outdated, not user-friendly, and do not appear to communicate effectively with one another. This creates unnecessary confusion, duplicate work, and reporting errors that directly impact volunteers and girls. Also, several boxes were returned this cookie season. The customers complained about the freshness of the product. We also noticed the expiration date is June 2026, which was a bit concerning.

Answer: *Our goal is to make cookie season a positive, empowering experience for the girls—not an overwhelming logistical challenge for volunteers.*

Cookie freshness is important to GSHG and Little Brown Bakers (LBB). If there are issues with freshness, volunteers are asked to send the product program team pictures of the boxes, the date, and the LBB coding of the affected box. LBB will make sure that the affected boxes are made good. This year there were different expiration dates. The dates are based on the date the cookies were made. The earliest was June for our council, 3 months after our program ended.

What steps are being taken to modernize and integrate the cookie systems?

Answer: *Little Brownie Bakers and GSUSA are working to make sure their systems work together. There is still some work to be done, but they have made great strides in making the system stronger and bringing it up to date.*

What improvements are planned for volunteer training and technical support?

Answer: *In response to our volunteers, we have worked hard the past few years to make training convenient. Training is offered online and in-person on request because it is key to your success. Additionally, we divided training into smaller modules so that you can easily get to the part that you need. We added office hours where you can call and ask specific questions. If there is something else needed, please let LaDon Shaw or Susan Freeman know.*

How will council ensure accountability in award processing? Inconsistent feedback, delayed updates, and lack of accountability have resulted in girls missing out on awards they rightfully earned. This is discouraging for families and undermines the integrity of the program.

Answer: We would like to address this issue but need more information. Please contact Susan Freeman with specifics.

How did cookie season go for the entire council? Did the council earn a profit? How much does the council earn per box of cookies sold?

Answer: *The cookie program was down 3.9% from last year. We don't have the amount the council earns per box this year because not all the invoices are in yet, but that information will be available later and will be in Five on Friday.*

Will the girls earn more selling cookies next year?

Answer: *We don't have the answer at this time; it will depend on where we end up with the increase in costs.*

What measures are being implemented to provide equitable staffing and support across Service Units?

Answer: *We are proud to share that we have a product program staff member in each area this year.*

Why is the Advancement team taking FIVE MONTHS to explain the Friends and Family Campaign to troop leaders?

Answer: *The intent is to provide leaders and families with information about the purpose of the Friends and Family Campaign. They shouldn't take more than 3-5 minutes of the meeting time. All staff members attend Service Unit meetings to share information and hear concerns.*

Why is Council planning corporate fundraisers during school days? Why can't we plan these at better times for more to attend? Also, if one is not profitable, why are we continuing to repeat the same fundraiser? At what point do we discontinue the fundraiser and come up with a new idea?

Answer: *The corporate fundraisers are planned during a time when it is most convenient for business owners to attend. We do ask troops to attend if possible, so we can showcase them -- it's always best when the girls share their Girl Scouting experiences.*

To your question about unsuccessful events, we evaluate events annually to determine whether to continue them. We try to give an event 2-3 years to catch on if we feel it has potential.

PROGRAM

Is there going to be summer camp at Camp Tanglewood? There has been a lack of communication.

Answer: *We hear your frustration and acknowledge that communication around camp details has not been as clear or timely as planned. We recognize the camp brochure was delayed, and we understand how difficult that makes planning—especially when you’re balancing work and trying to secure childcare through other camps at the same time. That uncertainty is not lost on us, and we know it impacts families in a real way.*

To deliver a truly girl-led experience, we took extra time this year to gather input directly from girls across the area. We held multiple meetings with the most important people, the girls themselves. Taking the time to collect and incorporate this feedback has helped us develop a camp experience that centered around what girls want. Nothing reflects the effort more than creative themes like “Time Travel CSI” and “Spuds and Suds”. While this process caused delays, it was done with the intent of making camp more meaningful and engaging for participants. We were originally going to offer two weeks of resident camp but now we’re offering five because we heard from our girls it was what they wanted. We are now offering 12 weeks of day camp.

Addressing early bird coupons and day camp. Day camp is on GS events this year. We’ll be issuing credit for everyone who registered ahead of time to use that coupon. If someone is using cookie credits for day camp, that spot will be taken out and held, but you must email the program registrar. We will do the same thing for resident camp.

Regarding Camp Tanglewood specifically, it is still in the process of being rebuilt following the hurricane that caused significant damage to the area. There is a great deal of planning and thought going into restoring the camp in a way that meets both current needs and future expectations. The ongoing restoration work has also contributed to the timing of information being released.

We also understand your concerns about communication between regions and decisions that may feel discouraging to troop involvement, like the situation with the dining porch lights. Feedback like yours is important, and it helps highlight where clarity, consistency, and collaboration can improve. Troop initiative and investment in camp spaces should feel supported, not discouraged.

Your perspective matters, and while this year has had challenges, the goal is to build a stronger, more responsive experience moving forward—for both girls and families.

We are now hiring camp staff, so please pass it on to someone who may be interested.

We are having a unique camp in Savannah at Camp Low, Operation React. GSHG, in partnership with the Chatham Emergency Management, will ensure girls learn how to be prepared in case of an emergency. There is even going to be a helicopter and zombies.

Why would the Savannah office be mad about a troop hanging new lights on the dining porch when it's dark out there?

Answer: *We apologize if it seems like we were “mad”; that was not the intended response. The concern has more to do with adding items without prior approval. As you might imagine, volunteers and girls always have ideas about ways to improve camp – lights, flower gardens, duck houses – lots of fun things. However, some require upkeep, and others can cause unintended damage to structures, paint, or overload wiring. If you have a camp improvement idea, please submit it for approval to Ronald “Doc” Holliday at rholliday@gshg.org or Cheryl Legette, clegette@gshg.org. All ideas are reviewed by the board’s property committee and/or staff.*

At Camp Tanglewood, we know there is a new cabin in Unit 1, is it for the Brownies? Is there any information when we register our children if they are in an air-conditioned cabin (or not)?

Answer: *We’ve already invested \$1 million in Camp Tanglewood renovations. We will have some air-conditioned cabins and will work to provide climate control for as many girls as possible. The cabins are not designated for any Girl Scout level in particular.*

Can we have council programming for the year announced during summer so troop leaders can plan outings around those events? I think it would also be helpful for the Service Unit to know. Many times, this past year we heard of a new council event but already planned a troop outing the same day.

Answer: *The Program Team is already hard at work planning for the next Girl Scout year! This is something we’ve heard before, and we’re happy to share that it’s being worked on.*

We’ve moved up our timeline, and Service Unit Managers will receive a preliminary calendar in the summer. It will include program names, Girl Scout levels, dates, and locations to help with planning for the year.

We’ll also continue to add new events as opportunities come throughout the year, so there may still be a few additions along the way.

A couple of years ago, we had a question asked if the Service Unit could reserve camp sooner than six months out. We heard your requests and we’ve fixed that.

Can we improve the council fall and cookie rally? Maybe think of moving them to regions to encourage troops to coordinate day trips. Would be fun to explore things we may never heard of like a farm, amusement park, etc. I do not feel these should be at camp property unless you can do this with all camp has to offer like low ropes, archery, etc. These rallies should cost a little more so they can feel awesome!

Answer: *Our rallies are thoughtfully designed with the cookie program as the central focus, ensuring girls gain confidence, teamwork skills, and real-world business experience. Little Brownie Bakers provides carefully developed themes, activities, and materials that have been tested for engagement and effectiveness. To keep costs affordable for families, we make use of our own facilities whenever possible. Throughout the year, we also offer camp events that highlight outdoor activities and exploration. Since our cookie rally takes place during the winter*

months, all activities are hosted indoors to provide a comfortable and safe environment. At the end of each rally, we collect feedback through surveys, which plays an important role in shaping and improving next year's events.

COUNCIL SUPPORT

There appears to be a lack of adequate training and personnel available to properly support volunteers. Many Service Units are severely undermanned, while others are not providing equitable assistance or resources. In some cases, the burden falls heavily on a small number of hardworking individuals, leading to burnout and loss of experienced volunteers and council workers.

Answer: *Thank you for recognizing our hardworking staff. Although our staff works hard to support girls and volunteers, Girl Scouting has always been largely driven by a volunteer work force. To that end, volunteer training and support are priorities for us, and we strive to meet the needs of our volunteers. We recognize that Girl Scouting is largely carried out by volunteers, a model used since our inception. However, our volunteers' needs and schedules have changed significantly in the past few years - especially since COVID, and we are continuously making adjustments. Given our huge footprint, one of the ways we've tried to meet this need is by increasing the number of online trainings available and offering some virtually. We also offer some in-person training regionally, on occasion partnering with Service Units. When these options do not meet the needs of our volunteers, we provide 1:1 or small group training on request. If you have suggestions on ways to better support our volunteers, please let us know.*

Please increase troop leader training so they are offered more often to get leaders trained so they can take their troops anywhere!

Answer: *Most of our troop leader training is online. There are a few -- like outdoor skills, that must be in person, and we are offering those more frequently as the demand increases. If there is a specific interest, please let us know.*

Will the property team be hiring a manager for CMJ like they are for Camp Low?

Answer: *The formal title for all rangers is property manager (we use the two titles interchangeably). In addition, Ronald "Doc" Holliday is Property Director (CMJ based) and Denis Robertson is Assistant Property Director (Camp Low based).*

What efforts are being made to make Girl Scouting available to those less fortunate who would otherwise not be able to participate?

What programs, such as Direct Delivery, do we currently have to meet this need and are there more in the wings?

Answer: *Last year we awarded nearly \$200,000 in financial assistance to ensure girls across the council could participate in Girl Scouting. Part of this money came from the \$5 service fee that the council charges with the membership registration, but it did not cover the full amount.*

We remain committed to removing barriers so that every girl can join Girl Scouts if they choose to. The financial assistance program will continue to support families.

We have really focused on partnerships this year, partnering with youth-serving organizations like the “Y” and Boys and Girls Clubs, and we are working with public housing to provide funding and meet girls where they are. We have had long-time partnerships with insurance companies like Peach State, who cover the cost of membership as well as putting money towards uniforms.

Other ways to meet needs are the GSUSA offered scholarships and funding opportunities for membership.

If a girl wants to join Girl Scouts and/or attend camp, we are going to find a way to make that happen.

MEMBERSHIP AND SERVICE UNITS

I feel the council and Service Units plan too much in December. Is there a way to limit Service Units to one event per month? Our Service Unit plans 3 -6 events (including walking in parades) in December, and it is just too much. We try to participate as much as we can, but it starts becoming too much. Options are nice, but our Service Unit leaders become burnt out. We want to keep the good Service Unit volunteers around.

Answer: *December is a busy month for many of our Girl Scout families, and we definitely don't want anyone to feel overwhelmed. We do try to scale back a bit in November and December with Council program offerings, especially closer to the holidays, and provide a mix of family events and holiday themed fun that troops can choose from. Many of our active Service Units follow the same trend during the holidays. While Council and Service Units offer these programs to our members and families and have great participation, attendance at these events is optional. We do appreciate your feedback because it is helpful as we continue working to provide the best program events for our members and families.*

As a troop leader, I feel there is a huge disconnect from council to troop leader. Like very little conversation. Very little interaction. Maybe I am doing something right as a troop leader, but it sometimes feels lonely, on an island by myself, leading girls in an organization that trusts me to just lead with no interaction.

Answer: *We value our troop leaders and volunteers so much and try to make sure you feel supported and connected through Service Unit meetings and direct contact with your Membership Manager, Regional Director, and other staff members. In recent years, we have worked to streamline communication in an effort to respect your time. However, if more support is needed, please feel free to reach out to your Membership Manager or Regional Director – we are here for YOU. We value our relationships with all our volunteers and are committed to ongoing improvements in how we communicate and build relationships with all our volunteers.*

When is the National Convention and what proposals are being presented?

Answer: *The National Convention is taking place July 20-25, 2026 in Washington DC. Our council is sending 10 delegates/alternates. We are just now getting the information on the proposals, which will be shared in Five on Friday. We will have one session with our membership to get feedback, so our national delegates will*

be fully informed. We send our delegation informed but not instructed. (UPDATE: information can be found on our website)

Where are girls and women represented in the top board leadership positions?

Answer: *Board leadership roles are nominated by board peers based on engagement, skill sets and involvement, not gender, and these positions are reviewed annually.*

How should Girl Scouts explain board leadership representation to older girls who notice mostly male names in top roles?

Answer: *We understand how the representation could appear concerning and agree that it is an important perspective. The board's nominating committee will be provided with this feedback. It is important to note; women also serve in officer roles and as members-at-large. Fun fact, one of our officers, whose name is Michael, is a woman.*

Does male participation in Girl Scout leadership conflict with the organization's mission of uplifting girls?

Answer: *Men have historically supported and advocated for Girl Scouts, including during Juliette Gordon Low's time. Additionally, supportive men continue to contribute as volunteers, troop leaders, board members, and executive officers. Our organization encourages participation from adults who are thoughtful and engaged advocates.*

What is the broader takeaway from the board representation discussion?

Answer: *Raising concern and perspective is important. We encourage volunteers and girls to provide continued feedback through other avenues, as this is an ongoing dialogue rather than a final discussion.*

From the Chat Box (during the meeting)

Program Questions:

We have previously submitted a request for the upcoming Girl Scouts Love State Parks event to be held in Adel, GA at Reed Bingham State Park, but we have not received a response. Additionally, we have made multiple requests for council support in the Valdosta area, including assistance with hosting or facilitating activities for our local troops, and have not received any follow-up communication. For troops in our region, traveling several hours for short day camps is often not feasible, which limits participation and access to programming. We are eager to provide meaningful opportunities for our girls locally, but we need support and communication from the council to make that possible. Can you please provide an update on these requests and let us know what steps can be taken to better support troops in the Valdosta, GA area?

Answer: One option is Programs by Request <https://form.jotform.com/251475873731060>
[| Town Hall - Virtual | Microsoft Teams](#)

Is council looking at increasing the \$5 council fee?

Answer: *For the upcoming membership year, we have chosen not to increase the council fee.*

For troops located farther away from many of the scheduled day camps, it can be discouraging to participate when families are required to drive several hours for activities that only last a short time. This is one of the main reasons many troops in our area are unable or choose not to attend. Are there any plans to offer more accessible programming or activities closer to the Valdosta, GA area so that troops in this region have more opportunities to participate without the burden of extended travel?

Answer: *Day camp is a challenge to deliver away from our facilities. We have many Service Units that run successful day camps in their region with volunteers. We have instituted a "programs by request" that will travel to deliver programs in other areas. We would love some input. t*

<https://form.jotform.com/251475873731060> | [Town Hall - Virtual | Microsoft Teams](#)

Do you have to be a Girl Scout to attend camp?

Answer: *Non-Girl Scouts are welcome to attend, and the registration fee is included in their fees. Girls are encouraged to bring friends. It's the best way to learn about Girl Scouts.*

What is a credit please? Is that a refund to my method of payment? I was told that there are no coupons for day camp so this is the first time I have heard about this. Is it some kind of "credit" for the store or a "credit" for programs or a "credit" for trefoil fun finds?

My parent that WAS using cookie credits got mad and asked the council office to change her reward to the letterman jacket because she couldn't get signed up and was unhappy.

Answer: *The cookie credits for camp were set up in the system to be used for resident camp only, which made it challenging to negotiate for day camp. However, in one or two instances where a parent wanted to apply it to day camp, the balance was applied as a shop credit. Next year we'll make the system adjustments. We apologize for the inconvenience.*

Funding

So far as grants, are Service Units able to utilize those services to purchase supplies for our camps: Twilight Camp, Survivor Day, etc.? Are we able to write those proposals, or do we submit our requests to council and be connected with someone to assist us?

Answer: *If you know about a grant, you'll need to contact the council. The information can be found in our Operational Volunteer Policies under Policy 2.6 in the procedures: The council is the only legal entity eligible to use the 501c3 status for grant writing purposes; all other groups (Service Units, troops, etc.) are subgroups of the council and, as such, are not an independent legal entity.*

1. Only council staff are authorized to write, submit, or manage grant proposals and grant awards on behalf of Girl Scouts of Historic GA. Individuals, Troops, and Service Units are prohibited from initiating or submitting grants independently, as this could cause conflicts with the funding strategy, compliance requirements, and the organizational reporting structure for the council.

2. If an individual, Troop, or Service Unit, comes across any relevant grant opportunities, please notify the council's Customer Care Team via phone or email so that we can follow up accordingly.

Product Program

When are the Girl Scout cookies made? Where are they stored? How are they stored?

Why do the cookies expire in the same year we sell them? Why can't we sell once they are produced?

Answer: *Parent company for LBB cookies is Keebler. These cookies are manufactured in Louisville, Kentucky. Once they leave the bakery, they are stored at 4 different delivery locations across GSHG. We believe cookies expire within the same year based on the ingredients, like other food products in stores. We welcome your questions and hope you'll consider joining our Product Program volunteer committee to help plan the programs.*