

MEMO

Attachment G



Date: April 5, 2011
To: Board of Directors
From: Sue Matz, Linkage to the Membership Task Group Chair
Subject: Final Report: Linkage to the Membership Task Group

Attached is the final report of the Linkage to the Membership Task Group. As you may recall from the charges, the purpose of this task group is to make recommendations to the board on the optimal form of linkage and communication with the members of the council. The communication methods selected must promote trust and efficiency, ensure an inclusive structure for the voices of stakeholders, and solicit a high degree of participation from constituents from all geographic areas of the council.

The task group separated the types of communication into five categories:

1. Ongoing status and action on regular business issues facing the council
2. "State of the Council" report to the membership
3. Annual Council Meeting
4. Important issues facing girls
5. Critical issues facing the council, in which the board will benefit by hearing from the membership.

You will see the purpose, frequency, and method of communication that we are recommending on the attached document. We have included a summary annual calendar at the end of the document.

The second document is a visual model of our communication. We have tried to show the various ways of communicating to our diverse audiences. Please note that any of the communication methods may be used with any of the audiences.

Please review the documents prior to the board meeting and feel free to ask any questions. At the April board meeting, we will be asking for board input on the methods and frequency of communication.

Guiding Principles for Board Communication with all Stakeholders

The board carries a responsibility to proactively understand, represent, and consider the diverse viewpoints of our ownership in deliberations and decisions. Although the final decisions rest with the board, we understand that multiple perspectives produce better results and that integrity and transparency of our communication will lead to trust. We will use the following principles to guide our communication with stakeholders.

1. We will ensure an inclusive structure for the voices of stakeholders and include within that structure multiple communication channels in an effort to reach all voices. We will remember that our members are as diverse as our world – some want electronic communication and others will prefer face-to-face conversation.
2. We value the voices of our members and will be respectful and mindful in our communications. We will strive for communication that is broad enough so all members are reached, yet targeted enough to allow for one-on-one dialogue.
3. We will use a systems approach in communication to amplify success and limit missteps. We will treat all communication as a complex web of audiences, pathways, and messages.
4. We will approach every dialogue as an opportunity to discover new information and lead to greater understanding. Thoughts, feelings, and behavior are all sources of information, are equally legitimate, and should be taken into consideration.
5. We will provide updates, status reports, and timely communication on a regular basis. Our goal is that there are no surprises.
6. We recognize that our owners often will bring input focused on management issues and we will have a process to direct this input appropriately and continue to educate all stakeholders on the channels for communication.
7. Our communication messages will focus on what is in the best interest of our girl members. We are willing to risk short-term gains to do the right thing for girls and ensure long-term success.
8. We will listen to understand and err on the side of over-communicating.

Board Communication to the Council Membership

4/4/11

Type of Board Communication	Purpose	Frequency	Method
Ongoing status and action on regular business issues facing the council	To communicate to the membership on board action	At least three times per year (February, May, September) and as needed	<p>A board update report will be communicated on the council website and through other means, as appropriate (e-newsletter, Facebook, service unit communication, etc.)</p> <p>At least once per year, the board will offer an online chat/web-based discussion with members.</p>
“State of the council” report to the membership	To communicate the status of issues facing the council, including finances, progress toward achievement of the Ends, relationship to GSUSA and the community, etc.	Annually	A state of the council report will be issued following the annual meeting. It will be available in written form and will be posted on the council website. A one-page synopsis will be sent to members.
Annual council meeting	To carry out the corporate and legal responsibility of the council to fulfill requirements of the State of Ohio	Annually	A meeting will be scheduled annually in April and will be communicated to the membership.

Type of Board Communication	Purpose	Frequency	Method
Important issues facing girls	To gather input on the issues impacting on girls' lives in order to make informed decisions that are in the best interests of our girl members.	Annually and as needed	At least annually, (beginning in 2012) members, girls, parents, and community members will have the opportunity to give input to the board through face-to-face meetings. To facilitate this dialogue, Member Forums will be scheduled in one location each year(alternating between the northern section of the council and the southern section). Other means, such as electronic surveys may also be used.
Critical issues facing the council, in which the board will benefit by hearing from the membership. This may include national council proposals, property issues, or funding issues.	To solicit input prior to board action and to communicate data, analysis of issues, and rationale for decisions following board action	As needed	As issues arise, a special task group will be appointed to determine the best means of communication with the membership and other stakeholders. This may include face-to-face meetings or electronic or written means.

Recommended Board Calendar for Communication

January	Board will identify issues to be communicated with membership and will set dates of annual council meeting and Member Forums
February	Board communication through (council website and other means) on action taken in the past four months.
April	Annual Council Meeting
May	Distribution of State of the Council Report
	Board communication (through council website) on action taken in past four months
September	Board communication (through council website) on action taken in past four months
Fall	Member Forums (alternating year between Toledo/Lima and Dayton/Cincinnati – beginning in 2012)

MAXIMIZING VOICE AND COMMUNICATION

