

MEMO

Attachment H



Date: June 15, 2018
To: Board of Directors
From: Roni Luckenbill, CEO
Subject: Marketplace Competition Proposal

We are in a moment that requires a united council-wide and Movement-wide response to a competitive threat from Boy Scouts that is targeting our girls, volunteers, and revenue sources. I appreciate the direct feedback many of you have given about the need for better communication, information, and tools. Across the country, councils are acknowledging this “new normal” and what it means to our organization. We are reprioritizing our resources, ways of work, and strategies to rapidly respond to this direct threat to our membership, volunteers, and founding sources.

At Girl Scouts of Western Ohio it is our top priority to harmonize these local actions within the national enterprise-wide effort. We are directing resources into grassroots mobilization, updated and targeted marketing, and accelerating our work in volunteer and digital solutions.

The actions that we take over the next eighteen months are critical in defining the importance of Girl Scouting for our girls, our families, our communities, and our nation. We have to be bold and do things differently, demonstrating fearless leadership, resilience and Girl Scout grit. Thank you for your support, feedback, and guidance, and for your teamwork and engagement as we move forward together.

The Proposed Solution

We began to address the competitive threats almost a year ago. There are a number of staff teams working on a variety of work streams that include offensive approaches, defensive action, and strengthened recruitment of girls and volunteers.

Our approaches are varied and cross functions and targeted audiences. We will increase communication of our unique value in the community, correct marketplace confusion and misperceptions, and make it easier for Girl Scout and community volunteers to advocate for girls and the Girl Scout experience.

We know that Girl Scouts is the best – and only – leadership program developed exclusively by and for girls. Our history and our results speak for themselves. The actions we are taking now will ensure that Girl Scouts’ brand assets, our cookie program proceeds and our curriculum are not co-opted by competitors. Ongoing communication to our target audiences will be launched and messaging will be crafted for the ever-changing landscape.

How We Will Measure Success

The overarching goal of this project is to ensure that more girls are having a great experience in Girl Scouts, delivered by a growing number of well prepared and supported volunteers. There are three types of measures that we will use to ensure that we are achieving success. The first assesses membership results, the second looks at placement of our messaging, and the third identifies target audience understanding of the benefits of Girl Scouting. In each of these areas, we will need to consistently collect, assess, and share data.

Cost of This Project

The detailed costs of this project are available and summarized below. In summary, to come out strong in this first year of Boy Scout recruitment of girls, we are estimating the need to supplement our operating budget by approximately \$400,000. My request is to allocate up to \$400,000 to be spent through December 2019, from operating reserves, to support the marketing and recruitment processes and resources needed.

We maintain operating reserves to allow for extraordinary events that will impact our organization and future, and are required by GSUSA to maintain a reserve of six months or approximately \$6,000,000. Currently, our operating reserves are \$9,299,000 or 8.9 months. Allocating \$400,000 to this work will bring our operating reserves to approximately \$8,899,000 (8.8 months).

I believe that this is the time to use some of the reserves to be able to strengthen our efforts and ensure our future is not comprised. By the end of December 2019, we will be building these costs into our operating budget. This move will allow us to make necessary improvements in recruitment, marketing, and communication.

We will be happy to answer questions at our June board meeting and to share specifics, as requested. I anticipate that you will be as excited about the possibilities as we are.

Summary of Additional Costs	
General Awareness Campaign: billboards, radio PSAs, TV PSAs, Facebook boosts, wearable shirts for recruitment staff, yard signs, community booths	\$88,000
Recruitment Expansion: digital advertising campaign, scarves for volunteer recruiters, banners for open houses, family packets, programmatic giveaways, mailings to educators, staff training	\$192,100
Family Engagement: family activity patch, mailing, program guide in every household	\$110,000
Cookie Promotion Expansion: digital marketing campaign	\$9,900
TOTAL	\$400,000

