February 18, 2020

Dear Seneca Waterways Council Family,

Today, the national organization of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy to achieve two key objectives: equitably compensate victims who were harmed during their time in Scouting and to continue to carry out Scouting’s mission for years to come.

I highlight below the important points that are most relevant to the Seneca Waterways Council:

- **The Seneca Waterways Council has not filed for bankruptcy.** Our Council is legally separate, distinct and financially independent from the national organization.

- **Scouting programs will continue.** This means that unit meetings and activities, district and council events, other Scouting adventures and countless service projects will take place as usual. In short, we expect no changes to the local Scouting experience in Western New York.

- **Scouting is safer now than ever before.** Over many years, we’ve developed some of the strongest expert-informed youth protection policies found in any youth-serving organization. I can also assure you that our volunteers and employees take youth protection extremely seriously and do their part to help keep kids safe.

- **Restricted donations – past, present or future – can only be used for their designated purpose.** In addition, Friends of Scouting (FOS) and other annual donations made to our Council will continue to fund necessary day-to-day expenses that are critical to local Scouting programs.

While it is premature for us to speculate on what the possible financial ramifications will be on our Council with the National Council filing Chapter 11, the fact that we are separately incorporated and most of our assets are donor restricted, would at best, indicate we could have limited involvement.

The National Council has developed a short video to help explain what the Chapter 11 means for Scouting. For our part, weekly unit meetings will continue to happen, camps will continue to run, and the magic of Scouting will continue to develop leadership and character in young men and women here in Western New York. Additionally, we will continue to enforce the strictest youth protection program guidelines of any youth program in the country and if a leader uses Scouting for malicious purposes, we will aggressively push legal actions where possible.

We will do everything we can to provide helpful, transparent responses and ensure your Scouting experience continues to be a great one.

*It is vitally important to know that, despite national BSA restructuring, Seneca Waterways Council remains focused on and committed to our mission and being good stewards of your financial support. We will continue, without distraction, to run a strong and safe Scouting program for my kids and your kids, and to develop them into great productive members of our community for generations to come.*

Thank you for all you do for the youth of our community.

Yours in Scouting,

Stephen T. Hoitt
Scout Executive