

**Board of Trustees Meeting
December 14, 2016 ♦ 6:15 pm
Minutes - Approved**

Chair: Lauren Schlezinger ♦ Minutes: Heidi Schell ♦ Timekeeper: Jon Herstein

Attendees

Board

Nathaniel Bergson-Michelson
Kristine Berman
Lois Fried
Scott Haber
Jon Herstein
Ware Kuschner

Staff

Matt Mandel
Gene Podkaminer
Betsy Rosen
Arlene Rosenberg
Heidi Schell
Lauren Schlezinger
Adam Steinberger

Staff

Rabbi Lisa Delson
Rabbi Dan Feder
Josh Mason-Barkin
Max Ruzi
Karen Wisialowski

Guests

Alison Poggi-Leon (PTO)
Helaine Darling
Carla Koren, Morgan Stanley

Summary of General Trustee Action Items

1. Attend Panim el Panim’s Multifaith Day of Learning on Teen and Young Adult Mental Health on January 22 from 2-5pm. Online registration coming soon.

Summary of Specific Committee/Individual Action Items

1. Facilities Committee (Gary Fishtrom) to finalize Facilities Reserve Study and get an updated quote on the sanctuary dome earthquake retrofit.
2. Finance Committee to research best practices related to target balances in the Operating Reserve Fund (the temple’s rainy day fund) and report back to Board.

Meeting called to order by President Lauren Schlezinger at 6:15PM.

Cultivating Sacred Space

1. Welcome & Blessing for Community Service 2 min
2. D’var Torah (Gene Podkaminer) 5 min

Special Guests

3. Carla Koren, Morgan Stanley – PTS Investment Policy 30 min Presentation

Carla gave an overview of the markets to date. This has been an exceptionally volatile year, especially immediately after the election. Morgan Stanley’s investment plan for PTS was approved in September and implemented in November 2016. (A copy is available in the temple office.) Carla reviewed highlights of the investment plan and shared information about Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) investing. Morgan Stanley team will meet monthly to review portfolio. Gene Podkaminer emphasized that the Investment Committee wants Board to have a long-term focus on risk and returns. Investment Committee will look at returns regularly and report to Board on a quarterly and annual basis. Will also continue to evaluate investment policy.

4. Helaine Darling – Congregant Perspective 5 min

Helaine is a 40-year congregant and shared her observations with the Board. She complimented improvements including complimentary guest “tickets” for singles for High Holy Days and Josh Mason-Barkin’s new design of

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the Bulletin. Helaine suggested we consider using plain tickets for HHD instead of name badges and the plastic holders. She also expressed a desire for more and varied activities for the older congregants. She encouraged the Board to seek out Legacy gifts. Helaine is involved with HICAP of San Mateo County, which provides Medicare counseling for Medicare recipients. Consider having a counselor at PTS once a month to answer questions and educate congregants.

Living our Mission and Values

5. Communication Priorities (*Josh Mason-Barkin*) 30 min Presentation

Main purposes of communication – to inform, inspire, listen and connect, as originally presented by Nathaniel Bergson-Michelson in the spring of 2016. Need to evaluate the strengths, competencies, bonuses and weaknesses of each communication tool and use it to its best advantage.

Focusing on the Bulletin, what are the challenges?

- Readership - no way of knowing how many people are reading it. Thesis is that few people are reading entire Bulletin = low impact for amount of effort that goes into Bulletin
- Massive investment of resources both in hard costs (appx \$15K per year including postage and mailing) and staff time/resources
- Most synagogues send some form of bulletin; there is a trend to ask congregants if they prefer to receive hard copy or electronic. Shifting to partial electronic distribution would not result in significant savings (small reduction in postage and printing, but creation still requires significant staff time.)
- Bulletin keeps the beat, which means that all other communication derives from the Bulletin. Bulletin should not play this role because content is created so far in advance of when things are happening that items are missed or are not fully formed at print time
- Goals are unclear: Inform? Connect? Inspire?

Proposed idea:

- Currently send out 10 Bulletin issues a year; propose that we shift to 3-4 a year
- Focus on inspiration and connection
- Thematic nature – e.g. mental health; likely to have longer shelf life
- No “monthly” content
- No promotional content
- Longer-form articles and essays
- Create and send a monthly 4-pager with information, events, calendar, etc.

There was discussion. Overall, people really liked the idea and felt it made sense. Helaine suggested we consider looking at demographic breakdown of congregants and target the Bulletin to the largest demographic. Josh’s proposed new model can work as long as other communication tools are also working well (e.g., Schmooze, website, email, social media, etc.) This model also frees up staff time so they can focus on other mission-focused priorities.

Questions to consider:

- How might we prioritize the four goals for communications?
- How do we gauge efficacy of communications if not by quantitative measures given our new measures of success?
- How do we assess whether or not we’re succeeding at being mission/vision-driven in our communications?

6. Post-Election Social Action and Social Justice Opportunities (*Rabbi Delson*) 10 min Discussion

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New measures of success agreed upon at Board retreat include: Ma'asim tovim (tikkun olam), connection to family, spirituality, sense of belonging and learning. Opportunity to do more around Ma'asim tovim. People are primed to do something and want to make an impact in the world, especially following the election. Currently do not have a Social Action Committee or Chair. Panim el Panim is addressing social justice around teens and mental health but there's much more we can do. Rabbi Delson shared ideas for issues to pursue based on a Board survey conducted prior to the meeting. Rabbi Delson and Rabbi Feder met with Rabbi Jessica Kirschner from the Religious Action Center (RAC) – opportunity to partner with them and their initiatives including criminal and racial justice, LGBT rights, civil liberties, environment. Rabbi Delson asked for suggestions of congregants who are fired up after the election and want to do something. **January 12 @ 7pm** Rabbi Delson will lead a gathering of interested congregants to share post-election reactions, hopes and fears, look at RAC actions and think of our own, and distill down to 3 PTS priorities.

7. Panim el Panim Update (*Arlene Rosenberg*) 5 min Report

Arlene gave an update on the inaugural event for PTS' Panim el Panim social justice initiative on teen and young adult mental health. **Sunday, January 22 from 2-5pm at PTS.** Main goal of the day is to educate the faith community about the problem of teen/young adult mental illness and the unique role that faith institutions can play in addressing the problem. Arlene encouraged Board members to attend, bring their families, encourage other families to attend and help spread the word to other congregations.

8. Motion: To allocate \$1692 from the Charitable Giving Fund to ARZA (American Reform Zionist Association) to support emergency relief in Haifa following the recent devastating fires. The Rabbis' Discretionary Fund will add \$108 to this amount so that PTS's total donation is \$1800. There will be \$0 remaining in the Charitable Giving Fund. (*Heidi Schell*) 3 min Vote

Background: The fires started Tuesday, November 22, 2016. Since then, over 110 different fires were identified in what is considered to be the worst fires in Israel's history. In Haifa alone, over 1000 homes were destroyed and over 60,000 people were displaced. For more information, go to <http://www.arza.org/blog/post/israel-on-fire>. Next week's Schmooze will notify the congregation about this gift and ask them if they are inclined to give, please consider replenishing the Charitable Giving Fund or directing their funds to ARZA.

Heidi moved. Nathaniel seconded. Motion passed.

Governance/Finance

9. Finance Update (*Adam Steinberger and Karen Wisialowski*) 20 min Report

Adam acknowledged the tremendous work that Gary Fishtrom does on behalf of PTS to maintain our facilities, including the thorough work required to commission the Facilities Reserve Study (FRS) by a third-party consultant. Our last FRS was completed in 2012, and tonight a draft of a new FRS is being presented. The FRS projects the future costs to maintain and replace the many aspects of our facility based on the useful life of each item. This, in turn, informs the funds that PTS should set aside to complete these projects. As of November 30,

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2016, the balance in PTS's "Reserve Study Fund" (together with the Facility Assessment Fund and the Plaque Sales Fund) is \$460K. Have been adding approximately \$130K to the Reserve Study Fund each year. The current draft of the FRS suggests that PTS should contribute an additional \$131K in the current fiscal year (already budgeted), with that amount growing by approximately \$5K per year for the next several years. The FRS does not include normal repairs and maintenance.

In addition to the items in the FRS, PTS's Sanctuary dome requires an earthquake retrofit at an estimated cost of \$260K.

1) Do we agree that this needs to be done and when?

2) How should we pay for it? The \$260K retrofit is not included in the \$460K Reserve Study Fund. One alternative – make part of overall philanthropy efforts (Financial Freedom/Endowment). Another is to use some of the \$650K currently in the Operating Reserve Fund (our rainy day fund). In order to make a decision about tapping the Operating Reserve Fund for the dome or other uses, the Board asked the Finance Committee to do some analysis on best practices related to minimum balances in our Operating Reserve Fund. **Action:** Facilities Committee (Gary Fishtrom) to finalize Facilities Reserve Study and get an updated quote on the sanctuary dome earthquake retrofit. **Action:** Finance Committee to research best practices related to target balances in the Operating Reserve Fund (the temple's rainy day fund) and report back to Board.

Governance/Other

10. Motion: To designate the following parsonage amounts, represented as percentages of total current salary, as requested by each clergy member for the year 2017. 3 min Vote

Rabbi Feder 42.8%	Rabbi Delson 73.4%
Rabbi Plotnik 45.5%	Cantor Reich 22.1%

Scott moved. Heidi seconded. Motion passed.

11. Motion: To approve Preschool Faculty Handbook and the PTS Employee Handbook, as revised. 10 min Vote

Scott shared that revisions have been in the works for many months. PTS, together with outside counsel, has reviewed the handbooks and ensured that they are up to date and compliant with current state and federal law. Report in Board packet highlights key changes, which were shared with Personnel Committee prior to Board meeting.

Scott moved. Nathaniel seconded. Motion passed.

12. Packet Q&A 5 min Discussion

Lauren shared that in January she will be asking for feedback on the Board meetings, functioning, etc. We will also take time to reflect on our goals and progress towards them. There will be small group dinners in January with Rabbi Feder and Lauren for Board members to socialize and continue to get to know one another.

13. Consent Agenda 2 min Vote

Approved minutes from November 16, 2016 Board meeting as shown in the Board packet. Motion passed.

Concluding Prayer

Meeting was adjourned at 8:35pm