

Board of Trustees Meeting
March 15, 2017 ♦ 6:15 pm
Minutes - Approved

Chair: Lauren Schlezinger ♦ Minutes: Heidi Schell ♦ Timekeeper: Jeff Lerner

Attendees

Board

Nathaniel Bergson-Michelson
Marc Engel
Julie Feuchtwang
Scott Haber
Marilyn Hollinger
Jeff Lerner
Matt Mandel

Gene Podkaminer
Betsy Rosen
Arlene Rosenberg
Heidi Schell
Lauren Schlezinger
David Silberman
Yash Snider
Adam Steinberger

Staff

Rabbi Lisa Delson
Rabbi Dan Feder
Rabbi Molly Plotnik
Max Ruzi
Allison Steckley
Karen Wisialowski

Guests

Alison Poggi-Leon (PTO)
Drew Ehrlich
Rebecca Ezersky
Eric Schlezinger
Judy Schmulewicz
Herb Schmulewicz

Summary of General Trustee Action Items

1. Lauren reminded Board members to sign up for D'var Torah (volunteers needed for April, May and June): <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0449acaf2aa7fa7-board>
2. Lauren reminded Board members to sign up for Shabbat welcome: <https://tinyurl.com/PTS-Shabbat>

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

Cultivating Sacred Space

1. Welcome & Blessing for Community Service 2 min
Lauren welcomed members of the Emerging Leaders Cohort including Eric Schlezinger, Judy Schmulewicz, Herb Schmulewicz and Alison Poggi-Leon
2. D'var Torah (*Heidi Schell*) 5 min
3. Board Activity 15 min Small Group Discussion

Vision: The Big Picture

4. Youth Engagement: National NFTY Conference (*Drew Ehrlich & Rebecca Ezersky*) 10 min Report

Rebecca and Drew shared highlights from their positive experience at the NFTY convention in Chicago.

5. Member Engagement & Community Building 40 min
(*Lauren Schlezinger / Matt Mandel*)
 - Engagement vs. Affiliation Group Discussion
 - PTS Update Report

Small groups discussed the following questions related to an article about relationship-based engagement (<https://tinyurl.com/mrvzdww>)

- Do you agree with the author's view about embracing a relationship-based engagement model? Majority agreed.
- Which of these lessons/strategies might we adopt at PTS? Need to have opportunities to engage in

Important Dates for Trustees

Executive Committee Meeting—April 3rd meeting canceled ♦ Board Meeting—April 19, 6:15pm
Special Evening with Rabbi Dr. David Dalin—April 22, 7pm ♦ Annual Meeting—June 4, 9am

- smaller group situations – e.g., Shalom in the Home, Solidarity gathering, small Hebrew groups at Religious School, chavurot
- What suggestions do you have for measuring engagement? Social mapping software. Survey people on their experience at an event.

Matt gave an update on Community Engagement plans. Want to develop and use various tools to enhance the strength of our community.

- Conduct assessment of relationships with members of PTS and identify connections among congregants
- Track attendance at events
- Review activities at PTS to recommend enhancements for fostering connections among congregants and building connections between different events
- Measurements for success
- IACC meeting on April 24 on community building
- Leadership Summit for PTS members (April 27 6-9pm)

Living Our Mission and Values

6. 2017-18 Budget Presentation (*Adam Steinberger*)

Bylaws References: [Article VIII, Section 6](#)

40 min Presentation & Discussion

Adam gave an overview of the budget process and the proposed budget for 2017-18. This year departments were asked to submit wish lists with “big ideas” along with their budget requests. According to our by-laws, the Board of Trustees must submit a balanced budget at the annual meeting 2017-18 proposed budget is \$4.086M, compared to \$3.958M projected for 2016-17. Key assumptions that drive the projected budget include:

Revenue

- Membership commitment – average increase of 3.5%
- Preschool tuition increase of 4% and a small increase to the number of students in extended care
- Slightly fewer Religious School students
- HHD fundraising goal same as last year
- \$20K net proceeds from a fundraising event; \$8K less in general support, because this figure is difficult to project
- As in past years, Religious School continues to be substantially subsidized as a service provided by the congregation

Expenses and Uses of Funds

- 3.5% increase in personnel salaries, with exceptions to bring some employees to a market rate
- \$12K placeholder for security
- Continued commitment to funding the facility reserve fund, \$152K projected
- Mortgage – \$103K, which is same payment as last year; higher amount going to principle due to 2016 prepayment
- Decrease in office expenses due to Bulletin changes and overall good housekeeping

Key Takeaways

- Preschool continues to contribute the largest amount to revenue, compared to other “departments”
- The board should consider a variety of ways to increase revenue from membership commitment, fundraising, religious school tuition and other means

Suggestions included: Consider setting aside a % of the budget (e.g. 5%) each year towards rainy day fund. Is the budget the place to do this or should this come from philanthropy/fundraising efforts? We currently have a policy

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of transferring actual net surplus to the Operating Reserve Fund, which is a “rainy day” fund; current Operating Reserve Fund balance is \$648K.

Finance Committee: near- and mid-term priorities:

- Build on existing team, including Board participation (add 1-2 Board members)
- Evaluate internal controls
- Help Karen build reporting tools
- Develop a multi-year financial plan and measure against longer term goals

7. Goal Check In (*Lauren Schlezinger*) 10 min Discussion

Congregant Engagement – original goal was to improve outreach and cultivation of new and existing members (grow membership). Goal as stated is vague and difficult to measure. Lauren suggests two new, alternative goals:

- Action plan for improving congregant engagement including timing, responsibility and measures
- Action plan for recruiting new members, including timing, responsibility and measures

8. Social Action Update (*Arlene Rosenberg / Rabbi Delson*) 5 min Report

When and how can the congregation’s clergy, staff or lay leaders take a stance on a social justice issue in the name of the congregation? Arlene will be presenting a proposed process for Board’s consideration in the near future.

Hunger Awareness month will begin on Passover and run through early May. April 7 – Hunger Awareness Shabbat. “Clean out your pantry” food drive.

Rabbi Delson shared the B’rit Olam (the World We Want Covenant) that the Religious Action Center is asking congregations to sign and commit to forming and leading a team to respond to hatred and bigotry. Wanted to bring this to the Board’s attention and get initial reaction. Board responded positively. Five areas of pursuing justice in the B’rit Olam include:

- Taking action in solidarity with vulnerable communities (e.g., Muslims, immigrants, LGBT community, etc.)
- Work to pass key proactive city, county and state policies that model the world we want to build in one of these areas: immigrant rights, criminal justice reform, health care, climate change and religious freedom,
- Support statewide and national campaigns of the RAC and the Reform Movement
- Build relationships with congregations and organizations of other religious traditions, races and classes
- Create a culture of civic dialogue and discussion in our congregation or community

Governance

9. Motion: Elect Julie Feuchtwang to the Board of Trustees for a 3 min Vote
term to commence immediately through June 30, 2017.

(*Marc Engel*)

[Bylaws Reference: Article VIII, Section 4](#)

Marc made the above motion. Yash Snider seconded. Motion passed.

10. Packet Q&A 10 min Discussion

Action: Lauren reminded board members to sign up for Shabbat welcome: <https://tinyurl.com/PTS-Shabbat>.

11. Motion: To increase the Facilities Reserve Assessment paid 5 min Vote

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during the first 10 years of membership from \$2,500 (\$250 per year) to \$3,000 (\$300 per year) for new members joining on/after March 16, 2017. (*Adam Steinberger*)

Bylaws Reference: Article VIII, Section 11

Background: The Board approved an increase in the Facility Reserve Assessment from \$1,800 to \$2,500 in March 2011. The proposed amount represents a 3% increase over the past six years and would bring the PTS fee in line with that charged by PTBE.

Heidi Schell made the motion. David Silberman seconded. The increase helps us keep pace with increase in expenses. Will affect only new members starting March 16, 2017. Question was raised as to why members only pay for 10 years. It is a common tradition among congregations across the country and it is something that we've done historically. Worth further discussion. Motion passed.

12. Consent Agenda

2 min Vote

Consent agenda was approved with change to Social Action report made by Arlene.

Concluding Prayer

Meeting was adjourned at 8:38PM.