

Board of Trustees
April 19, 2017 ♦ 6:15 pm
Approved

Chair: Lauren Schlezinger ♦ Minutes: Heidi Schell ♦ Timekeeper: Arlene Rosenberg

Attendees

Board

Nathaniel Bergson-Michelson
Marc Engel
Julie Feuchtwang
Lois Fried
Scott Haber
Jon Herstein
Marilyn Hollinger
Ware Kuschner
Jeff Lerner

Matt Mandel

Gene Podkaminer
Betsy Rosen
Arlene Rosenberg
Heidi Schell
Lauren Schlezinger
Sharon Silverman
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)

Summary of General Trustee Action Items

1. Board members to suggest names of congregants who would be interested in being part of or chairing the Culture of Philanthropy team.
2. Trustees to consider meaningful gift to the Financial Sustainability campaign.
3. Board members encouraged to RSVP and attend the May 3 Leadership Summit.

Summary of Specific/Individual Action Items

1. Karen to consider feedback on the proposed increase to the B'nei Mitzvah fees.

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 (*Scott Haber*) 5 min
3. Board Activity 15 min

The Board reviewed and discussed an article that describes attributes of effective Board members.

Living Our Mission and Values

4. Motion: To approve the 2017-18 budget, as presented by the Finance Committee. (*Adam Steinberger*) 20 min Vote
[Bylaws References: Article VIII, Section 6](#)

Adam explained the minor budget changes since the Finance Committee's presentation to the Board last month including a \$7,500 grant from the Federation for the Religious School and a few small items, which resulted in a

Important Dates for Trustees

Special Evening with Rabbi Dr. David Dalin—April 22, 7pm (5:30 Dinner at Saha'ara)
Leadership Summit—May 3, 6pm ♦ Executive Committee Meeting—May 4, 7pm
Board Meeting—May 17, 6:15pm ♦ Annual Meeting—June 4, 9am

net \$6,400 surplus allocated to the Operating Reserve. Motion made by Adam Steinberger, seconded by Matt Mandel. There was discussion. Karen and Adam responded to questions. Motion passed.

5. Philanthropy Update and Goal Check In (*Betsy Rosen, Lauren Schlezinger, Sharon Silverman and Karen Wisialowski*) 20 min Discussion

Goal of Culture of Philanthropy team is to create a holistic, integrated approach to philanthropy with the Donor at the center. Looking at ways to integrate the different fundraising “pods” including Membership Commitment, Annual Campaign (High Holy Day Appeal), and Financial Sustainability (pay off mortgage, create endowment, secure legacy gifts). Important to educate donors and connect individually with donors. Help them understand where the funds are coming from and where they are going.

- Annual Campaign (Sharon Silverman): would like to see percentage of people who give to Annual Campaign increase every year
- Financial Sustainability (Betsy Rosen): \$678K has been raised so far, including \$600K from 11 families (and the remainder from the 60/50/10 gala) towards retiring the mortgage; approximately \$500K left to raise; Betsy asked Trustees to be part of the campaign
- Membership Commitment (Matt Mandel): crafting different versions of letters for different audiences; introducing idea of Tzedakah Circle that accounts for total yearly giving; actual cost per family is approximately \$3,800/year (actual figure dependent on methodology for calculation)
- Fundraising/Board Commitment – Susan Battat is leading this effort. The current plan is to run a Purim Basket fundraiser in February 2018.

Action: Lauren encouraged Board members to suggest names of congregants who would be interested in being part of or chairing the Culture of Philanthropy team.

6. B'nei Mitzvah Fees (*Karen Wisialowski*) 10 min Report

Karen proposed that we increase bar/bat mitzvah lifecycle fee per student to \$1,800 payable over three years, which is comparable to nearby synagogues. Currently charging \$1,050. There was discussion about how to balance getting up to “market” rate with making such a large increase all at once. Communication and transparency are really important and emphasis that financial hardship will not be an obstacle. Communicate what the fees are paying for but avoid making it a “fee for service.” Consider creating a letter for everyone who is new to B'nei Mitzvah and a different one for those who already have children in the program. Personal phone calls would also be good. **Action:** Karen will explore this idea further.

7. Quarterly Investment Report (*Gene Podkaminer*) 15 min Report

Gene gave an update on the Investment Committee and results from Q1. Carla Koren, our Morgan Stanley Investment Advisor, will be at the July Board meeting. Gene will also be bringing other Investment Committee members to the July Board meeting.

8. Community Building Update (*Matt Mandel and Lauren Schlezinger*) 20 min Report

Matt gave an update on three major initiatives:

- a) Benchmark our Social Capital – assessing the relationships that senior staff members have with all our congregants and how closely engaged these congregants are
- b) Track attendance to get a sense of what events different congregants attend over the course of a year
- c) Attend Community Building Hackathon on April 24 (a regional learning event with Sarale Shadmi-Wortman and members of the Israel Association of Community Centers)

Lauren gave an update on the Leadership Summit taking place on May 3 from 6-9pm. Event is designed to bring together past, present and future leaders. Opportunity to share new measures of success with other leaders in congregation and create opportunities for past and current Board members and Presidents to interact. **Action:** Board members encouraged to RSVP and attend the May 3 event.

Marilyn and Matt shared a survey with Board members to be used as a template for future events and activities. Survey is designed to tie in with our Measures of Success. There was discussion and feedback.

9. Motion: Allocate up to \$10,000 from the Peter Battat Memorial Fund to upgrade the meditation garden. (Jeff Lerner) 5 min Vote

Background: The Beautification Committee hopes to refurbish the meditation garden, which has become tired and needs repair. Planned improvements include recoloring the concrete floor, replacing and pruning plants, and possibly refacing the fountain in marble. We have been quoted \$6,500 for materials and labor for the concrete and plants, with pro bono design and management services provided by Travis VanBrasch. Work to reface the fountain will not exceed \$3,500.

Jeff made the motion. Sharon Silverman seconded. Motion passed.

Governance

10. Packet Q&A 10 min Discussion

- Karen noted two corrections to the new members report.
- Rabbi Molly reported that Daniel Bernstein has been hired as the new Director of Youth Engagement. Daniel is a senior at UC Santa Cruz and will be at Camp Newman this summer. He is a trained song leader and hopes to attend HUC in a few years.
- Lauren shared that Heidi Schell has enthusiastically agreed to be considered for nomination as Board President following Lauren and starting July 1, 2018.

11. Consent Agenda 2 min Vote

Consent agenda was approved.

Concluding Prayer

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30PM.

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