

Board of Trustees
October 18, 2017
Meeting Minutes - APPROVED

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

Attendees

Board

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

Andy Oliff

Betsy Rosen

Arlene Rosenberg

Heidi Schell

Lauren Schlezinger

Sharon Silverman

Adam Steinberger

Staff

Rabbi Lisa Delson

Rabbi Dan Feder

Rabbi Molly Plotnik

Karen Wisialowski

Guests

Alison Poggi-Leon

Summary of General Trustee Action Items:

1. Trustees are encouraged to sign up for the URJ's "How Successful Congregations Embrace Change: A URJ Day of Learning" on Oct 29 and the URJ Biennial in Boston: <http://tinyurl.com/ya9qeg4x>

Summary of Specific Committee/Individual Action Items:

1. Rabbi Molly to ensure that communication to youth education community about the new B'nai Mitzvah program is ready to go immediately following Oct 28 6th grade B'nai Mitzvah retreat.
2. Karen to verify if congregants will need to set up an ID and password or an account to access their information online.

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

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|---|--------------------------|
| 1. Welcome, Blessing for Community Service | 5 min |
| 2. D'var Torah (<i>Arlene Rosenberg</i>) | 5 min |
| 3. Camp Newman Update | 20 min Report/Discussion |
| <p>Lauren acknowledged the devastation at Camp Newman and the North Bay from the recent wildfires. Camp Newman experienced extensive damage but is committed to offering already scheduled youth programs (like CW Smash) and there WILL be summer camp in an alternate location. There are a variety of ways to support victims of the fire (including Camp employees), which are listed on sholom.org. Long-term (1-2 years) rentals of vacation homes in the North Bay are needed. Contact Rabbi Delson or Arlene Rosenberg if you or someone you know has a home they can rent. PTS is looking for someone to be the point person for PTS efforts in the North Bay. Rabbi Molly is looking for a different location for our January congregational retreat. Karen advised that Rabbi Feder reached out to all the PTS congregants we know of who have homes in the North Bay.</p> | |
| 4. B'nai Mitzvah Program Update (<i>Rabbi Molly</i>) | 10 min Report |

Objective: Our rabbi team devised the new B'nai Mitzvah program based on what they want our students to think, feel and know at the end of this program. They want each student to feel that becoming a bar/bat mitzvah is relevant to their lives, that they have a unique perspective to share and a responsibility to become a leader in our community.

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Timing: The new B'nai Mitzvah program will be launched at the 6th grade B'nai Mitzvah retreat on Oct 28.

What's New:

- Introducing three different tracks from which students can choose to help students engage more deeply in the process of becoming a bar/bat mitzvah:
 - prayer focus
 - social justice focus
 - community/peoplehood focus
- Prayer training will include peer-based learning of the prayers before working with Cantor

Learning Torah and Haftarah portions will be similar to what it is now.

Planning to hire a part-time B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator to manage the program and ensure that each student is supported throughout the process.

Many of the changes were based on feedback from parents over the past couple of years.

The Board gave direction to Rabbi Molly to develop communication in advance of the retreat. **Action:** Rabbi Molly to ensure that communication to youth education community about the new B'nai Mitzvah program is ready to go immediately following Oct 28 6th grade B'nai Mitzvah retreat.

5. Finance Report (*Adam Steinberger*)

45-60 min Report

Per PTS' By-Laws, Adam provided a year-end financial report for fiscal year 2017. Adam acknowledged Finance Committee members: Maria Yarmolinsky, Gary Fishtrom, David Silberman, Roger Lazarus, David Monasch, Matt Mintz, Jeff Savitz, and staff members, Karen and Shari, for their hard work.

- Starting November 1, we will be outsourcing our bookkeeping function to Kesef Accounting Services, which serves 70 synagogues. Goal is to free up some internal resources, gain more consistency in reporting and benefit from best practices from other synagogues. Other benefits include online storage for easier access and sharing and online check signing. Letters and an email blast will be going to entire congregation. Congregants will have online access to their account information and be able to pay their bills online. Cost is the same as in house bookkeeper. Finance Committee meeting Nov 28 – good opportunity to evaluate transition to Kesef. **Action:** Karen to verify if congregants will need to set up an ID and password or an account to access their information online.
- Adam reviewed aspects of the Balance Sheet as of June 30, 2017
 - Cash & Investments – total of \$3.7 million in three “buckets”:
 - a) approximately \$600K operating cash
 - b) approximately \$2.1M savings, to meet the obligations of the various restricted funds (program funds, Rabbi's Discretionary Fund, Facility Reserve Study Fund, Operating Reserve Fund, etc.) The savings account is in cash, and we would like to invest some of it in higher yielding investments. First, we will need to determine timing of cash flow needs and target amount of operating reserves. Subsequently, the Finance Committee will recommend to the Board protocol for investing savings in higher yielding, but less liquid investments.
 - c) \$900K Morgan Stanley investment accounts (permanently restricted funds), goal is to maintain the

Important Dates for Trustees

Sholom Women Appreciation Dinner—Oct. 26, 6p

URJ Day of Learning—Oct. 29, Noon-4 (*Congregation Beth El, Berkeley*)

Executive Committee Meeting—Nov. 2, 7p ♦ Board Meeting—Nov. 15, 6:15p

Biennial—Dec. 6-9 (Boston, MA)

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corpus, and use the earnings according to the approved Investment Policy.

- o Mortgage – largest liability on our balance sheet; currently in the third year of a 5-year note with approximately \$8500/month payment (4 1/8 percent interest); at each year anniversary, we can pay down 20% of principal without penalty; to date, we have made two such payments; at end of year 5, in September 2020, there will be a balloon payment of the remaining balance. Will evaluate at that time best options for what to do with remaining mortgage. Mortgage balance on June 30, 2017 was approximately \$828K. With September's prepayment and scheduled payments, current balance is approximately \$650K. We have \$150K in additional donations and pledges from the Financial Freedom campaign.
 - o Other Liabilities – payments that we have received for services yet to be provided, primarily prepaid membership commitment and tuition
 - o Restricted Funds (equity) - \$2.9M in 65 different temporarily and permanently restricted funds. Descriptions of all funds are in the Restricted Fund Handbook (currently being updated). Funds that are open for donations are also described on sholom.org/donate.
- Adam reviewed the profit & loss statement for fiscal year 2017. Extended care at preschool and overall successful fundraising efforts resulted in total revenue of \$4.1M vs \$3.8M budgeted. Actual expenses were equal to budgeted expenses. Board to decide in November how to deploy the \$200K+ surplus.
 - Finance Committee is mindful of and cautious about the importance of internal controls.

6. Reflections on HHD (*Lauren Schlezinger & Heidi Schell*)

30-45 min Group Discussion

Trustees broke into small groups to share their favorite memories during the HHD. Lauren shared takeaways from an online Board survey on the HHD. Congregant stories were very well received. Board Outreach and Board members participating in the Hospitality Team provided important connections and are worth improving and repeating next year. Board shared suggestions for improvement next year.

7. Cantorial Transition Update (*Nathaniel Bergson-Michelson*)

10 min Discussion

Nathaniel thanked Rabbi Delson for her beautiful blessing of Cantor Barry on erev Rosh Hashanah. Search Committee has begun meeting and is working on an application to the American Conference of Cantors (ACC), through which we will conduct our search. Music Vision Task Force has met three times and is visiting other congregations to see what cantorial experiences are like elsewhere. Marilyn Hollinger, Sharon Silverman and Andi Sobel will head up the Communications team. Diane Goldman has agreed to chair the Honors committee. Will be working on budget for the celebratory weekend in June. Cantor Doron Shapira offered to convene a group of cantors to hold a concert in honor of Cantor Barry on June 3. Still looking to secure chairs for the Gala Committee.

8. Board Packet Q&A

10 min Discussion

Karen shared that we will be promoting the National Day of Unplugging in March with a month of programming and conversation. For example, we will give the gift of cell phone "sleeping bags" to Shabbat attendees to encourage

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unplugging and connecting with one another.

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9. Consent Agenda

2 min Vote

Consent Agenda was approved.

10. Concluding Prayer

Meeting was adjourned at 8:35pm.

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