

Board of Trustees Meeting December 19, 2018 Minutes

Chair: Heidi Schell ♦ Minutes: Arlene Rosenberg ♦ Timekeeper: Andy Oliff

*Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is not to stop questioning.
- Albert Einstein*

Attendees

Board

Nathaniel Bergson-Michelson
Jenna Fisher
Julie Feuchtwang
Scott Haber
Jon Herstein
Marilyn Hollinger
Ware Kuschner
Jeff Lerner
Matt Mandel
Andy Oliff
Gene Podkaminer
Betsy Rosen
Arlene Rosenberg

Heidi Schell

Eric Schlezinger
Sharon Silverman
Adam Steinberger
Mary Ann Waterman

Absent

Maria Yarmolinsky

Staff

Rabbi Dan Feder
Rabbi Lisa Delson
Cantor Alexandra Fox
Jonathan Harris
Ayelet Shapiro
Allison Steckley
Madeleine Steckley
Karen Wisialowski

Guests

Diane Goldman
Howard Wettan

General Trustee Action Item:

1. Trustees should pass along to Heidi any suggestions they have for people to serve on the Window of Names task force.

Heidi called the meeting to order at 6:15 pm.

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| 1. | Welcome, Blessing for Community Service | 5 min |
| 2. | D'var Torah (<i>Scott Haber</i>) | 5 min |
| 3. | Window of Names (<i>Heidi Schell, Howard Wettan</i>) | 30 min Presentation/Discussion |
- Heidi briefly reviewed the background on the issue relating to the Window of Names that was contained in the Board packet.
 - Howard shared information about Judah Benjamin and proposed that Benjamin's name be removed from the Window of Names.
 - Diane Goldman, who chaired the renovation of the synagogue during which the Window of Names was installed, shared background on how the Window of Names was originally conceived and how the names were selected. Diane clarified that the intent was to create a teaching tool about Jews who have had an impact on history or

culture, not to honor the people listed or to identify them as role models.

- Trustees were asked to consider the following questions:
 - What do we do with names of people listed on the Window of Names whose actions/behaviors are not consistent with our values?
 - What process do we put in place to address other names that might become problematic?
 - If removing names is considered/recommended, what should we take into consideration in determining what replaces the names?
- Trustees had an opportunity to make comments and ask questions.
- Next step: Heidi will create a task force of 5-6 people (including staff, Board and non-Board members) to consider the questions listed above, to address Howard's requests, and to come back to the Board with a recommendation. Heidi invited suggestions for who might serve on the task force. **Action item:** Trustees should pass along to Heidi any suggestions they have for people to serve on the Window of Names task force.

4. Story of the Month (*Jeff Lerner*) 5 min Personal Reflection

5. Personnel Committee Update (*Scott Haber*) 5 min Presentation

- Scott reported on behalf of the Personnel Committee that we have renewed Rabbi Feder's contract for an additional 5-year term beginning on July 1, 2019.

6. Membership and Community Engagement (*Matt Mandel*) 30 min Presentation/Discussion

- Matt reported that the community engagement team has settled on a name and an organizational structure for its efforts. The team will be led by a Kehillah Kedoshah (sacred community) Steering Committee. Under the steering committee will be two subcommittees: (i) the Belonging and Engagement Team ("BET"), which will focus on increasing engagement and a feeling of belonging in the PTS community; and (ii) the Prospective Membership Team, which will focus on member recruitment.
- The team has also developed five proposed goals for the Belonging and Engagement Team to work toward during the coming year:
 - a. Model "everyday" community building: Every person who is accountable for a program, function and/or process will routinely integrate easy-to-adopt community-building activities within their function.
 - b. "Dive Deep": Every person who is accountable for a program, function and/or process will lead a comprehensive implementation of the community-building lens in at least one area of their function.
 - c. Pilot community building with Baby Boomers and new members: PTS will implement and document significant improvement in engagement with Baby Boomers and new members.
 - d. Create connections with intention: PTS will establish a group that facilitates connections among congregants and matches congregant interests with engagement opportunities.
 - e. Be accountable: The BET will assume responsibility for driving the achievement of these goals. As a first step, the team will finalize its charter and structure by February 2019.
- The Board's role in these efforts:
 - Model community building practices in interactions with congregants.
 - Provide feedback to the steering committee on the proposed goals.
 - The steering committee will develop other thoughts on how the Board can support their work and report back in future meetings.

7. Board Fundraiser (Betsy Rosen)

10 min Presentation/Discussion

- Heidi reminded the Board that it is responsible for raising \$21K to balance the 2018-19 budget.
- Heidi and Betsy presented information about raising funds through the sale of Purim Mishloach Manot gift baskets for congregants to give to one another. The plan is to purchase pre-made baskets, and to use a third party organization to collect the orders and prepare tags for the baskets, which will be distributed by PTS volunteers.
- The project will require commitment of Board members to (i) purchase baskets; (ii) encourage their friends to participate; and (iii) help with delivery.
- The goal is to raise \$19-20,000.
- Other congregations report that this is a fun community-building project.
- The Board agreed to pursue this fundraising project.
- Heidi expressed appreciation to Betsy for the work she has done to investigate and lay the groundwork for this project, and for volunteering to chair it.

8. Budget Preview (Adam Steinberger, Karen Wisialowski)

10 min Presentation

- The budget process for 2019-20 kicked off with the first Finance Committee meeting, which was held on December 10.
- Everyone within PTS who runs a department or committee has been asked to generate a “wish list” for the coming year. These lists are due on January 7 to Jonathan Harris.
- The budget process includes 4 meetings of the Finance Committee, during which the committee will consider proposals of various groups and departments.
- A draft budget will be presented to Board in March, submitted for a Board vote in April, and presented to the congregation at the Annual Meeting on June 2.

9. Governance

10 min Votes

Motion: To approve Peninsula Temple Sholom preschool tuition increases for the core program of 5% for Temple Members and 4% for Non-Temple Members for the 2019-2020 school year. (Adam Steinberger)

Background: The increases were determined based on market analysis of like preschools on the Peninsula. The increase percentage for members is different from that for non-members because members benefit from preferential registration status and significant discounts for siblings, extended care, drop-in care, and winter/spring/summer camps; and because non-members have experienced faster tuition increases at PTS in the last couple of years. The proposed rates are supported by the Finance Committee.

- Adam Steinberger made the motion. Matt Mandel seconded.
- In response to Trustee questions, Allison provided some additional details about tuition rates.
- Motion passed.

Motion

To designate the following parsonage amounts, represented as

percentages of total current salary, as requested by each clergy member for the tax year 2019. (*Scott Haber*)

Rabbi Dan Feder 44.6%
Rabbi Lisa Delson 67.4%
Rabbi Molly Plotnik 34.8%
Cantor Alexandra Fox 43.0%
Cantor Emeritus Barry Reich 18%

Background

The guiding principle behind parsonage is that clergy do not pay Federal income tax on income that is used to cover the cost of housing, broadly defined. Its genesis was the commonplace tradition that clergy live in homes owned by their employers/religious institutions. In the 1950s, the IRS codified the tax-free status of this benefit, which also applies to the cost of housing regardless of whether the clergy lives in the property owned by the employer or pays for housing independently.

For purposes of a board vote, parsonage refers to the amount a clergyperson pays to maintain his/her home (e.g., rent, mortgage, utilities, repairs) when housing or a housing allowance is not provided directly. The clergyperson is solely responsible for calculating the parsonage amount each year, and to defend it in the event of an IRS audit. By offering a parsonage benefit (which is stipulated in clergy contracts at Peninsula Temple Sholom), PTS agrees to designate the stated amount as a housing allowance before paying it to the clergyperson each year.

- Scott Haber made the motion. Nathaniel Bergson-Michelson seconded. Motion passed.

Motion: To ratify the following action that the Board took in November 2018 by unanimous written consent (via email), pursuant to section 9211(b) of the California Corporations Code: The Board of Trustees hereby authorizes Allison Steckley, Director of Early Childhood Education, to apply on behalf of Peninsula Temple Sholom Preschool to the Community Care Licensing Division of the California Department of Social Services for the following: 1/ increase capacity in Classrooms 9 and 10 from twelve children to sixteen children each, and 2/ increase "usable space" for the preschool to include the back parking lot. (*Arlene Rosenberg*)

Background: Last summer, Allison Steckley applied to the appropriate state licensing division for authorization to increase the permitted capacity of two preschool classrooms from 12 students to 16 students and to include the back parking lot as usable space. In mid-November, Allison received a "Notification of Incomplete Application," which required her to submit a Board resolution authorizing her to apply for these capacity increases on behalf of the preschool. Because time was of the essence, we secured approval of the required resolution by unanimous written consent (via email) of the Trustees, pursuant to section 9211(b) of the California Corporations Code. We are now seeking ratification of that action so that it will be memorialized in the Board minutes.

- Arlene Rosenberg made the motion. Jon Herstein seconded. Motion passed.

10. Board Packet Q&A

15 min Discussion

- A Trustee asked Karen for an update on the collections year to date. Although they are behind expectations due to a glitch in Youth Ed registration and the effort required to collect updated credit card information from congregants, the accounting office is actively working with personal outreach to bring accounts current.
- A Trustee thanked Mary Ann for her Shalom Women update.

11. Consent Agenda

2 min Vote

Includes last month's Board minutes and approval of new members.

- Consent agenda was approved.

12. Concluding Prayer

The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 pm.