

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes January 16, 2019

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

*Trust yourself. Create the kind of self that you will be happy to live with all your life.
Make the most of yourself by fanning the tiny, inner sparks of possibility into flames of achievement.
- Golda Meir*

Attendees

Board

Nathaniel Bergson-Michelson
Jenna Fisher
Julie Feuchtwang
Scott Haber
Marilyn Hollinger
Ware Kuschner
Matt Mandel
Andy Oliff
Gene Podkaminer
Betsy Rosen

Arlene Rosenberg

Heidi Schell

Eric Schlezinger

Mary Ann Waterman

Absent

Jon Herstein

Jeff Lerner

Sharon Silverman

Adam Steinberger

Maria Yarmolinsky

Staff

Rabbi Dan Feder

Rabbi Lisa Delson

Cantor Alexandra Fox

Jonathan Harris

Ayelet Shapiro

Madeleine Steckley

General Trustee Action Items:

1. Trustees who are interested in participating in this year's Purim Shpiel should email Cantor Fox.
2. Board members should share with Rabbi Feder their thoughts about a congregational trip to Eastern Europe and/or Israel.
3. Board members should let Heidi know if there are specific things they would like to hear from the clergy during future clergy updates.
4. Trustees should sign up to assemble and deliver Mishloach Manot baskets.
5. Board members should go online to purchase Mishloach Manot baskets as soon as they receive the link and should let Betsy know if they have any problems using the website.

Heidi called the meeting to order at 6:16 pm.

1. Welcome, Blessing for Community Service 5 min
2. D'var Torah (*Mary Ann Waterman*) 5 min
3. Governance (*Heidi Schell*) 15 min Vote
 - a. **Nominating Committee for President.** Per Bylaws Article VII, Section 2(a): "*Selection of President. At the January meeting of the Trustees, the Trustees shall elect a committee of three (3) Trustees who shall nominate a Trustee for the position of President. At the February meeting of the Trustees, the committee*

shall present their nominee. Other nominations may be made from the floor. The Trustees shall then elect a President. The newly elected President shall take office at the beginning of the ensuing fiscal year."

- Heidi asked for volunteers to serve on the committee to nominate a candidate for Board President for 2019-20. Scott Haber, Marilyn Hollinger, and Gene Podkaminer volunteered.
- Heidi made a motion to elect Scott, Marilyn, and Gene as a committee of three Trustees to nominate a Trustee for the position of President for fiscal year 2019-20. Ware seconded the motion. Motion passed.

- b. **Motion:** To approve spending of approximately \$21,000 out of the Preschool Fund for Outdoor Classroom items such as mud kitchens, magnet/funnel walls, and Outlast blocks. (*Arlene Rosenberg*)

Background:

The 2018-2019 school year Gala, held on November 3rd, 2018, raised \$65,000 for the refurbishment of the Outdoor Classroom. Donors who gave at the \$5,000 amount or more were given the choice to pick out a particular item to go into the space such as a mud kitchen, magnet/funnel wall, or Outlast blocks.

3-Mud kitchen/Outlast blocks with supplies approx.

\$14,061 (Community Playthings)

2-Magnet kitchen with supplies approx. \$6,3503 (Kodo Kids)

- Arlene Rosenberg made the motion. Marilyn seconded. Motion passed.

- c. **Motion:** To allocate approximately \$5,000 plus travel and expenses to bring Elana Arian to PTS as musician-in-residence for the weekend of Sukkot 2020, as part of the Cantor Barry Reich Music Series with funding from the Cantor Barry Reich Tribute Fund. (*Scott Haber*)

Background:

Elana Arian is a ground-breaking, multi-instrumentalist composer, and recording artist who writes exquisite music. Cantor Fox is excited to bring Elana to PTS next year to help cultivate the joy and spirit of both Shabbat and Sukkot. She'll be with us for the entire weekend and will help the clergy lead Shabbat and Sukkot services, as well as some exciting programming on Saturday, Saturday night, and Sunday. Learn more about her and listen to her music on her website, Elanaarian.com.

The funds need to be approved well in advance because Elana is booked out so far, and holidays such as Sukkot book up even more quickly than regular weekends. The current balance of the Cantor Barry Reich Tribute Fund is \$46,694.

- Scott Haber made the motion. Nathaniel Bergson-Michelson seconded.
- A Trustee asked whether we will be bringing a guest musician to PTS during 2019 as part of the Cantor Barry Reich Music Series. Cantor Fox replied that she hopes to, but is still looking for someone who can come in 2019.
- Motion passed.

d. **Motion:** To approve spending of up to \$2,000 for additional security measures. Source of funds: Operating Reserve Account. (*Nathaniel Bergson-Michelson*)

- Nathaniel Bergson-Michelson made the motion. Ware Kuschner seconded.
- Heidi noted that a synagogue member has pledged funds to support enhanced security measures at PTS.
- Motion passed.

4. Consent Agenda 2 min Vote
Includes last month's Board minutes and approval of new members

- Consent agenda was approved.

5. Investment Update (*Gene Podkaminer*) 15 min Presentation

- Investment Committee Membership: Marc Snyder recently joined the Investment Committee. The Committee hopes to find one additional new member.
- Market Update: The market has shown increased volatility lately, which marks a return to more typical conditions after an unusually stable 10 years. The market suffered a downturn in 2018, particularly during the last quarter.
- PTS' 2018 results:
 - PTS' portfolio was down around 6.35% for the year, compared to decline of about 4.36% in our benchmark.
 - The difference in performance between PTS' portfolio and the benchmark is primarily attributable to: (i) the management fees that PTS must pay (the benchmark does not include fees); and (ii) underperformance of the socially-responsible funds in which PTS has chosen to invest.
 - The Investment Committee does not believe there is any need to change our investment strategy at this time.

6. Clergy Update (*Rabbi Feder, Rabbi Delson, Cantor Fox*) 20 min Presentation

- Cantor Fox:
 - Is collaborating with other cantors from the Bay Area and around the country on a concert celebrating Leonard Bernstein's 100th birthday; the concert will be held on Saturday, January 26.
 - Started a youth choir called Kehillah Singers, which rehearses two Sundays per month before Youth Ed.
 - Is putting together a Purim Shpiel with a Mary Poppins theme, which will be performed (interspersed with the megillah reading) at Purim services on Wednesday evening, March 20. Cantor Fox encourages any Trustee who is interested in participating to email her. **Action item:** Trustees who are interested in participating in this year's Purim Shpiel should email Cantor Fox.
 - Is teaching a class on chanting Megillat Esther; everyone in the class will chant from the megillah on Purim during the shpiel.

- Rabbi Delson:
 - Is working with lay leaders to organize a house meeting campaign to determine what social justice issues we will work on for the next 12-18 months. During the house meeting campaign, small groups of PTS congregants will gather in members' homes for facilitated discussions in which they will share personal stories about things that matter to them. PTS will also host a house meeting event at the synagogue, which will include people of all faiths and backgrounds and will be cosponsored by the Industrial Areas Foundation as part of its efforts to create a Broad Based Organization in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties.
 - Will be attending the URJ's Consultation on Conscience in Washington, DC this May with Karen Wisialowski, Arlene Rosenberg, and hopefully others.
 - Has joined a committee of the Women's Rabbinic Network (part of the Central Conference of American Rabbis) that will be studying family leave within the rabbinate.
- Rabbi Feder:
 - With his Back to the Source class, has finished a line-by-line reading of the Torah and begun reading Prophets. To support this next phase of the class, Rabbi Feder has arranged for the synagogue to purchase several copies of a book that contains commentaries on Prophets and Writings as well as Torah. Rabbi Feder shared some interesting commentaries on Prophets with the Board.
 - Is finishing up his term as co-chair of the Rabbinic Advisory Committee for Shalom Bayit. Last Sunday, PTS and Shalom Bayit cosponsored a two-hour workshop at PTS on Preventing Another #Me-Too Generation, which focused on creating a culture of consent and being careful about the implicit messages we send our children.
 - Welcomed a visit to PTS by a rabbi from Da'at, a company that organizes Jewish travel. Rabbi Feder is exploring whether congregants would be interested in a PTS adult trip to Eastern Europe and/or another trip to Israel. **Action item:** Board members should share with Rabbi Feder their thoughts about a congregational trip to Eastern Europe and/or Israel.
- Heidi invited Board members to let her know if there are specific things they would like to hear from the clergy during future clergy updates. **Action Item:** Board members should let Heidi know if there are specific things they would like to hear from the clergy during future clergy updates.

7. Story of the Month (*Scott Haber, Rabbi Delson, Heidi Schell*) 5 min Personal Reflection

- Heidi, Scott, and Rabbi Delson reflected on their recent trip to Israel with the North Peninsula Jewish community.

8. LGBTQ Audacious Hospitality Presentation (*Marilyn Hollinger*) 20 min Presentation

- Marilyn reported on an online URJ course in which she recently participated on Audacious Hospitality directed to the LGBTQ community. (The URJ defines Audacious Hospitality as "the focused effort to embrace our diversity and reach out to those currently not engaged in Jewish life.")
- Marilyn shared some highlights and practical tips from the course, including information about the importance of (i) ascertaining and using people's preferred pronouns; and (ii) using inclusive (non-gendered) language.
- Marilyn will present more information from this course at a future Board meeting.

9. Membership and Community Engagement (*Matt Mandel*) 10 min Presentation/Discussion

- Matt shared his positive experience attending a Shalom in the Home event for second grade families and acknowledged Madeleine Steckley for organizing the well-received gathering.

- Matt distributed a revised chart of the community engagement team's organizational structure and asked Trustees to write in the names people who would be good additions to the various community engagement teams.

10. Mishloach Manot Purim Fundraiser (*Betsy Rosen*) 10 min Presentation/Discussion

- Betsy briefly reviewed the purchasing options and the delivery plan for the Board's upcoming Mishloach Manot basket fundraiser.
- Betsy encouraged Board members to sign up to assemble and deliver the Mishloach Manot baskets. **Action Item:** Trustees should sign up to assemble and deliver Mishloach Manot baskets.
- Board members will receive the link for purchasing baskets before it is sent to whole congregation. Betsy asked Board members to try out the site and let her know of any problems. **Action Item:** Board members should go online to purchase Mishloach Manot baskets as soon as they receive the link and let Betsy know if they have any problems using the website.

11. Windows Task Force Update (*Heidi Schell*) 5 min Presentation

- Jon Herstein has agreed to chair the Window of Names Task Force. The other Task Force members will be Rabbi Feder, Rabbi Delson, Karen Wisialowski, Madeleine Steckley, Gene Podkaminer, Gary Pollard, Lisa Rosenthal, and Lauren Wanderman. The Task Force hopes to have 2-3 meetings and come back to the Board with a recommendation.

12. Board Packet Q&A 10 min Discussion

- Heidi noted that at next month's Board meeting we will need to elect a Nominating Committee to create a slate of Trustees to be elected for terms beginning on July 1, 2019. Under the Bylaws, the Nominating Committee must consist of three Trustees and four non-Trustees. Heidi asked for three Trustees to volunteer to serve on the Nominating Committee. Betsy Rosen, Julie Feuchtwang, and Marilyn Hollinger volunteered.
- Heidi thanked the clergy and staff for keeping the synagogue running smoothly during an unusually high number of personnel changes.

13. Concluding Prayer

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.