

Board of Trustees Meeting

August 21, 2019

Minutes

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

We must not appoint a leader over a community without first consulting the people.
– Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 55a

Attendees

Board

Nathaniel Bergson-Michelson
Julie Feuchtwang
Jon Herstein
Marilyn Hollinger
Ware Kuschner
Andy Oliff
Gene Podkaminer
Jason Pollard
Betsy Rosen
Arlene Rosenberg
Heidi Schell
Eric Schlezinger
Adam Steinberger
Maria Yarmolinsky
Stuart Zussman

Absent

Jenna Fisher
Scott Haber
Lisa Rosenthal
Mary Ann Waterman

Staff

Rabbi Dan Feder
Rabbi Lisa Delson
Rabbi Molly Plotnik
Cantor Alexandra Fox
Karen Wisialowski
Allison Steckley
Ayelet Shapiro
Madeleine Steckley

Guests

Lois Fried
Michael Fried
Isabelle Friedman
April Glatt
Brian Hafter
Kim Oliff
Keith Tandowsky

General Action Items:

1. All Trustees should sign up to join the HHD hospitality team.
2. Trustees should return their HHD Appeal pledge cards promptly.
3. Trustees should respond to the leadership survey by Friday, August 23.

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

1. Welcome
2. D'var Torah (*Andy Oliff*)
3. Blessing for Community Service

4. Fulfilling Our Vision During the High Holy Days (*Michael & Lois Fried, Kim & Andy Oliff, Karen Wisialowski, Heidi Schell*) Presentation

- The chairs of our HHD Hospitality Committee – Lois & Michael Fried and Andy & Kim Oliff – presented their plan for making every congregant and guest who comes to PTS during the High Holy Days feel warm and welcome.
 - For each HHD service, there will be three roles for hospitality volunteers:
 - Shift leader;
 - Foyer greeters (who will perform safety & security roles as well as hospitality roles); and
 - Room ushers.
 - People will be invited to sign up for hospitality roles using Signup Genius.
 - **Action item:** All Trustees should sign up to join the HHD hospitality team.
- Karen provided additional HHD updates:
 - Honors
 - Karen thanked Sharon Silverman and Sandy Oberstein (z"l) for their work in assigning HHD honors.
 - Karen reviewed the categories of congregants who are typically offered HHD honors, including Trustees, large donors, and new members.
 - Security
 - Karen briefly described security training that PTS' staff has recently received.
 - Karen reviewed new security measures that the synagogue has implemented or plans to implement, both for every day and for the HHD.
 - HHD Appeal
 - Karen, Heidi, and Rabbi Feder will be meeting soon to determine the themes they want to emphasize in this year's HHD appeal.
 - Pledge cards will be sent to congregants after Labor Day. **Action item:** Trustees should return their HHD Appeal pledge cards promptly.
 - Ware will be recruiting and scheduling Trustees to give a Board welcome at the start of each HHD service.

5. Succession Planning (*Heidi Schell*) Presentation/Discussion

- Heidi explained that PTS needs to identify and develop future leaders. Currently, we do not have anyone identified to take over as president or treasurer when Heidi and Adam leave those positions and roll off the Board on June 30, 2020.
- Heidi invited Trustees to share their perceptions about what is preventing people from stepping up to assume leadership roles. Ideas shared included concern about the time commitment, lack of experience, home life commitments, and concern about lacking the skills required.
- Heidi convened a panel consisting of herself and Past Presidents April Glatt, Brian Hafter, and Keith Tandowsky. The panel was moderated by CCO and Past President Karen Wisialowski. The panelists discussed what the role of PTS president entails, what they found meaningful and satisfying about the role, the challenges they faced, and how they balanced the role with other commitments in their lives. All of the panelists invited Trustees to speak with them privately if desired.
- Jon previewed a survey that will be sent to all Trustees to gather their views on what we need in synagogue leadership and to gauge their interest in assuming leadership roles. **Action item:** Trustees should respond to the leadership survey by Friday, August 23.
- Heidi distributed a written overview of the job of PTS president.

6. Menu of Responsibilities (*Nathaniel Bergson-Michelson*) Presentation

- Nathaniel once again thanked Trustees for signing up to assume responsibilities in the coming year. He will be following up with Trustees individually to discuss next steps for their particular roles and tasks.

7. Board Packet Q&A

Discussion

- Heidi reminded Trustees of the Board-led Shabbat on Friday, October 18 and thanked Ware and Jenna for organizing the service for that night.
- Heidi reminded Trustees that the Board photo will be taken before the next Board meeting on September 11.
- Madeleine reminded Trustees of the PARTY Board/PTS Board "guac-off" event on Friday, August 30 from 5:30-8pm. The PARTY Board has planned this event as part of its desire to build connections between the two Boards.

8. Governance

Vote

Motion: To purchase 350 copies of Mishkan HaNefesh for Youth for a total of approximately \$6,637. Funds would come from two sources: \$846 from the 2019 Confirmation class gift to PTS and the remainder from The Kaufman Prayerbook Fund. After the use of funds, there will be approximately \$2,280.
(Ware Kushner)

- Ware made the motion. Gene Podkaminer seconded.
- Rabbi Molly noted that the actual price of the books will be only \$5,867.71.
- Rabbi Molly explained that PTS already owns the Mishkan T'filah for Youth, a youth version of our weekday and Shabbat prayer books. This HHD youth prayerbook was published about one year ago. The clergy has reviewed it and likes it. It will be used in all of the family HHD services to supplement the visual t'filah. The clergy chose to order 350 copies of the book based on the capacity of the Klein Spiritual Center, which is 333.
- Motion passed.
- Rabbi Molly noted that the synagogue will make efforts to encourage contributions that will replenish the Kaufman Prayerbook fund.

9. Consent Agenda

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

Vote

- Consent agenda passed.

10. Concluding Prayer

11. Executive Session

- Arlene Rosenberg moved that we enter executive session. Heidi seconded. Board entered executive session at 7:48 pm. All non-Trustees with the exception of Rabbi Feder were excused from the room.
- Board exited executive session at 9:14 pm.

12. Contract Renewals

Votes

Motion: To authorize the Personnel Committee to enter into negotiations for the renewal of Allison Steckley's contract, in accordance with the unanimous recommendations of the Personnel Committee and Rabbi Feder.

- Eric Schlezinger made the motion. Betsy Rosen seconded. Motion passed.

Motion: To authorize the Personnel Committee to enter into negotiations for the renewal of Rabbi Molly Plotnik's contract, in accordance with the unanimous recommendations of the Personnel Committee and Rabbi Feder.

- Eric made the motion. Marilyn Hollinger seconded. Motion passed.

Motion: To authorize the Personnel Committee to enter into negotiations for the renewal of Rabbi Lisa Delson's contract, in accordance with the unanimous recommendations of the Personnel Committee and Rabbi Feder.

- Eric made the motion. Jason Pollard seconded. Motion passed.

Heidi adjourned the meeting at 9:18 pm.