

Board of Trustees Meeting
January 15, 2020
6:15p

Minutes

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

"It is when we are in transition that we are most completely alive." - William Bridges
"Any transition is easier if you believe in yourself and your talent." - Priyanka Chopra

Attendees

Board

Nathaniel Bergson-Michelson
Julie Feuchtwang
Jenna Fisher
Scott Haber
Jon Herstein
Marilyn Hollinger
Ware Kuschner
Jason Pollard
Andy Oliff
Gene Podkaminer

Arlene Rosenberg
Lisa Rosenthal
Heidi Schell
Adam Steinberger
Mary Ann Waterman
Maria Yarmolinsky
Stuart Zussman

Absent

Betsy Rosen
Eric Schlezinger

Staff

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

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

1. Welcome
2. D'var Torah (Mary Ann Waterman)
3. Blessing for Community Service
4. Priorities for Trustee Nominating Committee (Jon Herstein, Heidi Schell) Activity/Discussion
 - Heidi reminded Trustees that she, Nathaniel, and Adam will be stepping off the Board at the end of June, leaving three vacant Trustee slots to be filled by a Trustee Nominating Committee. Mary Ann will also be stepping off the Board at the end of June, when her term as Sholom Women president concludes.
 - Heidi announced that Andy Oliff, Julie Feuchtwang, and Stuart Zussman have agreed to serve as the three Trustee members of the Trustee Nominating Committee, subject to election by the Board. Following the Board's practice, the Nominating Committee will be chaired by the immediate past president, Lauren Schlezinger.

- Jon reviewed the results of a survey that he distributed to the Board in advance of the meeting in an effort to assess the skills and expertise of continuing and returning Trustees.
- Heidi led the Board through an exercise designed to assess the personal strengths and motivators of continuing and returning Trustees.
- Heidi and Jon will meet with Andy, Julie, and Stuart to review and digest the results of both the survey and the exercise in order to identify skills, expertise, and personal strengths that may be underrepresented among current and returning Trustees. They will then share their assessments with the Nominating Committee to assist the committee in its work.
- Jon and Heidi asked Trustees to recommend to the Nominating Committee anyone who they think might be interested in serving on the Board and who might possess needed skills, expertise, and personal strengths.

5. Preschool Tuition for FY 2020-21 (Allison Steckley)

Presentation/Vote

- Allison explained that before creating her proposal for next year's preschool tuition, she conducted an extensive survey of tuition charged by other preschools in our area. She discovered that most of our preschool programs are competitively priced, but that some are under- or over-priced relative to the competition. Therefore, rather than requesting the same percentage tuition increase across all programs for the upcoming school year, Allison created a proposal designed to make our rates competitive with those of other schools, as well as to cover anticipated personnel cost increases.

Motion: To approve Peninsula Temple Shalom preschool tuition for the 2020-21 school year.

- 5% increase for Twos core program
- 4% increase for Threes and Fours core program
- 4% increase for summer camp
- 3% increase for winter and spring camp
- 12% increase for drop in care
- Flat to modest increases for extended care

(Adam Steinberger)

Background: *The increases were determined based on market analysis of like preschools on the Peninsula and by reviewing expected personnel cost increases.*

- Adam made the motion. Nathaniel seconded. Motion passed.

6. Investment Committee Quarterly Report (Gene Podkaminer)

Presentation

- Gene reported that the Investment Committee met last week and determined that the asset allocations for PTS' investment portfolio are still appropriate.
- Gene presented the Investment Committee's quarterly and year-end reports. Highlights:
 - The assets in PTS' fund now total over \$1 million.

- PTS was able to capitalize on the market's unusually strong performance over the past year.
- There is market uncertainty ahead.

7. Clergy Update (Members of Clergy)

Presentation

- Rabbi Feder spoke about ways in which his role as PTS' Senior Rabbi allows him to engage with the broader community. He talked about the relationships he has been able to build at the gathering of local clergy hosted each January by Burlingame City Council member (now Mayor) Emily Beach. He also talked about his involvement with the North Peninsula Professionals Consortium, a gathering of leaders of several North Peninsula Jewish institutions, which, among other things, sponsors a Scholar-in-Residence each year.
- Rabbi Delson spoke about her work with the preschool Parent-Teacher Organization ("PTO"). She discussed the Talmudic text she recently shared with the PTO about the importance of continuing to educate our children, even during times of crisis.
- Rabbi Plotnik spoke about her recent visit to The Magnolia retirement community in Millbrae, where she led a Chanukah program in which she encouraged residents to share stories about special holiday memories.
- Cantor Fox spoke about her work with the adult B'nai Mitzvah class and the Kehillah Singers youth choir.

8. Clergy Transitions (Heidi Schell)

Discussion

- Heidi reminded Trustees of their role as ambassadors of the congregation during the clergy transitions.
- Heidi shared feedback that she has received from congregants since the announcement of Rabbi Molly's and Cantor Fox's impending departures, and asked Trustees to share any additional feedback that they have received.
- Heidi provided an update on the search process.

9. Communications Committee Update (Marilyn Hollinger, Ayelet Shapiro) Presentation

- On behalf of the Communications Committee (which consists of Marilyn, Ayelet, Jason Pollard, and Betsy Rosen), Marilyn and Ayelet proposed that PTS embark on a program of data gathering over the course of the next year. They would like to begin by surveying congregants about their preferences with respect to the types of communications they receive from the congregation.

10. Board Packet Q&A

Discussion

- Heidi urged Trustees to talk to Karen about families who are not feeling connected to the congregation so that we can do outreach and try to draw them back in.
- Heidi urged Trustees to thank Burlingame police officers and San Mateo County sheriff's officers when we see them patrolling around PTS.
- Marilyn announced that the LGBTQ Inclusivity Task Force will have its first meeting next week.
- Rabbi Delson announced the introduction of the "Tzedakah Box Fridays" program, which will collect tzedakah from congregants each week before Shabbat services. Each month, the program will benefit a different organization that reflects PTS' values.

11. Governance (Heidi Schell)

Votes

Motion: To elect Andy Oliff, Adam Steinberger, and Maria Yarmolinsky to serve as the nominating committee for President.

Background: *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."*

- Nathaniel made the motion. Lisa seconded. Motion passed.

Motion: To elect Julie Feuchtwang, Andy Oliff, Stuart Zussman, Lauren Schlezinger, Jennifer Silk, and Sharon Silverman as members of the 2020-21 Trustee Nominating Committee. (Nathaniel Bergson-Michelson)

Background: *Per Bylaws Article XV, Section 1: "The Trustees shall no later than at its regular monthly meeting in March elect a Nominating Committee for the purpose of nominating Trustees. This committee shall consist of three (3) members of the Trustees and four (4) members of the congregation at large, as well as such alternates as the Trustees may determine. All these committee members must be members in good standing. It is the spirit and intention of these Bylaws that any nominating committee shall be composed of more members of the congregation at large than of Trustees. The Trustee who shall serve as President in the next fiscal year shall not serve on the Nominating Committee."*

- Scott made the motion. Jenna seconded. Motion passed.

Motion: To authorize the Executive Committee to elect the final member of the Trustee Nominating Committee in advance of that committee's first meeting in early February.

Background: *Only three of the four non-Trustee positions on the Trustee Nominating Committee have been filled. The Nominating Committee is scheduled to hold its first meeting in early February, before the next Board meeting on February 12. To avoid the need for an electronic vote of the entire Board to elect the final Nominating Committee member, this motion authorizes the Executive Committee to conduct the election on behalf of the*

Board.

- Nathaniel made the motion. Marilyn seconded. Motion passed.

Motion: To use \$5,000 from the Cantor Barry Reich Tribute Fund for the weekend of March 13-15, 2020 with Beit T'Shuvah, a residential addiction treatment center, congregation, and educational institute based in Los Angeles. (Arlene Rosenberg)

Background: PTS has a close relationship with Beit T'Shuvah and has supported its work over the years. Beit T'Shuvah Founding Rabbi Mark Borovitz will speak during Shabbat services on March 13, and lead Torah study on March 14. On Sunday, March 15, Beit T'Shuvah Players will perform Freedom Song, an acclaimed musical production interweaving a Passover Seder with personal stories of addiction, for our community. PTS's Let's Talk Mental Health team is leading this effort with Rabbi Lisa Delson.

- Arlene made the motion. Ware seconded. Motion passed.

12. Consent Agenda

Includes approval of last month's Board minutes, approval of new members, and approval of any administrative resignations.

Vote

- Consent agenda was approved.

13. Concluding Prayer

Meeting adjourned at 8:33 pm.