

Board of Trustees Meeting

May 19, 2021

6:15p via Zoom

Minutes

Chair: Jon Herstein ♦ Minutes: Arlene Rosenberg ♦ Timekeeper: Andy Oliff

Attendees

Board

Linda Citron
Julie Feuchtwang
Jenna Fisher
Laurie Friedman
Jon Herstein
Marilyn Hollinger
Ware Kuschner
Andy Oliff
Gene Podkaminer
Jason Pollard
Alison Poggi León

Betsy Rosen
Arlene Rosenberg
Lisa Rosenthal
Eric Schlezinger
Maria Yarmolinsky
Stuart Zussman

Absent

Scott Haber
Roger Lazarus

Staff

Rabbi Liora Alban
Rabbi Lisa Delson
Rabbi Dan Feder
Ayelet Shapiro
Lauren Silva
Allison Steckley
Karen Wisialowski
Cantor Anna Zhar

Jon called the meeting to order at 6:18pm.

1. Welcome (*Jon Herstein*) 5 min
 2. D'var Torah (*Jenna Fisher*) 5 min
Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech haolam, asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav v'tsivanu la'asok b'divrei Torah
 3. Blessing for Community Service 2 min
Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech haolam, asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav v'tsivanu la'asok b'tzorchay tzibur
 4. COVID-19 Task Force Update (*Laurie Friedman, Karen Wisialowski*) 15 min Inform//Discuss
- Laurie noted that due to the minimal level of disease spread over the past several weeks, San Mateo County has moved into the least restrictive tier in the state's COVID-19 hierarchy. She credited the county's impressive vaccination rate for this development.
 - Karen updated the Board on the following COVID-related topics:
 - *High Holy Days*: Feedback from the Board and congregation has been helpful. The congregational survey revealed that about 75% of respondents would like to attend services in person and would feel comfortable doing so with some limitations on the number of attendees. The Board survey revealed that: (i) Trustees would like to have some type of greeter program; and (ii) Trustees are comfortable with imposing vaccination or negative COVID test requirements if those requirements would allow more people attend in person.
 - *Office staff*: After June 15, all office staff will begin coming into the office on a limited basis. The goal is to have everyone back in the office full time by August 1. In the meantime, the clergy have begun to have some in-person one-on-one interactions with congregants.
 - *Shabbat services and other summer programming*:
 - We plan to hold outdoor Shabbat services on the second and fourth Fridays of each month this

summer, starting with the Confirmation service on May 28. The in-person services will also be streamed. During the other weeks of each month, Shabbat services will continue to be held on Zoom.

- We will also have outdoor Havdalah and outdoor Tots 'n' Torah this summer.
- Karen and the clergy have been working with professionals on the technology needed to stream the in-person services.
- All of the in-person programming will be by registration only to control the number of attendees. We can accommodate up to 40 people in the courtyard.
- At the moment, the plan is to permit singing at all the services, but to require masks. This plan may change if there are changes in government and scientific guidance.
- We will send an update to the community soon about these in-person opportunities.
- *B'nai Mitzvah*: The COVID task force and the staff have been discussing ways to safely loosen B'nai Mitzvah restrictions, including increasing the number of attendees permitted and allowing food to be served.

5. Budget Update (*Jason Pollard*) 10 min Inform/Discuss

- The revised Reserve Study does not require any change to the budget we passed last month.

6. Sholom Women Annual Update (*Linda Citron*) 10 min Inform

- Even though every Sholom Women event this past year was virtual, there was good participation and the year still felt productive.
- In addition to holding virtual events during the past year, Sholom Women also participated in Women of Reform Judaism events and in social action projects such as writing postcards to combat voter suppression (with the Religious Action Center); creating no-sew blankets for Project Linus and Pets in Need; and donating money raised through honey sales to the scholarship/campership fund.
- Upcoming Sholom Women events include an end-of-year brunch and the annual Chai Tea, which will be held in person on October 10 and will be open to the entire congregation as a “welcome back” to the building.
- Some of the challenges Sholom Women will face in the coming year include building the Judaica shop; engaging younger people such as Youth Education and preschool parents; increasing membership in general; and planning events that will inspire and excite all members.
- Linda extended the following “thank you’s” on behalf of Sholom Women:
 - To Karen, for telling Sholom Women not to worry about being unable to meet its financial commitment to PTS in light of the Judaica shop’s pandemic-forced closure, but to focus on keeping members connected.
 - To Linda Korth, for her many years of service in running the Judaica shop. Linda will be stepping away from that role this year.
 - To Alison Greenspan, for devoting so much time to the Judaica shop.
 - To Rabbi Alban and Cantor Zhar, for spearheading the new Sholom Women Rosh Chodesh program.
 - To clergy and staff, for their continued support of Sholom Women.
 - To the Board, for granting Sholom Women a seat on the Board of Trustees, something that not every congregation does.

7. Youth Education Report (*Rabbi Alban*) 10 min Inform/Discuss

- Rabbi Alban introduced and welcomed Lauren Silva, our newly-hired Director of Youth and Family Engagement.
- Rabbi Alban provided an update on the Youth Education program:

- o In response to feedback received through parent focus groups and a parent survey, Rabbi Alban will be returning the Youth Education program to Sunday mornings next year. She believes that this change will better meet the needs of our families.
- o Grades K-7 will meet during the first part of day, and grades 8-10 will meet during the second part of the day.
- o There will also be a monthly program for grades 11-12, and the madrichim program will continue.
- o In addition, there will opportunities for Youth Education families to celebrate Shabbat together 5 times per year, when there will be a Friday night Shabbat experience in place of the Sunday programming.

8. Governance 10 min Inform/Discuss/Vote

Motion: To take from the table the motion to accept the Reserve Study as prepared by John Beatty & Company and attached to the Board packet, with the intention that the Board of Trustees will endeavor to build annual budgets that enable PTS to contribute recommended amounts to the Reserve Study Fund each fiscal year. *(Jason Pollard)*

Background:

Approximately every five years, PTS commissions a reserve study to understand the funds that it should set aside for ongoing maintenance of the facility and related equipment. In addition, it is our practice that the Facilities Committee together with the Chief Community Officer review the needs of the facility using the Reserve Study as one guide to determine where maintenance and replacement is required.

- Jason made the motion. Ware seconded. Motion to take the Reserve Study motion from the table passed.
- Jason reviewed the background on the Reserve Study motion.
- Reserve Study motion passed.

9. Training on racial sensitivity and microaggressions *(Rabbi Delson, Marilyn Hollinger, Arlene Rosenberg)* 30 min Inform/Discuss

- Rabbi Delson, Marilyn, and Arlene led the Board through exercises and presentations designed to help Trustees (i) change their assumptions about what Jews look like and who Jews are; (ii) understand how Jews of Color are subjected to microaggressions in Jewish spaces; (iii) learn how to avoid inflicting unintentional harm; and (iv) learn how to make all people feel welcome at PTS.

10. Board Packet Q&A 10 min Discuss

- Karen addressed a Trustee question about the status of membership renewals.

11. Consent Agenda 2 min Vote
Includes last month's Board minutes, approval of new members, and approval of any administrative resignations.

- Consent agenda passed.

12. Bylaws Task Force Update *(Arlene Rosenberg)* 15 min Inform/Discuss

- Arlene updated the Board on feedback we have received from congregants regarding the Revised Bylaws and on a few changes that have been made to the Revised Bylaws in response to that feedback.
- Arlene reminded Trustees that they will be ambassadors for the Revised Bylaws when they are submitted to the congregation for approval.

13. Executive Session

15 min Vote

- Jason moved that the Board enter Executive Session. Eric Schlezinger seconded. Motion passed.
- The Board entered Executive Session at 8:31pm. Rabbi Feder was invited to join the Executive Session.
- While in Executive Session, the Board passed a motion regarding a personnel matter.
- The Board exited Executive Session at 8:58pm.

14. Concluding Prayer

2 min

Meeting adjourned at 8:59pm.