

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees  
The Jewish Center of Princeton  
Thursday, December 17, 2015**

**Board Meeting Attendees:** Naomi Perlman, Jeannette Timmons, Fred Appel, Susan Kanter, Ginger Schnitzer, Phil Carchman, Jonathan Gershen, Jon Shavel, Bob Garber, Gil Gordon, Helaine Isaacs, Linda Milstein, Judi Fleitman, Heidi Shegoski, Linda Grenis, Suki Wasserman, Rebecca Sarett, Alexandra Bar-Cohen, Naomi Neumann Richman, Jerry Neumann, Stephanie Will, Michael Vermut, Audrey Straus

**TJC Congregants in Attendance:** Barbara Gantwerk

**TJC Staff Attendees:** Rabbi Feldman, Hazzan Dulkan, Phil Nordlinger, Neil Wise

**1. Call to Order (Naomi Perlman)**

- (a) Meeting called to order at 7:45 pm by President Naomi Perlman.

**2. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting (Naomi Perlman)**

- (a) A motion was made by Phil Carchman to approve the amended minutes of the meeting of November 19, 2015. Suki Wasserman seconded. The minutes were approved with one abstention.

**3. Good & Welfare (Naomi Perlman)**

- (a) Mazel Tov to Dan Brent and Sally Steinberg-Brent on the occasion of the marriage of their son.
- (b) Best wishes to Randy Brett for a rapid recovery from his surgery.
- (c) Kudos to Neil Wise for his excellent work organizing the “Chanukah on Ice” recreation program, which attracted ca. 190 attendees.

**4. President’s Report (Naomi Perlman)**

- (a) In light of the report of the Long Range Planning Committee, which noted that the membership was especially interested in seeing the shul’s building modernized and renewed, a committee is now exploring a potential remodeling of all four of the synagogue’s bathrooms – to beautify them and to render them more accessible. Naomi called on all experienced grant writers to volunteer to help apply for government and other grants that could help defer the costs of these and other modifications.
- (b) The lease negotiations with U League for sharing of the school building are moving along well.

**5. Fundraising Report (Neil Wise)**

- (a) Neil reported that the Annual Fund has accumulated \$205,000 in donations thus far. With the brick-related donations the figure rises to \$222,000.

- (b) 42 households who gave to the annual fund last year have yet to donate this year. And 200+ families have never given to Annual Fund; they will be targeted after Jan 1<sup>st</sup>. The hope is that we will exceed the Annual Fund goal of \$250,000 with the help of some of these families.
- (c) Board participation in Annual Fund is not yet at 100%. Naomi urged Board members who have not yet contributed to do so.
- (d) Kudos to all volunteers who have called congregants to request money.

#### **6. Report on Parochet – replacing the Ark Curtain (Barbara Gantwerk)**

- (a) Barbara has been chairing a Parochet committee during the last 18 months. The committee, which also included Mindy Langer, Robin Wallack, Dan Brent, Jeanette Timmons, and Joanne Carchman, was charged with choosing a new parochet to replace the current damaged one.
- (b) Criteria of selection: a transparent fabric; a more visible, obvious handle; a strong prayer theme; a design featuring both nature motifs and biblical Hebrew script.
- (c) Artists were invited to submit proposals. The artist selected is Jerusalem-based Chana Cromer. Visual renditions of the parochet were circulated to the Board.
- (d) The new parochet will be installed soon – by February.
- (e) Barbara was thanked for her fine work chairing this committee.

#### **7. Clergy Report (Rabbi Feldman, Hazzan Dulkan)**

- (a) Hazzan Dulkan's report:
  - a. HJD reminded the Board of the annual Shabbat Shira to be held during the weekend of January 22-23. The Friday night will be family-friendly featuring teen musicians and singers. Shabbat morning will feature an ad hoc choral group.
  - b. She also noted the forthcoming concert appearance at the shul of Rick Recht on February 27<sup>th</sup>.
  - c. HJD also spoke about the roll-out of the new conservative movement's Siddur. Advance printing 40,000 copies; 37,000 pre-sold. TJC has ordered 400 copies. Date of arrival: late January. The Hazzan has been on Siddur publication committee.
- (b) Rabbi Feldman's report:
  - a. RAF noted the forthcoming Tichon program focusing on LGBTQ issues featuring an invited speaker on Wednesday January 13<sup>th</sup>.
  - b. The rabbi also informed the Board of a forthcoming Princeton community program to address growing anti-Muslim sentiment. During three evenings (January 26-28, 2016) events will be held at TJC, the Nassau Presbyterian Church, and The Islamic Center of Central New Jersey. More information will be forthcoming soon.
  - c. RAF also thanked Melissa Hager and Louise Sandburg for their efforts in connection with Nassau Presbyterian Church volunteers for the resettlement of Syrian refugees.

#### **8. Director of Administration Report (Phil Nordlinger)**

- (a) Report on a joint staff-Executive Committee program, to facilitate communication between staff and part of the lay leadership and to explore deficiencies in administrative systems.

#### **9. Committee Breakout (various)**

- (a) This was a 15-minute brainstorming session during which the Board split into small groups, each one chaired by a Vice President, to discuss different areas of operation at TJC and to identify challenges in each area.
- (b) Thereafter VPs from various sectors – programming, education, religious affairs – discussed some initiatives for their committees for the future. Discussion ensued and some suggestions for more effective committee programming were aired.

#### **10. Finance Committee Report (Jonathan Gershen)**

- (a) Reported that we are presently slightly ahead - \$40,000 – in terms of dues collection.
- (b) On expense side, TJC is better than budget by approx. \$60,000 thus far.
- (c) Re: membership: the shul is down by 42 member units from last year (net). It was noted that a significant percentage of these dropped members had been inactive for years and are finally being dropped from the member rolls.
- (d) Jonathan addressed questions from Board members about various budget lines, both income and expenses.
- (e) An external audit will be conducted in February-March 2016

#### **11. Israel Dialogue Update (Helaine Isaacs)**

- (a) Helaine mentioned the organization of a follow-up workshop, on January 10<sup>th</sup>, to allow participants in last October's active listening and workshops to further practice these skills. An email has been distributed to the participants of last October's workshops to invite them to take part.
- (b) Rabbi Melissa Weintraub's organization's survey – intended for the whole congregation - has been delayed and will be distributed to the congregation in January rather than this month.
- (c) The events scheduled for the Shabbaton weekend of February 26-28, 2016 – when Rabbi Weintraub and her organization's facilitators will be present - were recounted.

#### **12. New Business (Naomi Perlman)**

- (a) A closing event for the nursery school is being organized for June 5, 2016. Joan Levin is chairing the event, and alums will be invited. More details to come.
- (b) Jerry Neumann requested that the Board discuss the issue of building security at a future meeting.

#### **13. Executive Session**

- (a) Items discussed in this section concern confidential matters – such as (but not limited to) personnel.

#### **14. Adjournment**

- (a) Naomi P. adjourned the meeting at 10:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Fred Appel  
Recording Secretary