

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees
The Jewish Center of Princeton
Thursday, February 18, 2016**

Board Meeting Attendees: Naomi Perlman, Jeannette Timmons, Fred Appel, Susan Kanter, Ginger Schnitzer, Jonathan Gershen, Bob Garber, Gil Gordon, Helaine Isaacs, Linda Milstein, Judi Fleitman, Heidi Shegoski, Suki Wasserman, Naomi Neumann Richman, Jerry Neumann, Steve Hudis, Michael Bloom, Randy Brett, Nicole Soffin, Dina Shaw, Dan Brent

TJC Congregants in Attendance: Louise Sandburg, Ruth Schulman, Sherry Rosen

TJC Staff Attendees: Rabbi Feldman, Hazzan Dulkan, Phil Nordlinger

1. Call to Order (Naomi Perlman)

- (a) Meeting called to order at 7:08 pm by President Naomi Perlman.

2. Good & Welfare (Naomi Perlman)

- (a) Congratulations were extended to Alexandra Bar Cohen for her recent Rosh Chodesh program for teen girls.
- (b) The Tichon class's recent sessions in peer group leadership were praised.
- (c) Randy Brett announced that he and his wife Debbie are soon to be first-time grandparents.

3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting (Naomi Perlman)

- (a) A motion was made by Steve Hudis to approve the amended minutes of the meeting of January 21, 2016. Jonathan Gershen seconded. The minutes were approved with two abstentions. Linda Milstein was thanked for preparing these minutes.

4. President's Report (Naomi Perlman)

- (a) ULeague update. The lease is still not signed pending the addition of a few small items to the agreement. A signing of this lease agreement is imminent. A very successful ULeague Open House was held in TJC preschool facility last month. The transition toward the partnership with ULeague continues to go well.
- (b) Board workshop with Adena Philips: Sunday February 28, 9 am, adult library. Adena Philips has helped construct the congregation-wide survey on attitudes toward Israel and Israel advocacy that will be administered after the Shabbaton weekend. All Board members are strongly encouraged to attend. Non-attendees are asked to email Naomi P and Fred in advance.
- (c) A Nominating Committee is being formed and will be chaired by Bob Garber. Names of other members of this committee will be released within a week's time.
- (d) Sulam for current lay leaders. Sulam is the name of an integrated set of a leadership development resources offered by USCJ (United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism). These resources are available to Conservative shuls at no cost (beyond the synagogue's dues to USCJ).

Sulam includes programs for emerging leaders, current leaders, and new presidents. Training topics include leadership succession planning, governance, lay leader-staff relations, lay leader-clergy relations, etc. Programs entail a serious commitment: those designated as program leaders will attend a one-day training session at the shul (during which the Sulam trainee imports his/her training to the shul lay leadership), followed by three more Sunday training retreats for the Board. TJC Executive Committee has expressed support for this initiative for our shul. The Board was invited to address this training program. Discussion ensued.

- a. The Board expressed broad agreement with the initiative. It was agreed that a committee of 3-4 congregants be established, all members of which would undergo Sulam training and then impart Sulam training to fellow lay leaders.

5. Clergy Report (Rabbi Feldman, Hazzan Dulkan)

(a) Rabbi Feldman's report:

- a. RAF was invited the previous week to take part in a Princeton community access television show on the topic of how clergy build community. Other Princeton area clergy participated as well.
- b. RAF also reported on the JCYF program this coming Sunday at which he will speak. JCYF is sponsored by JFCS and the Jewish Community Foundation, JFCS focusing on philanthropy training for Jewish teens.
- c. Princeton Theological Seminary students are interested in participating in a Passover Seder in the community. Anyone interested in hosting one or two Christian students at PTS should speak to RAF.
- d. RAF outlined the shul's plans for Purim programs, involving among other events multiple Megillah readings and a celebration with a "Star Wars" theme.

(b) Hazzan Dulkan's report:

- a. HJD spoke about the arrival of the new Conservative Siddur (published and released this year by the Rabbinical Assembly) and about its official dedication at TJC. HJD was on the editorial committee and spoke about the work that went into the Siddur's development.
- b. HJD also spoke about the upcoming Ellen M. Egger Shabbaton weekend, including the Saturday evening concert featuring the Jewish American popular singer Rick Recht. Attendance was encouraged.
- c. TJC will host a B'nai Mitzvah Institute on Sunday March 13th, 9-noon. The goal is to demystify the Bar-Bat Mitzvah experience. Cantor Matt Axelrod is the invited speaker. This program will be offered annually for parents of teens in grades 4-7.

6. Director of Administration Report (Phil Nordlinger)

- (a) The Finance Committee meets on March 13th for a first look at the budget for the next FY. All committees are asked to submit budget plans to Phil by March 4th. Committee chairs should organize meetings with their respective committees to discuss.

7. Bathroom and Bimah Update (Dan Brett and Steve Hubert)

- (a) Dan spoke about the challenge of making both Bimahs – the one used year-round and the expanded one for the High Holidays - accessible to those with physical handicaps. The House Committee has invited four architectural firms to respond to an RFP to determine which firm

will be chosen to develop the design(s). Then the designs will be used to solicit bids from contractors.

- (b) Also, RFPs will soon go out to architects to select the firm that will do the design that will fulfill the shul's intention to upgrade and beautify two bathrooms – and to make sure they are all ADA-compliant. The scope of the RFPs will be contingent on cost estimates and the ability to raise funds for the projects off-budget. Once a design is approved from the winning firm, bids will be solicited from contractors.
- (c) The goal is to have both of these jobs complete by the 2016 High Holidays. The Board will be informed as developments occur.

8. Finance Report (Jonathan Gershen)

- (a) Jonathan reviewed the budget review process envisaged for this spring.
- (b) Jonathan distributed current budgetary numbers for the present FY and reviewed the highlights. Discussion ensued on another of issues – including the situation of uncollected religious school dues, membership numbers, and the state of the capital reserve fund.

9. Israel Dialogue Update – Shabbaton Weekend, February 27-28, 2016 (Helaine Isaacs)

- (a) Before Helaine's presentation, Naomi P thanked the Israel Dialogue Committee for its hard work in planning this weekend.
- (b) Helaine briefed the Board on the Shabbaton schedule, from the Friday evening through Sunday afternoon. She mentioned that to date about 60 congregants have registered for the workshops, and suggested that either there will be a last-minute rush to register and a full house or a disappointingly poor attendance.
- (c) Board members who have not signed up to attend the workshops and for volunteer activity are urged to put forward their names.

10. 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.

11. Other business

- (a) Congregant Louise Sandburg presented the shul's involvement in the local refugee resettlement interfaith committee, which includes a number of Christian congregations as well as the Center for Jewish Life at Princeton U and the Princeton Theological Seminary. One Pakistani Urdu-speaking family with a small child is being settled into the community next month and volunteers for various support tasks were requested. An info sheet was distributed.

12. Executive Session

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

13. Adjournment

(a) Naomi P. adjourned the meeting at 9:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Fred Appel
Recording Secretary