



## General Board Meeting - June 7, 2020

### Present:

|                         |                       |                         |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Barbara Abramson        | Heidi Joseph          | Abigail Rose            |
| Alexandra Bar-Cohen     | Edye Kamenir          | Lynne Ross              |
| Joel Berger             | Jonathan Katz         | Adam Scheer             |
| Randy Brett             | Judy Kutin            | Rabbi Elliot Schoenberg |
| Gabrielle Cayton-Hodges | Jenny Ludmer          | Robert Schwartz         |
| Dane Dickler            | Moshe Margolin        | Ed Simon                |
| Josh Eisenberg          | Andrea Martinez       | Nicole Soffin           |
| Martin Ettenberg        | Joshua McCoy          | Polly Strauss           |
| Samantha Hirschberg     | Linda Meisel          | Harlan Tenenbaum        |
| Helaine Isaacs          | Lauren Neufeld        | Cantor Jeff Warschauer  |
| Bret Jacknow            | Naomi Richman-Neumann | Tom Will                |

### Minutes:

1. Meeting called to order at 5:03 PM and was held via video conference.
2. Randy Brett welcomed the new Board and thanked everyone for serving in this capacity. He reviewed Zoom procedures. Purpose of tonight's meeting is to provide an orientation to the Board and discuss the issues in the coming year. Randy Brett welcomed Rabbi Schoenberg and invited him to offer a D'var Torah.
3. **D'var Torah** by Rabbi Elliot Schoenberg
4. **Approval of Minutes**  
The minutes of the April 22, 2020 Board meeting were approved in a motion made by Heidi Joseph and seconded by Helaine Isaacs. Eleven people abstained from the vote due to the fact that they were not part of the last Board, and, therefore, were not in attendance at the last meeting. See [www.thejewishcenter.org/Resources/Board-Minutes.aspx](http://www.thejewishcenter.org/Resources/Board-Minutes.aspx).
5. **Orientation to the Board of Directors** - Randy Brett
  - 4.1 Overview
    - Randy Brett mentioned the deliberate nature of the Board composition to reflect both established and new members in order to develop a strong leadership pipeline going forward. New members to the Board will be relied upon for future leadership and to recruit others to leadership roles to expand and broaden the reach of the synagogue and get more people involved - in spite of the fact that we may not be able to gather in the same room. The important thing is that we are together, and we will be working together in the coming year. Reach out to one another to collaborate and support each other. This is a collective effort.

#### 4.2 Expectations of Board Members

- One important value of TJC is the agenda of the community - we are here to build up the community, to expand it and to make everyone people have a place. No personal agendas, political agendas, etc. All decisions will be based on what's best for our synagogue. Everyone received a 4-page document that serves as a primer on who we are as a synagogue and what our values are. Randy highlighted our values as we move into this year of transition. He has provided operating values of TJC and encourages the Board to read this and discuss.
- The Board will meet at least 9 times this year as required by the By-Laws. There may be more as needed. The Executive Committee will meet once a month, and its purpose is to advise the President and to guide the organization. The Board has a fiduciary obligation to the congregation and responsibility to read all of the materials, including the monthly financial dashboard, which is extremely important this year as we determine the financial impact of COVID-19.
- Important to give Executive Director Joel Berger lead time for the newsletter, which is important in order to manage publication costs. Joel will put out deadlines for the newsletter. Please coordinate programs through Heidi to ensure no conflicts.
- Another expectation of Board members is to attend services to show support for our essential mission.
- Board meeting dates have been provided in the package. Randy Brett would like Board meetings to focus on discussion of policy, issues, etc, rather than recitation of reports. Therefore, please read all materials in advance. Committee chairs and VPs should communicate on updates in advance to be circulated before Board meetings

#### 4.3 Priorities for the Coming Year

- Plan to have a full-blown membership drive led by Bret Jacknow and Andrea Martinez.
- The Education Committee will play a pivotal role in keeping engagement strong among the young families and the religious school cohort, especially while we are not in person.
- The plan is to continue the December 20 mid-year congregational meeting to keep lines of communication open, started during Linda Meisel's term
- Randy Brett discussed financial remissions and the importance of confidentiality in that process. Therefore, identity of financial secretaries are known only to Randy, Dane Dickler and Joel Berger.
- Israel Dialogue Committee headed by Harold Heft will be active in the next few months.
- Nicole Soffin and Bob Schwartz have been asked to take a look as governance structure to increase efficiency going forward.
- Naomi Richman Neumann headed a committee on dues alternatives and that will be a priority going forward.
- IT and Technical infrastructure - Bernie Fleitman and others who work with Joel to address technology needs and upgrades. ShulCloud implementation will be a priority this year.

- Fundraiser in budget this spring for \$30K. We will be hearing more about that in the future.

## 5. Finance Update - Dane Dickler

5.1 We do not currently have the financial statements or dashboard given the early in the month timing of this meeting. These will be reviewed at next meeting. Highlighted a few key points from the last FY:

- TJC raised more money in the past fiscal year because of 70th Anniversary Gala, which was very successful.
- Annual Fund was a bit down - we came at \$225K when goal was \$250K - likely diversion to Gala support, but cumulatively across the two, it was much higher for the year.
- Additional restricted funds due to passing of RAF z"l
- Additional funds from rental income from ULeague, which paid a year of rent in advance as part of the lease settlement upon their departure
- Our congregation is shrinking every year - people age into senior memberships, b'nai mitzvah families don't renew, older members pass on - we are always trying to compensate for that. We expect a tough year for dues on account of higher than usual rates of remissions, people not renewing due to the COVID-19 crisis
- We do have a surplus due to last year's successful fundraising - \$200K as of April 2020, we hope that surplus at close of fiscal year in May 2020 will come in around \$150K
- No capital costs last year - which was very unusual - and helped with the budget
- Additional clarity will be provided in the next few weeks as the financial statements come in

## 5.2 Payroll Protection Program Loan Update

- TJC applied for the loan through PPP under the Cares Act - an SBA loan for small businesses. As long as funds are used for payroll, mortgage and utilities, they can be converted from a loan to a grant in its entirety.
- TJC submitted the loan application with TD Bank on the first eligible day to process that loan, and we were approved for \$156,000.50 loan based on our payroll to continue paying salaries and wages. No one on our payroll was furloughed or terminated during this time.
- Therefore, TJC can apply for loan forgiveness that would turn into a grant, which would help create greater budget favorability, which is not currently reflected in the 2020-2021 budget, because we did not know that we would be eligible for forgiveness at the time the budget was approved. Randy noted that money could potentially be used as a pool for remissions if needed. The budget that was approved reflected a constant school enrollment versus last year, but that may not be a realistic assumption. So this loan forgiveness could also help with that.
- Randy Brett noted the Finance Committee's work over the last few years in giving TJC financial security by identifying opportunities to increase interest rates and diversifying the portfolio across multiple banks.

- Jonathan Katz asked about employee retention after June. Randy Brett said that our intention is that we would keep all staff.
- Ed Simon brought up additional details that the June 30 date has now been moved to December 31 by federal government.

### 5.3 Religious School Rental Revenue Status

- Randy Brett mentioned that ULeague will provide a year's worth of income that will hit this year's operating budget in accordance with their lease with TJC. Joel Berger and Randy have been speaking with UNow who are interested in securing additional classroom space to accommodate social distancing. We presented a proposal to them, and they are reviewing with their board. Randy will keep us posted. If they do accept, that would be additional income not reflected in our current budget. Other avenues to offer the Religious School space for rent are also being pursued.
- Nicole Soffin asked about whether cost of additional sanitation required for another tenant would be factored in. Randy Brett noted that the offer on the table includes rent and utilities, but cleaning would be billed back to UNow. Linda Meisel offered the point that some classrooms would be dedicated to UNow, and others dedicated to TJC RS. We are also considering one night of RS during the week to be online to help with the changeover.
- Joshua McCoy asked for clarification on ULeague history. Randy provided details.

### 5.4 Insurance Discussion

- Randy Brett, Joel Berger, Dane Dickler and Alexandra Bar-Cohen will be meeting with our insurance carrier on Tuesday, June 9 to ensure that our coverage is sufficient and current in light of COVID.

## 6. Safety & Security Update

6.1 Naomi Richman Neumann provided an update on the committee, chaired by Josh Eisenberg and Tom Will, and consisting of Andrea Gaynor, Linda Milstein, Josh Zinder, and Abigail Rose. They will provide an update to the Board on how to open safely.

- Josh Eisenberg said we will focus on a phased approach to re-opening, including POV on masks and social distancing. Other topics under consideration are UVC lights in building ductwork, contract tracing, how to clean prayer books, what would be permissible on Shabbat and holidays, etc. Over the next 10-14 days the Committee will have something for the Board to review.

6.2 Bret Jacknow asked if we are in the position to open today. Josh Eisenberg said no - as of June 12, no more than 10 people can be gathered inside per the NJ Governor's Executive Order. Even with that, transmission concerns remain in a congregational setting with singing and limited ability to distance appropriately. The committee is trying to synthesize multiple resources and viewpoints into realistic recommendations.

6.3 Randy said that the committee's report will be the primary topic of next month's Board meeting.

6.4 Randy also referenced the USCJ President's listserv, which provides advice across member organizations so we can learn what is working in other areas.

6.5 Naomi mentioned that the Board will get questions from congregants, and we should reassure our congregants that we are making these decisions and developing our approach as fast as we can, with their health and safety, as well as that of our staff, as our primary concern.

6.6 Joshua McCoy asked if there has been any consideration for holding outdoor services. Josh Eisenberg said there are still concerns with using a tent or covered structure that it might be as risky as indoors. But everyone is looking into what is reasonable. More concrete answers will be available soon. Randy mentioned the challenge of taking services outside is that so many people use LiveStream and Zoom, which would have to be addressed, since our technology at the moment facilitates only indoor usage of those services. The possibility of buying additional cameras that could be mounted to allow livestream if outside has been discussed in order to overcome that challenge. Joel mentioned additional concerns like the bathrooms (port-a-potties would have to be secured for outdoors to minimize indoor foot traffic), how many people can be safely distanced under an outdoor tent for weather, etc. There are more considerations than meet the eye to move services outside.

## **7. Religious Affairs Update**

7.1 Polly Strauss provided an update on Religious Affairs.

- She thanked Linda Milstein for serving as the Religious Affairs liaison to the Safety and Security Committee.
- Looking ahead to High Holidays, if the decision is made that they will be virtual, that would present tremendous opportunity for impact and engagement - perhaps drawing in people from other settings, such as Riverside and the library minyan. It could be a chance to be very innovative. The RA Committee awaits the guidance of the Safety & Security committee and the decision of the Board.

## **8. Adult Education Update**

8.1 Randy said an ad hoc Committee was named after the crisis to increase engagement.

8.2 Moshe Margolin said the Adult Education committee designed a number programs to keep people connected and engaged.

8.3 The committee's belief is that even after this crisis passes, there will still be a need to keep these resources active to help those who can't get out. The average age of TJC members is 64 years old, with many members in their 90s. That presents a unique challenge to foster a sense of community.

8.4 A report will be presented at the next meeting to outline a plan going forward.

8.5 The committee is representative of the congregation in multiple ways (age, gender, ways they connect with TJC, etc). It is a good working group, supported by Joel Berger and Sharon Diamondstein. Moshe named the committee members.

## 9. Membership Update

9.1 Bret Jacknow and Andrea Martinez gave an update on membership.

- Membership is about attracting and retaining members. Much of the focus has been on attracting. Bret wants to focus on retention this year, partially driven by COVID, but also driven by the value proposition that we offer. So the biggest thing we can do is to drive retention is to engage and involve our members. A few months ago, Bret started an initiative to call everyone to make sure everyone was okay as the pandemic struck. It was very well-received, and attracted a number of volunteers. This should be a community where people feel cared about and involved.

9.2 Bret stated his intent to track more data about each member to understand how to best get people involved and engaged.

9.3 Andrea added that we will still continue to recruit new members and will continue historical outreach activities.

9.4 A full committee has also been identified to help membership be more of a focus.

9.5 Randy Brett emphasized that the Board needs to play this role to help with membership, as well.

9.6 Helaine Isaacs asked about whether we have been active about letting people know about the remissions program. Was it very clear in the membership packet? Joel said we made it clear in the letter to reach out to Joel Berger directly. Randy Brett emphasized that we do not want finances to be a barrier to being part of our community

## 10. Rabbi Search Update

10.1 Polly Strauss provided an update on the Rabbi Search Committee. They are meeting for the first time on June 17 and have already grouped into subcommittees.

10.2 Polly emphasized that the process needs to be consensus-oriented and allow people to feel heard. Therefore, parlor meetings (in an effort led by Committee members Nancy Lewis, Linda Grenis, and Dave Saltzman) and a survey (in an effort led by Gabrielle Cayton-Hodges, Judy Kutin and Ed Simon) will be conducted to gather congregational feedback.

10.3 Barbara Abramson will be responsible for making sure the Committee has an on-going plan for congregational communication.

10.4 Eran Zacks, Abigail Rose, Jen Black and Bob LeBeau round out the committee, plus Randy Brett and Alexandra Bar-Cohen act as ex officio members with Rabbi Schoenberg's guidance.

10.5 Polly invites Board feedback at multiple touchpoints throughout the process, as well as directly.

## 11. **Good & Welfare**

11.1 Alexandra Bar-Cohen announced that her eldest son Gabriel will be volunteering at a Kibbutz where his parents volunteered 21 years ago while she was pregnant with him.

11.2 Andrea and Alan Martinez bought their first house.

11.3 Randy and Debbie Brett's daughter and son-in-law are moving to Kansas at the end of the month to advance their careers.

Meeting adjourned at 6:59PM in a motion made by Moshe Margolin and seconded by Joshua McCoy.

Minutes recorded by Edye Kamenir

**Attachment A**

An everyday Hebrew expression for which there is no simple English equivalent, is “Mah pit’om”? It can be variously translated as: “What the \_\_\_\_\_?” “Where is this coming from?” “Since when?” or “Why on earth?”

I had a “mah pit’om” reaction to news coming from this Board several times this past week.

The Johnson Amendment of the U.S. tax code clearly states that we are not to endorse or oppose political candidates. Attempting an end run by deleting the name of the candidate you are targeting does not make it any less political, nor does hiding behind a reference to a pre-existing endorsement. Mah pit’om?

What was the urgent need, fully six weeks after a resolution passed in the House, that allowed no time for discussion of past events since the last Board meeting but required an emergency vote via email? Mah pit’om?

I know that the diversity of opinion at TJC regarding Israel-related issues reflects the diversity of opinions across the American Jewish community and across American Jewish organizations. (I for one am very proud of this diversity.) It is also clear from the last decade that reaching consensus among us on these issues is divisive, inflammatory, and nearly impossible. We can’t even have an Israeli Affairs committee! Why, then, would 30 Board members cast their votes to endorse a measure that they know reflects only one position among our nearly 600 member households? Why jeopardize our very fragile sh’lom bayit? Mah pit’om?

If the Board really wants to support, help, and express its love for our Israeli brothers and sisters, why not spend a fraction of this time educating itself about the current Israeli government’s shabby treatment of its own minorities, including but not limited to: non-Jews other than Muslims, Ethiopian Jews, and non-Orthodox Jews like us? Then you could really make a difference.

Lastly – I said mah pit’om just yesterday upon hearing for the first time that this “endorsement-within-an-ad” is scheduled to appear three more times in Town Topics. To this I say, in Hebrew and in English, NO. Not in my name.



General Board Meeting, June 7, 2020

**Attachment B – Finance**

TJC Financial Dashboard

|                                       | July 31, 2019<br>YTD Actual | July 31, 2019<br>YTD Budget | Variance        | July 31, 2019<br>YTD Actual |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Operational Revenue</b>            |                             |                             |                 |                             |
| Dues                                  | 234,560                     | 182,875                     | 51,685          | 368,776                     |
| Security Assessments/Donations        | 23,895                      | 17,415                      | 6,480           | -                           |
| Capital Assessments                   | 13,119                      | 9,605                       | 3,514           | 38,885                      |
| CapEx & Building Development Fund     | 14,834                      | -                           | 14,834          | -                           |
| Other                                 | 17,489                      | 15,021                      | 2,468           | 13,360                      |
| <b>Operational Expenses</b>           |                             |                             |                 |                             |
| Professional Salaries                 | (97,159)                    | (93,033)                    | (4,125)         | (93,956)                    |
| Buildings                             | (63,112)                    | (41,956)                    | (21,156)        | (49,834)                    |
| Administration                        | (21,188)                    | (17,113)                    | (4,075)         | (19,521)                    |
| Membership                            | (1,653)                     | (2,692)                     | 1,039           | (2,316)                     |
| Mortgage Debt Service                 | (12,177)                    | (12,176)                    | (1)             | (12,177)                    |
| Finance                               | (17,086)                    | (13,418)                    | (3,668)         | (13,575)                    |
| CapEx                                 | -                           | -                           | -               | (7,178)                     |
| Information Systems                   | (2,999)                     | (7,166)                     | 4,167           | (5,529)                     |
| USCJ Dues                             | -                           | -                           | -               | -                           |
| Security                              | (13,697)                    | (9,721)                     | (3,976)         | -                           |
| Other                                 | -                           | -                           | -               | -                           |
| <b>Operational Expenses Subtotal</b>  | <b>(229,070)</b>            | <b>(197,275)</b>            | <b>(31,795)</b> | <b>(204,087)</b>            |
| <b>Operational Net</b>                | <b>36,097</b>               | <b>10,226</b>               | <b>25,872</b>   | <b>216,935</b>              |
| <b>Education</b>                      |                             |                             |                 |                             |
| Education Revenue                     | 38,640                      | 22,947                      | 15,693          | 54,183                      |
| Education Expenses                    | (35,686)                    | (52,601)                    | 16,915          | (38,506)                    |
| <b>Education Net</b>                  | <b>2,955</b>                | <b>(29,654)</b>             | <b>32,609</b>   | <b>15,677</b>               |
| <b>Fundraising</b>                    |                             |                             |                 |                             |
| Annual Fund Income                    | 8,111                       | 8,111                       | (1)             | 2,339                       |
| Contributions                         | 2,708                       | 2,708                       | -               | 1,599                       |
| Security Grant                        | 49,697                      | 50,000                      | (304)           | -                           |
| Other Fundraising (Events)            | 84,334                      | -                           | 84,334          | 175                         |
| Fundraising Expense                   | (3,265)                     | (755)                       | (2,510)         | (20,343)                    |
| <b>Fundraising Net</b>                | <b>91,888</b>               | <b>10,064</b>               | <b>81,824</b>   | <b>(16,230)</b>             |
| <b>Programming, Committees, Other</b> |                             |                             |                 |                             |
| Revenue                               | 33,166                      | 17,038                      | 16,128          | 25,710                      |
| Expense                               | (33,652)                    | (23,427)                    | (10,225)        | (15,015)                    |
| <b>Net</b>                            | <b>(485)</b>                | <b>(6,389)</b>              | <b>5,904</b>    | <b>10,695</b>               |
| <b>Restricted Funds</b>               |                             |                             |                 |                             |
| Revenue                               | 8,129                       | -                           | 8,129           | 20,997                      |
| Expense                               | (6,949)                     | -                           | (6,949)         | (15,245)                    |
| <b>Net</b>                            | <b>1,180</b>                | <b>-</b>                    | <b>1,180</b>    | <b>5,752</b>                |
| <b>Total Revenue</b>                  | <b>528,681</b>              | <b>325,720</b>              | <b>202,961</b>  | <b>526,024</b>              |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>                 | <b>(308,621)</b>            | <b>(274,058)</b>            | <b>(34,563)</b> | <b>(293,195)</b>            |
| <b>Net Income</b>                     | <b>220,061</b>              | <b>51,662</b>               | <b>168,399</b>  | <b>232,829</b>              |

| Membership as of 8/14/19         |            |                |
|----------------------------------|------------|----------------|
| Category                         | # Families | \$ Billed      |
| Household                        | 238        | 646,062        |
| Single                           | 36         | 59,232         |
| Senior Couple                    | 104        | 168,681        |
| Senior Single                    | 75         | 69,750         |
| <b>Subtotal</b>                  | <b>453</b> | <b>943,725</b> |
| Associate                        | 4          | 1,440          |
| Friend                           | -          | -              |
| Remissions                       | 8          | 6,632          |
| Non-Paying*                      | 39         | -              |
| <b>Total</b>                     | <b>504</b> | <b>951,797</b> |
| <b>FTE @ full household dues</b> |            | <b>349</b>     |

\*Non-Paying includes 4 Exploratory, 0 Young Household, 12 Clergy, 10 Staff and 13 Exempt

| School Enrollment as of 8/14/19 |            |                |
|---------------------------------|------------|----------------|
| Grade                           | # Children | \$ Billed      |
| Yad B' Yad                      | 1          | -              |
| Ganon                           | 4          | 700            |
| Gan Katan                       | 4          | 3,408          |
| Gan                             | 5          | 4,260          |
| Alef                            | 9          | 6,816          |
| Bet                             | 13         | 11,076         |
| Gimmel                          | 10         | 12,890         |
| Daled                           | 21         | 27,069         |
| Heh                             | 15         | 16,857         |
| Vav                             | 23         | 29,325         |
| Zayin                           | 24         | 38,976         |
| Sulam                           | 21         | 16,560         |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>150</b> | <b>167,936</b> |

**Attachment C**

**DRAFT**

The Jewish Center

Policy on Weapons

DRAFT -- DOCUMENT IN PROGRESS. DO NOT FORWARD, COPY OR DISSEMINATE

Weapons are not permitted on The Jewish Center property, or at facilities rented by The Jewish Center for any purpose.

Weapons include, but are not limited to, guns, knives or swords with blades over four inches in length, explosives, and any chemical whose purpose is to cause harm to another person.

No one will be allowed onto our grounds or into our buildings possessing weapons, regardless of their possession of right-to-carry permit. No one will be permitted into our buildings who refuses an arms check prior to entering if requested.

Sole Exception: Possession of a weapon can be authorized jointly by the TJC President and Executive Director to allow hired private security personnel and police to have a weapon on TJC property when this possession is determined necessary to for the safety and security of our members and guests. Only the joint authorization from Executive Director and TJC President may approve the carrying of a weapon onto TJC grounds, as defined above.

**FINAL**

The Jewish Center

Policy on Weapons

Weapons are not permitted on The Jewish Center property, or at facilities rented by The Jewish Center or at events sponsored by The Jewish Center for any purpose.\*

Weapons include, but are not limited to, guns, knives or swords with blades over four inches in length, explosives, box cutters, and any chemical whose purpose is to cause harm to another person.

No one will be allowed onto our grounds or into our buildings possessing weapons, regardless of their possession of right-to-carry permit. No one will be permitted into our buildings who refuses an arms check prior to entering if requested.

\*Sole Exception: Possession of a weapon can be authorized jointly by the TJC President and Executive Director or their designees to allow hired private security personnel and police to have a weapon on TJC property when this possession is determined necessary for the safety and security of our members and guests. Only the joint authorization from Executive Director and TJC President or their designees may approve the carrying of a weapon onto TJC grounds, as defined above.