

TJC Board Meeting Minutes  
November 30, 2023

Heidi- call to order at 7:07

Approve August 24, 2023 and November 2, 2023 Board meeting minutes—Ari; first: I move to approve; Moshe; seconded.

Abstain—ABC; Neal; Jesse; Diane; four votes abstain due to absence from those meetings.

Everyone else approved minutes from August and November board meetings.

Financial Report—Neal Masia

I sent 2 spreadsheets earlier today. I will hit the highlights. IN contrast to last year we are ahead which is good. For example the budget was for 145 students and we are up to 152 so that generates revenue. We are also ahead on billed dues. We are ahead of what we budgeted. We are adding members not subtracting. We have a lot of inflows into Life and Legacy. The Life and Legacy fund is up over 300K so it's growing. When we get to 500K then it starts generating income for TJC. There is 50-60K payment coming into Life and Legacy soon, so we are getting there. Once it gets to 500K then at that point 5% of it becomes available to use. It is invested right now in the Jewish Community Foundation but we can't use any of it right now. The balance sheet is strong right now so I feel good about where we are this year.

The annual fund is going pretty well and Joel will speak more about it. We had budgeted to have a deficit this year, but right now we are tracking to where we won't have a deficit which would be great. Interest income has been a nice positive number. Any questions on the budget piece?

Heidi- the annual fund idea of doing Robo calls has been implemented. We sent a call to 384 people. 40 people didn't get it so 340 people got a message about the annual fund and our events and wishing them a happy thanksgiving. It's a prerecorded voicemail message from me, that is left on their phone. We are in the process of collecting the data and results from that. We are planning on sending out mass text message and an email about the annual fund. And I will send you each a list of members to call to make an annual fund contribution. So I hope everyone can help.

Heidi- we will know who made contributions on the dates from the phone call and we can compare it to this time last year.

It's not a robo call. This is a ring less voicemail. It just shows up as a voicemail. The caller id is Heidi's phone number. We will provide a script and list of numbers to call with your list of members for the annual fund.

Neal- Jesse asked me about growth of associate member category.

Those are members who live far away and they can still be connected with the shul.

Regular family membership has gone up net 1; net 5 overall since June. Some people leave and some join. We have had a lot of people move. Heidi- people have left because they moved to Florida and a few deaths. But no one has left because they were unhappy. The household category is up net 3 since May.

Neal- The Israel Impact Fund

It's been an amazing process. There have been over 100 distinct donors. The vast majority are TJC members. Right now as of this morning there are some core donors who have given a lot of money but it's a lot of members who have given varied amounts. The fund is up to 535K and we are expecting more so closer to 600K. The first 40K has gone out about 10 days ago to a kibbutz and we have a detailed spreadsheet of how the money has spent. The fund has doubled since 10/31/23.

Alexandra Bar Cohen (ABC) - The Israel impact fund continues to focused on kibbutz Holit, one of the communities attacked on 10/7, where the need is very great. The IIF team on the ground in Israel just met with the displaced kibbutzniks, currently guests of Kibbutz Ein Ged, is in touch frequently and meets weekly in person. Our initial disbursement will pay for their winter clothing via a voucher system that has been organized by the IIF with Kibbutz Holit's business committee. Photos to come. The IIF is also making possible family mental health mini getaways to Eilat since each family unit is living in one room right now. IIF is also helping pay for group trauma therapists. We are working pro bono with kibbutz members whose livelihood was taken away on Oct— matching up their skills with work needed by five partner companies. We are doing all of this with their existing business manager and existing kibbutz operating structure to ensure decisions are made by them not for them, to respect and empower them. We are also trying to advise them as they renegotiate their solar contract to help with their existing debt. The government said they could go back to the kibbutz for partial harvest, because parts of their fields are still growing, such as Mangos, etc. But there are few volunteers and foreign workers as there is no iron dome coverage for the Gaza Envelope at this time and Hamas is still firing on the area. RAM- could people from here go there and farm?

ABC- they could but it would not be a "vacation." There are what's app groups that Israelis use to choose where to go help with the harvest every day. So much opportunity to help.

The website has been updated and will continue to be as we get weekly updates. Please check it out and feel free to share it widely:

[IsraellImpact.org](http://IsraellImpact.org)

Jane La Grange - Camp Ramah is sponsoring 4 day trips to go to Israel and help out.

Moshe- the reaction for Hear o Israel was very good- 175-200 people attending. We learned there is a need for the community to get together. We did

have some AV problems and it wasn't the perfect program but it was very much appreciated. As an organizer I look at things more critically than the people in the audience.

Heidi- Neil Stauber- chef, came from Brooklyn and made hummus and we sold a lot of hummus and we made a lot of money for the IIF and Federation fund. Attendees were half congregants and half from the Jewish Community.

Merow and ABC— It was a full day experience making hummus. Nil Strauber is a former chef at Port Said, NY and now head chef at Selina Hotel, Chelsea. He did a phenomenal job corralling a robust TJC volunteer force throughout the day, measuring, mixing, filling containers. People brought in scales, food processors. Nil did the final blend and tasted each batch. Containers sold for \$20/pint and were stamped with a sticker that says From Israel with Love, the Israel & Us committee @TJC.

There was an Israeli wine tasting and all in all, it was a great solidarity day- a great feeling.

Moshe- it was amazing for me to see the community and everyone chipping in. There was so much going on here at TJC. It was a great event and it was well spirited and great volunteers.

Moshe- There were 75 people at the ADL event on confronting anti-Semitism. The weather was bad so a lot of people did not show up. The lecture was great. The speaker was excellent and interacted well with the audience and gave a lot of information in a relaxed manner. He was well received. We prepared the topics in advance and we used note card to collect questions and comments. He was the right guy for this shul and for our audience.

Heidi- Judy an update on game night, please? There have only been 4 board members who signed up so please sign up.

Judy—a great night of solidarity and community on Dec. 9 I hope I see you all at game night. Eve and Harry are our bar tenders. Please come and bring a friend. We need sign ups as soon as possible for catering. We have a few big sponsors but there is room for more. The more that come the more fun it will be. Grand kids would be great for this.

Bring your friends, kids, neighbors. Even if they are not members. You can bring Jews or non-Jews.

ABC- Game Night: Does it make sense for TJC to send out a robo-text to drum up more signups for what will be an exciting way for us to come together during these difficult times?

Heidi- Civil rights trip. There were 27 of us that went on the trip and met in Atlanta and went to the Ebenezer Baptist church. We heard Rev. Warnock

preach, the services were amazing at the Baptist church. They have ambassadors at their services to meet and greet and talk to visitors. It was a superb experience. We walked out of there saying WOW we should do this at TJC. There are takeaways that we should be learning. We also went to the Edmund Pettis bridge.

Rabbi- I suggest that people who don't want to go to services should stay in the lobby and be an ambassador. You don't have to sit in services. And the church members are not afraid and embarrassed to ask their members to donate. I was talking to one of 6 pastors there. The reverend said they consider a 10% donation a requirement and then they ask for more. He said it's an honor to give so it's an honor to ask. In our tradition, tzedekah means doing the right thing and contributing so it's an honor to give.

Heidi- asking for donations was part of their power point presentation at services. They said we need money to do all the wonderful things we do. They put an envelope in the pew. They didn't miss a trick. We do want to do the ambassadors so we want to make that happen. And we need to talk about money as much as we don't like it.

How do you think our congregation would react to donation envelopes in the pews? I don't know that it is something that shuls do, but maybe.

Ari- but the members of the church don't pay a membership fee. They pay donations. Since we have to pay membership dues, people don't want to pay more.

Jane LaGrange- I don't think we should ask for money on shabbat. It really bothers me.

RAM- that was one part of the trip. We also saw the history of lynching. And the museums were fabulous. Hopefully there will be some takeaways and a presentation for MLK weekend or another time.

Heidi-75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Pam- we need to make a change to the by laws for the raffle for one of the fundraising aspects. We have to get a license so then we can get a permit. We have to provide our governing documents to the state and our financials. Alan Porter, TJC Counsel, developed the language in the by law change. We have a congregational meeting on Dec. 17 and we will have to ask members to be prepared to vote on the by law change.

ABC- I make a motion to read the by law change.  
Second by Jesse Treu

Pam- reads the by law change. I ask the board members to vote Yea to move the by law change to the congregation for the vote.

Discussion—

Lew Gantwerk. -- Do we expect to make a lot of money on this raffle?

Dana – are the funds described for only Jewish non-profits.

ABC- Is this a one time deal?

Jesse- Is this so we can get non- TJC people to buy raffle tickets?

Dana- it seems excessive, but this is the process and once we change the by laws it's easy to get. But maybe it should say Jewish non-profits.

Ari- if you do a special door prize raffle where it's included with the entrance price then you don't need a permit.

Pam- we have a goal to sell a lot of raffle tickets and raise in the range of 300K. We are hoping that each board member sells a lot of raffle tickets.

The current language is ok.

Heidi- I so move that the Board agrees that this is a by law change that we would approve and can present to the board at the mid-year meeting

Ari- second

Melissa Hager votes no because she doesn't understand it.

Everyone else voted – yes

Neal and ABC - At the mid year meeting we should make a presentation and explanation about what the raffle is important and why we are doing it and generate excitement for the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event. This will also free us up for future uses.

Pam- Joel gets credit for putting this out to his colleagues, so we understood the process and helped us navigate the process. Thank you Joel!

Heidi- catering committee is still working so no update.

Ari- Update on house committee. We are continuing to work on little things around the property and building and with security on Tom. We fixed a couple of Torahs .

Heidi- everything outside is lit up now; we put new lights up so please notice and be happy with that.

Neal- any discussion about a new sign?

Ari- yes- we are talking about way finding and a new sign. The social hall is nice and bright now.

Heidi- the apartment – there was an issue with the township to get an extra permit and we have it now so any remaining construction should take 3 more weeks and then it should be finished. We'll see.

Tom Will – security –the barrier system is in the works. I'm going to talk to Josh Zinder about potential reworking to make sure the playground area is covered a little better.

Heidi- we also have some plans to make changes to the front entrance of the building.

Joel- the vestibule is in the works. We are getting quotes on ballistic glass to extend the front entryway. Waiting for quotes.

Lobby—we moved two large plaques from side lobby to the main lobby so people can see them. We are looking to use the side lobby as a meeting space and coffee bar, and storage closet for the chairs.

Religious school—a lot happening. Enrollment is up to 150. We've been doing class breakfasts every week and once a month it's for the entire school. The students and everyone enjoyed it. We will do it again. The breakfast gets parents to volunteers and interact. And the kids get to learn the prayers for food, etc. Each class has a room breakfast, but once a month the whole school is together. There are other chances for the parents to meet and socialize also. Field trips coming up. Each grade will go on appropriate trips. For example, 2-3 graders are going to the zoo re, Noah's ark ; 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders in Feb. will go to a social justice seminar in Washington DC for 4 days. Learn about advocacy, Israel, justice, Havdalah, shabbat, etc.

Dec. 6 we are dedicating the youth lounge. There's a lot of stuff going on.

RAM- Shabbat k'lanu is when we change RS to be on Shabbat services and there is no school on Sunday. We do this 4 times per year, and it's been great. We hope to do it more.

Micahel Goldin- it's important to get the parents to know each other so that they want to stay at TJC after the b'nai mitzvahs.

ABC- We should try to put the onus on the parents to organize themselves for events outside of TJC so they become real friends.

ABC- would you be interested in a pool table and video machine for the youth lounge? It's in Maryland though so we'd have to get it delivered.

JCW update – Pam- JCW is looking forward to this Sunday when we are doing a Judaica sale during the craft fair. We collected Judaica that people want to get rid of and resell. The mikvah trip is coming up as well, with the Rabbi.

Heidi- Jane – briefly—Judi Fleitman and Mindy Langer are bringing back the leaflet we will have in the sanctuary for each shabbat.

Moshe's committee Israel and Us and Religious affairs initiative with the sister shul in Omer, Israel. Maybe a t'bishvat seder or a meet and greet.

We are going to try to organize a Shabbat across TJC where people sign up to host or attend a Shabbat dinner in the Spring.

Lynn Ross—we are going to have a movie series that will be on Sundays in January Feb, March. Around a musical theme and Jewish People.

Diane- membership – new membership event in February for Havdalah. We had an idea for game night; do we want to offer recent new members to come for free? Or at least send them a special invite.

Board directs: Just invite them personally and encourage them to come to game night.

We have a membership outreach time line for the first 2 months where various people at TJC contact the new members. But, do we have a check and balance to know if these calls and actions are actually happening? I was wondering about bringing back a buddy system? We think it would be a great way to help new members feel connected to TJC. We have done this in the past we just need to reenergize this.

Joel- security- the daffodil project was amazing in Tiger Park. We planted there the day after the park was marched on by Palestinians. We have since met with the police chief about the rally, and we have a lot of police presence at TJC. I found out at the tree lighting there was a Palestinian protest. So for the menorah lighting the police are closing off Palmer Square at 3 pm and we are going ahead with it at 4 pm, and there will be police in place.

We want to know about Palestinian actions so that we can tell the police, especially if it's on campus. If you see something let us know, we have doubled out security and some generous donors cover the cost. This is our reality. On Sunday Dec. 17 we have the semi annual meeting so the police are coming here with bagels from 9-11 to show us their support. The Rabbi has a great connection with the police chief. They do care, but they don't inform us as much as we want about the Palestinian rallies. So please send us the information. We can call the police or take whatever steps we need to take to keep everyone safe.

Heidi- Rabbi- Pastor James also the head of Princeton clergy association came to services here and then he talked about TJC to his congregants and one of them gave a 7K donation to us for 1K for Israel and 6K for TJC security. We sent them a thank you note. It was incredible.

ABC- suggests writing an op-ed about this for the local paper. Rabbi Merow will write something with the Reverend.

Joel - The menorah in front of the Princeton McCaffreys' was vandalized. And the hostage posters there were also taken down. So we have to stay vigilant.

Heidi- I want to thank Ari for speaking at the last Great Minds Salon.

**Mid -year meeting is Dec. 17 at 10 am**

**Joint Board and EC meeting on Dec 14- this will be our Chanukah meeting.**

Joel:

Ari-three Sundays in the winter we are running classes of self defense, CPR and First aid. It will be in the January bulletin.

Joel- Lisa is our new communications manager and she is learning and doing a lot. We need to get the January bulletin done soon, so if you have submissions send it in soon,

Heidi- before we leave please, I appeal that you each make a donation to the annual fund. Please sign up for game night on Dec. 9.

Rabbi- D'var Torah We are in an unprecedented time of anxiety and sadness and that's why Jews are coming together. We see curious people each Shabbat to find us. We are about to be at Chanukah so we have real Maccabees we are fighting for . We have the opportunity to come together. There are so many opportunities to come together and we have to use these events to bring other people in and find the Jews who are not affiliated and bring them to an event. We all need to be together. This Sunday there is a holiday craft fair and there are a lot of Chanukah events. I know the miracle I want is that we don't have to put those hostage posters back up and that we put up a huge sign that say TJC is here, and that Israel has peace and quiet and protection. We are searching for a lot of miracles. Please come to the Menorah lighting on Nassau Street. Palmer square lighting and we want to pack the square. Please come.

Charlene- First night of Chanukah menorah lighting is here at TJC (Nassau Street)

Palmer Square menorah lighting is on Dec. 12 at 4 pm. The square is opening at 3 pm and will have music from 4-6 pm.

**Good and Welfare:**

Heidi- Munchies for Menches is very important this year. You can start signing up now. Trays are made and Delivery is made on Dec. 21 and Dec. 22



ABC-There were only two children in the group of hostages released tonight in Israel, teenage siblings, Aisha and Bilal Ziyadne, who are two of the four members of the Bedouin family kidnapped from Kibbutz Holit, the kibbutz the IIF is helping. Great news.

Chuck Schumer had an op ed in the NYT on anti-Semitism.

Executive session:

8:45

Heidi- anyone have anything to discuss? Any issues?

Heidi- Joel is due for a contract renewal in May. If you have any private feedback please give it to me privately.

Roni Garrison is still sick with Covid and now bronchitis, but she wants to come back but we told her to get better. She doesn't want any help but I will send her a card. I'll put a card in the office so if everyone can sign it I will then send it to her.

Thank you all.

Motion to adjourn- Jesse

Second- Neal Masia

Adjourned.