

TJC Board Meeting March 20, 2025

7:05 President Heidi Joseph called the meeting to order.

Attendees: Heidi Joseph, Rachelle Simon, Judy Kutin, Joel Berger, Rabbi Merow, Jesse Treu, Louise Sandburg, Adam Pechter, Moshe Margolin, Suzanne Esterman, Pam Zaifman, Lynne Ross, Melissa Hager, Michael Goldin, Leah Boustan, Abbye Cornfield, Fred Appel, Lew Gantwerk, Abigail Rose, Jeremy Spiegel

I. D'var Torah

RAM: Prepping for Passover. We need to get ourselves ready for the Seder.

Mission Trip 11/1-9

Moshe: Four synagogues are participating and each has a representative. Ours is Jacqui Schreiber. It is a busy schedule. The actual trip guide is leading the meeting tonight.

Moshe moved to accept the minutes. Minutes were approved.

II. Budget Update

Leah: There are two proposals for revenue collection for next year. Currently, most revenue comes from dues. The total is \$979k. It can be broken down into 4 household categories:

2 adult 500k,

1 adult 59k,

Senior 300k,

Senior Single 115k

Plus:

Security fee 82k

B'nai mitzvah fee 14k

Also religious school fees

Option 1 raise all dues \$10/month

Option 2 couples \$10/month, singles \$5/month
Security fee is \$36 for all.

B'nai mitzvah fee is \$1200 and has not changed since 2019. There is a proposal to raise this fee to \$1400 next year and \$1500 the next.

Religious school proposal \$1/month which is \$10/year but possibly what was meant was \$10/month.

Option 1: The issues are that these assumptions may be optimistic in assuming no members are lost, since increases may cause people to leave. Dues over \$3k barrier may seem like a lot. The percent increase differs by household type.

Option 2: The security and b'nai mitzvah fee will stay the same. It is still over \$1 million in dues revenue. There are similar percent increases for different household types. 7k less would be raised. This increase also breaks the \$3k barrier, so we may still lose members.

An important part of messaging is what the revenue is used for.

Jesse: Why are we talking about increasing revenue? These increases are bigger than inflation. The expense side should drive this. Why do we need to raise dues?

Leah: Now basic operating expenses are barely covered. More than that is out of reach. We have plans such as a well executed meal for each holiday, but Rabbi does not have staff support for that. No one is working with pre K kids or to onramp families. We could possibly hire part time staff. Also, for post bar mitzvah Torah reading for high schoolers.

Jesse: We are expensive now, yet trying to grow. The impediment is the price tag. Discussion should start with plans for how we grow, rather than \$5 or \$10.

Pam: Are there other revenue sources we are pursuing? Such as facility rentals.

Joel: We want to explore the raise in dues early, so we are discussing it now. Bar mitzvah family dues, security and religious school fees are going up.

Adam: Fees are usually raised each year.

Moshe: Maybe a cap as a break for bar mitzvah families. Also, the debt can be spread over months and a discount is possible.

Abigail: Are there people who don't join due to high fees?

Joel: There has not been a single person who won't join because of money. We will work with them on financial issues. Money is not a barrier to entry.

Abbye: Talking to religious school families, it's possible that they might not feel comfortable asking for financial help.

Joel: Only a small number ask for discounts.

Leah: The big thing is dues. There's not a lot of other options. Maybe we can ramp up new membership dues more slowly.

III. Life and Legacy Program

Amy Zacks Executive Director of Jewish Community Foundation of Greater Mercer, Evy Grossman, and Elliot Freeman

Elliot: This program was started about 15 years ago to enhance Jewish institutions in North America. There are over 90 promise makers at this time.

Evy: Forms were given out to enable committing to leaving a gift to the synagogue in your legacy. Different ways to give are outlined in the form. All levels are welcome. You can also make a donation right now to the Life and Legacy Endowment. If the endowment fund is large enough, it can provide significant annual revenue.

IV. Chavurat Chesed

Pam: A group brainstormed at Martha Friedman's home to expand the Chesed program. The Mission Statement is to provide caring support in times of need, celebrate joyful times, comfort the bereaved, and perform acts of lovingkindness. Categories to be expanded include meal train, Shiva squad, friendly visitors, caring drivers. We are working on easily receiving requests.

V. Restricted Funds-Refugee Resettlement

Heidi: The \$18k check to I-RISE is delayed by a lack of documentation. We are in the process of making it happen. Scott Borsack will be working on it, and, hopefully, it will be done by next month.

Melissa: I don't understand the problem. You look at donor intent. The intent is refugee resettlement, which is what I-RISE does.

Heidi: The bylaws only allow checks up to \$1500, if not in the budget and this is not in the budget. Also, the money is going to an organization and not to refugees. And there is no documentation in the fund.

Melissa: There is a lot of money sitting in the fund. And there is a need. There's no reason to wait. I make a motion that 18k be submitted to I-RISE.

Abigail seconds.

Heidi: There is no description for the disbursement of the fund. Scott is looking at it now and should give an answer within the week.

Lew: The question is, can this nonprofit give to another nonprofit. The lawyer has been consulted and asked to create a framework, so we can donate this money.

Judy: This is not in the bylaws, but a financial policy that was created to prevent the president from writing, for instance, a \$50k landscape check.

Blocking this check to I-RISE is not the intent of the policy. The intent was to safeguard against rogue actions and this is not a rogue action.

Suzanne called the question. Adam seconded. There was a vote to approve an end to debate.

Melissa agreed to table the motion and hoped to have a check written in the next week.

Heidi: An update on the apartment. It will take 2-3 weeks to replace the window. Everything else is done and approved.

VI. Upcoming Events and Holidays

Heidi: Scholar in Residence 3/21-23 It's too late to register for meals but people can still attend.

Pam: JCW Shabbat 4/4. JCW women lead the service and there is dinner. Also 5/4 is the JCW Spring Event at TJC. It's a spiritual day, with a speaker, art project, and brunch.

Heidi: We're planning a new program, an end of year event. It's a Burn the Mortgage party with a Billy Joel/Elton John tribute band 5/22. If the mortgage is paid off, there will be an extra \$7k/month cash flow. Melissa, Louise, and Lynne agreed to help with the event.

Melissa: The Social Action table at Purim reached out to lots of people. \$370 will be distributed to refugees, JFCS, and the Rescue Mission. Paget will be organizing a book collection for the Rescue Mission. PCH is building birdhouses. Debbie Dunn Solomon suggested a memorial for Cynthia Sage, who helped start the TJC garden.

RAM urged everyone to vote in the World Zionist Congress.

VII. Good and Welfare

Next mtg 4/17

Budgets 5/8

Annual Meeting 5/18

8:28 Meeting Adjourned