

TJC Board Meeting May 8, 2025

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

Attendees: Heidi Joseph, Rachelle Simon, Suzanne Esterman, Jesse Treu, Leah Boustan, Allison Schneider, Moshe Margolin, Abigail Rose, Bruce Goldstein, Diane Guvenis, Jane LeGrange, Louise Sandburg, Melissa Hager, Rabbi Merow, Joel Berger, Fred Appel, Jen Black, Edye Kaminer, Polly Strauss, Judy Kutin

### I. D'var Torah

RAM: What does it mean to be holy? That is the job of the Jewish people. What does holy mean? Kadosh is related to the word separate. That is not what the American Jewish community wants to be. We should separate ourselves by being holy, by being kinder, trying to be a little bit better all the time.

### II. Annual Fund

Heidi: The fiscal year ends at the end of May. We are at \$312k but could get to \$325k. Each person here should take a card that has the name of a person who gave less than 1k last year and hasn't given yet, and call them for a donation.

Does the Annual Fund still serve its original purpose? Should we do something else? What is most effective? Most synagogues have dues and an Annual Fund. Some have a High Holiday appeal.

Jesse: The concept was always people were always getting asks from Shul so we would raise money in summer and not have an annual appeal. No other fundraisers. It's very different now. \$300k+ means the strategy is working, though.

Heidi: It could be even more. Could be \$500k. We still can't find someone to lead fundraising.

Judy: We basically have a hybrid of mandatory dues and a voluntary fund. We could market the annual fund as voluntary and, in addition, try targeted appeals. Money for a specific task that is meaningful to people might generate donations.

Joel: This was the highest amount raised ever. But there is more potential.

Heidi: A targeted fund must pay for only that task. What about the Annual Fund starting in August and done asking by the end of September? It's annoying to get all these emails.

Edye: I would challenge us to think about it from the giver's perspective, not the institution.

Melissa: Can we have a visual in the lobby?

Edye: Or a matching funds challenge. I think we've done that in the past.

Heidi: So we prefer an Annual Fund to High Holiday appeal?

Abigail: Why not both?

Heidi: Any new ideas are appreciated.

Diane: Any way to find out what works for other synagogues?

Heidi: We could ask.

Abigail: What about special fundraising events?

Heidi: We could do that and we did the Cruise Gala very successfully.

Moshe: Events do require a lot of work and some money.

III. Catering Committee Update

Fran Amir: It started as the Food Committee for the Gala two years ago. We interviewed caterers which became the basis of the list. We created a panel of caterers for congregant events, mostly B'nai Mitzvah. There is no pricing due to prices being custom based on menu and services. There are two groups: full service caterers and drop off caterers which drop off platters. Some overlap. It's an alphabetical listing and then questions you might want to ask the caterers. If anyone wants to use a caterer not on the list, talk to Rabbi or Joel.

RAM: Rabbinic Assembly does not approve of Panache and I would like them removed.

Judy: What about Green Bowl in Lakewood?

Fran: They were lackluster.

David: Could caterers be sponsors?

Joel: They do contribute back. I always ask.

RAM: Do these places require a Mahgiach? Maybe that's a question to ask. That will raise your cost.

Heidi: So this is our list that congregants will use. We can add others.

#### IV. Apartment Update

Heidi: I'm happy to report we got permission from town this week for move in. Moving in is scheduled for June 1. There will be AC units put in.

#### V. Budget Update

##### 2025-26 Planning

Leah: We are presenting a balanced budget. To do so, we are proposing raising dues, B'nai Mitzvah fee, religious school tuition and security fee.

Dues will go up \$10/month for couples, \$5/month for singles. The Security fee will go up \$36/yr. Religious School tuition will go up 2%. B'nai mitzvah fee is going up from \$1200 to \$1400.

Our largest source of revenue is from dues at 50%. The new, increased dues will provide around \$1 million in dues. We expect a small increase in Annual Fund giving. There is a plan for two fundraisers next year. There was only one this year. In total, there was just below \$2 million in revenues.

Most expenditures go to salaries, so there is not much wiggle room. There is a bare bones staff, so not much room to cut expenses.

For the Religious School and the building, most of the expense is also salary. Meals for community building creates a catering expense.

Mortgage debt is budgeted as an expense of \$70k for next year. But we could pay off the mortgage. Our mortgage rate is 3.99%. It's a good idea for a targeted fundraiser. There is about \$150k left in the mortgage. It will be fully paid 7/2027, if we don't do it sooner.

Joel: We wanted to pay off the mortgage this year with a targeted appeal, but the market crashed and we thought timing was not good.

The first five categories are 86% of income. Have to think about these areas.

Jesse: How many people pay dues monthly? People don't relate to \$10/month. We should present the increase as \$120/yr. Our increase is above inflation but stress that it has not increased for a few years.

Commitment form goes out in June and July 1 dues payment form goes out.

Motion to approve budget by Fred with Moshe seconding. Unanimous approval.

Motion to approve March minutes by Abigail with Moshe seconding. Unanimous approval.

## VI. Upcoming Events and Holidays

Lifelong learning next Wednesday.

May 15 Nosh and Drosh

May 21 Let's Do Lunch for seniors

May 29 Great Minds Salon

June 1 Shavuot

### VII. Good and Welfare

May 18 Annual Meeting-A Rabbi from our sister congregation in Israel will give a talk at the annual meeting

May 30 Shabbat of Appreciation-Install new Board: Richard Fishbane  
Leadership Award

June 13 Congregant of the Year Friday night service

June 20 International Refugee night with conversations in the corridor with  
refugee families attending

8:19 Meeting Adjourned