

Meeting of the Ohavi Zedek Board of Directors
December 17, 2015

Board members in attendance: Miriam Sturgis, Judy Rosenstreich, Sharon Panitch, Michael Schaal, Basha Brody, Sarah Kleinman, Wayne Senville, Joanna May, Gary Visco, Harvey Klein (trustee), Sheindel Kane, Abby Rosenthal

Staff and Clergy: R. Joshua, R. Jan, Naomi Barell

Guests: John Blatt, Michael Rosenthal, Lila Shapero, Eric and Karen Corbman

D'var Torah--R. Joshua

Acceptance of previous minutes

Basha moved to accept the minutes of the previous meeting on 12/9/15

Sarah seconded

The minutes were accepted.

Fern Hill Board

- Ingrid Pels is leaving before her term ends. Eric Corbman will be taking her place. We do not need to approve this appointment.
- Joy Livingston's term is ending. Nancy is bringing Lani Ravin's name to the OZ Board to be approved as a new Fern Hill Board member.

Judy moved to approve Lani Ravin's appointment to the Fern Hill Board.

Wayne seconded the motion

The motion passed.

The Fern Hill board is now comprised of: Eric Corbman, Lani Ravin, Stella Bukanc, Jeff Alpert, David Rome, Nancy Sugarman, Lila Shapero, Diana Carminati, Joe Frank

Report on Young Judaea--Abby Rosenthal

Basha first noted that Fran Pomerantz is ending her tenure as YJ director. Basha and Abby are looking at potential candidates. Several people have expressed interest. There is a question as to whether or not we need to post the position outside OZ. It was suggested that we post through OZ and Temple Sinai.

- The YJ Maz established a presidential committee since there were several people all contributing a lot of time and effort to organize.
- They are revamping the way in which they communicate with members, will discontinue just making phone calls
- Have been reevaluating the events that they ask kids to come to

President's report

Living Tree Alliance

- OZ was asked to serve as fiscal sponsor. We had to decline. Rabbi Jan spoke about what Living Tree Alliance is. Living Tree received a grant extension and they now have a different fiscal sponsor.

Our finances

- Michael gave an overview of OZ accounts: There is 1 account at Merchant's Bank and 3 at NBT. Any money that comes into the synagogue goes into the general operating fund. The endowment is managed by Raymond James and is comprised of restricted and unrestricted funds. We took \$30,000 from the endowment to put toward the general operating account--the majority of this went toward work on the cemetery.
- Monies should have been transferred from the general operating fund to the endowment, and the other way around. This did not happen for a long time because the amounts to be transferred were considered to be "a wash." We will no longer do this. Monies will be transferred as required regardless of amounts.
- At this point, it looks like our expenses are coming in at \$63,000 less than anticipated for the year.
- Michael is proposing opening another account at NBT for the mural so that money for mural-related expenses will only be taken from this dedicated account, never from the operating account. The Finance Committee should make a recommendation regarding this.
- Rick Wolfish is recommending a partial audit called a limited purpose engagement. He believes that working with Peggy they can get sufficient information to complete this audit.
- Finance committee should meet as soon as possible and make a recommendation regarding an auditor including who to use, and what type of audit to pursue. The board expressed concern about using an auditor from Gallagher Flynn (Rick Wolfish's company) because of perceived conflict of interest.
- Gary is stepping down as the chair of the finance committee. Current members include Gary (not chair), Miriam, Rick Wolfish, Judy, Peggy
- Michael requested that a board member be a liaison with committee chairs, except for Religious Committee, Social Action Committee, and Hebrew School Committee. Joanna volunteered.

History of role of treasurer-Basha Brody

- For 25 years, Bea Samuelson was treasurer. She never touched the endowment. Her responsibility was to pay bills, make sure budget was balanced. Only the board made decisions concerning the endowment, which was managed by an Israeli firm.
- After Bea, Leon took over position of treasurer. Rick Wolfish assumed position for 7 years after that.
- Under Basha's presidency, they transferred endowment to UBS for management. Fortunately, OZ had taken out a substantial amount of money and put cash in bank just before recession.

- After Rick, Peggy took over (approximately 2009). Mike Kanarick took over some control of finances.
- When Peter came on, he assumed control of all finances with some assistance from Peggy. Peter made decisions regarding endowment without the input of the board.

Treasurer

Miriam has indicated her desire to be treasurer.

Rick Wolfish has also agreed to take on the role with several limitations, including his limited availability during tax season and his inability to come to OZ to sign checks.

Miriam gave a statement as to her desire and qualifications to be treasurer. Conversation ensued.

Sharon moved that the board elect Miriam Sturgis to the position of Treasurer, effective immediately.

Gary seconded the motion.

The motion passed.

Report on Interim Executive Director Search--Wayne Senville

- Wayne previously sent out minutes of committee to the board.
- Committee is setting up conference calls with other EDs to review what the OZ committee has done so far and to get feedback to improve the process.
- Wayne will be sending out survey to the board to help with crafting position
- There was general agreement on changing title to Executive Director from Director
- Committee also needs to come back to board re: financial package
- Michael and the committee discussed increasing Naomi's hours so that she can temporarily assume some of the responsibilities of the director. This Interim Director position would run from Jan. 1 - June 30. The search committee will get list of responsibilities to board.
- Concern was expressed about the lack of an HR committee and lack of access to any HR policies that OZ might have.

New Board Member

John Blatt introduced himself and gave a little history.

Basha moved that we appoint John to fill the vacant board seat created by Jeff Potash's resignation, the term of which expires in November, 2016.

The motion was seconded by Gary.

Motion passed.

New Businesses

1. Statement re: support for local Muslim community--Eric Corbman

Eric asked for the board to introduce a motion to approve the statement of support for the Muslim community as crafted by Ilyse Morganstein Fuerst.

Discussion ensued regarding part of the statement that could be seen as endorsement of or condemnation of certain Presidential candidates. An edit to the statement was recommended in order to safeguard our 501(c)(3) status.

Sheindel moved that the Board of Directors adopt the following statement as presented by the Social Action Committee:

As a community committed to *tikkun olam*, Jewish principles of justice and equality, we are gravely concerned by the increased incidence of anti-Muslim and Islamophobic rhetoric and acts of violence in our country. We are dismayed by the growing and blatant characterization of Muslims as "un-American," "terrorists," and "violent," not only because these broad representations are factually inaccurate and misleading stereotypes, but also because we know that ugly rhetoric can have dangerous consequences. We recall far too well when similar misrepresentations and hateful stereotypes became political rallying cries against Jews, and when solutions to the so-called problem of Jewish citizenry moved from political rhetoric to genocide.

While our local community has, thankfully, not seen hate crimes committed against Muslims as other parts of the nation have, we have seen the dissemination of Islamophobic literature in and around Burlington; we are not immune to Islamophobic vitriol, and we aim to work against it as committed Jews.

We stand alongside and behind our Muslim neighbors—alongside them as witnesses to our own history of persecution, and behind them as allies and supporters in the fight against anti-Muslim racism.

Sarah seconded the motion.

More discussion ensued.

The motion passed unanimously.

2. Brundibár-Sharon

Sharon informed the board about Theatre Kavanah's upcoming production of *Brundibár* and the accompanying lectures series. She asked for OZ's support for the lecture series in the form of a \$500 sponsorship.

Basha moved that OZ be a sponsor of the lecture series by Theatre Kavanah in connection with the production of *Brundibár*, and that the sponsorship be in the amount of \$500, to be funded partially by the Scholar in Residence Program.

Wayne seconded the motion

The motion passed unanimously

Liz moved that we go into executive session.

Wayne seconded the motion.

The board entered executive session at 9:07 p.m.

Basha moved to exit executive session.

The board exited executive session at 9:52 p.m.

Sarah moved that we hire Naomi Barell for the position of Interim Director at the rate \$538.50 per week beginning Jan. 1, 2016, with specific provisions to be spelled out in an employment contract to follow.

Gary seconded the motion.

The motion passed.

Reminders about volunteer appreciation luncheon on January 10, Rabbi Joshua's last sermon on December 26, Rabbi Amy's first Shabbat on January 1.

Gary moved to adjourn the meeting.

Liz seconded.

The meeting adjourned 10:04 p.m.

Meeting minutes submitted by Sharon Panitch, Secretary