

## Meeting Minutes - Ohavi Zedek Board of Directors

**Date:** October 17, 2019

**Present:** Vivien Rabin, Rabbi Amy, Steve Zeidenberg, Sarah Glassman, Erika Geremia, Naomi Barell, Wayne Senville, Bill Miller, Jeff Priest, Eric Corbman, Karen Corbman, Mindy Evnin, Sergey Shpaner, Adam Bluestein, Jessica Schechter Kane, Becky Wasserman

**Absent:** Nat Lew, Judy Rosenstreich, Zoe Panitch-Hecht

**Trustees:** Judy Hershberg, Harvey Klein

**Facilitator:** Vivien

**Meeting Recorder:** Adam

	<b>Topic/Outcome – Who</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>
5:30 – 5:40	<b>D'var Torah – Rabbi Amy</b>	We are in the middle of Sukkot, Moadim l'simcha. <b>Discussion and demonstrations</b> the lulav and etrog ritual; significance of Women of the Wall setting up a booth so that women could partake in the ritual. Sukkot is the holiday of ingathering, and we are strengthened by being close, connected.	
5:40 – 5:43	<b>Approve minutes – Vivien</b>	Minutes from last meeting, reported by Wayne, are approved with changed noted in discussion of security issues”: should say “consensus” instead of “discussion.”	
5:45 – 6:05	<b>Review Action Items</b> Outcome: Follow up on ongoing action items.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discussion of action items (updated below).</li> <li>▪ Discussion of how to highlight funding opportunities in Voice. List vs. selected “funds of the month” to highlight? Can we put more info on website, including descriptions, and then feature certain funds in newsletter? Do we have a current minimum to establish a new fund; Judy H. says used to be \$2,500.</li> <li>▪ Non-restricted funds throw off interest to the general fund.</li> <li>▪ Need to be sensitive in reviewing funds and history, but is there way to do positive messaging around virtues of “cleaning up” small, seldom used funds and consolidating? Focus on active ones (e.g. Cemetery, where we are still in touch with the families and reach out to keep them engaged.</li> <li>▪ The process for someone calling and wanting to set up an</li> </ul>	<p>Bill and finance committee(?) to look at ways to group existing endowments by non-restricted v. restricted. Consider process and guidelines for setting up new endowment funds, with a preference for non-restricted ones.</p> <p>Approve “co-treasurer” agreement? Bill, write up job description for distribution through OZ community.</p>

		<p>endowment hasn't been established yet. Should have meeting with Bill/finance committee to discuss restrictions, unrestricted/general funds, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Re: Treasurer role, Bill agrees to let Sergey "do heavy thinking," and he'll do another year as accountant. Would use \$3k in budget to pay for accounting support. Would be "co-treasurers." Vivien to consider. Bill will writeup "job description" for Treasurer and Erika can also distribute this to preschool families for potential other candidates.</li> </ul>	
6:05 – 6:30	<p><b>Rabbi's report – Rabbi Amy</b> Outcome: To continue to engage the board in the work of the Rabbi</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Thanks for help with High Holidays. Vivien especially did so much.</li> <li>▪ We got about \$400 from cards in seats with "beautiful" notes.</li> <li>▪ There was some confusion among people who thought they couldn't come to services if hadn't paid for a ticket. We need more ways to communicate that everyone is welcome, don't need to pay.</li> <li>▪ Discussion of conflict of interest issue involving Deb Ingram, of VT Interfaith Action (VIA), and also state senator, involving her support for reproductive rights legislation. She has asked Rabbi for help in rallying support from OZ community supporters of VIA. Agreement reached that this is an argument we don't need to be involved in. No statement will go out.</li> <li>▪ Discussion of Peace and Justice Center's ongoing support for BDS and invitation to OZ to participate in Oct, 27 meeting where BDS stance is on agenda, along with other issues. Temple Sinai not participating, as they have explained, citing BDS origins in Palestinian activism with goal to take Israel down. The executive committee agreed that Rabbi should not participate, nor anyone else representing OZ. Rabbi has communicated desire to continue to meet privately with their leadership.</li> <li>▪ Early November, Rabbi and others will be on Israel trip;</li> </ul>	<p>Think about ways to communicate that everyone is welcome to HHD services, don't need to pay.</p>

		<p>Vivien away 11/4-14.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Minyan: Rabbi might announcement at HHD services re difficulty in gathering minyan every weeknight. Will discuss with religious committee to. Straw poll: Would 5:30 pm be a better time? Yes, perhaps. Zoe: Can we do a survey? We should check with people who regularly go, and there will be an article in The Voice. Please send any ideas to Rabbi.</li> <li>▪ We have new furniture for yurt and sanctuary, made by Bob. Thanks, Bob!</li> <li>▪ Next weekend is year anniversary of Pittsburgh shootings. There will be Friday night service here and on Sunday, Pause for Pittsburgh at 5 PM.</li> </ul>	
6:30 – 6:35	<p><b>Treasurer’s Report - Bill</b> Outcome: To update board on finances</p>	<p>Surplus is not that different from last year. In ballpark. Net should be \$10k to good. Discussion of number of families who actually pledged; it is 256. How are we ensuring monthly pledges keep coming? Tari does a ton of followup</p>	
6:35 – 6:40	<p><b>Executive Director’s report - Sarah</b> Outcome: To continue to engage the board in the work of the Executive Director</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Security presence at High Holidays was well received. The Burlington police were here whenever we wanted them.</li> <li>▪ DHS grant is being processed still. Looks like all approved except krav maga training program, which was not allowed.</li> <li>▪ Fence permit has been closed.</li> <li>▪ Feen lecturer being secured, in contract negotiations. Anticipate filling sanctuary with the white chairs, planning to invite media ... pre-interview with VPR as part of deal.</li> <li>▪ Working w Pride Center on doing transgender day of remembrance at OZ.</li> </ul>	
6:40-6:45	<p><b>Preschool Update – Erica</b> Outcome: To update and engage the board on the work of the preschool director</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ There is a new student, from a Jewish family hoping to become members, starting in January.</li> <li>▪ We had a successful outdoor workday, laid down all wood chips in new playground. Will have another on 11/10. Got a \$500 donation from grandparent for materials. Amazing to see community come together. We can start to use woods, make trails.</li> <li>▪ Two Nadav interns are starting and will help with “late care.”</li> </ul>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ACT 166 application is in the works. Plan to get to 4 Stars is written up, and timeline to submit by January is on target.</li> </ul>	
6:45 - 6:50	<b>Hebrew School report – Naomi</b> Outcome: To continue to engage board in Hebrew School activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two Nadav interns from Sinai are going to work in the preschool. Naomi has invited Sinai to officially join in program and join in funding. They haven't yet. Nadav is financed by OZ donors. Condition for Sinai participation is that kids volunteer here at OZ; if they work at Sinai, that would require their financial committee.</li> <li>Commissioned interns to make video for upcoming USCJ meeting.</li> <li>Sukkot and Simchat Torah Hebrew School events coming up.</li> <li>Two new families are considering coming to OZ; Gan Alef could grow to 11 kids now.</li> <li>Now working on younger youth-group activities. Would probably be pay-as-you-go activities. There is group of girls in 4th and 5th grade who it would be great to keep connected.</li> </ul>	Communicate to synagogue community that Nadav is donor supported program, as way to encourage others to contribute?
6:50 – 7:00	<b>Renovation Report - Vivien/Rabbi</b>	Architect's design assessment was previously shared with board. It is an assessment, not a proposal. What are next steps? Rabbi: We don't want to be an old and tired brand, and our physical space communicates "old." Precious for some, not for other. The assessment we have suggests getting rid of pews, putting pulpit in middle of sanctuary, allowing a more traditional Jewish model and flexible seating options. We can generate excitement just through the renovation process. Wayne: In an outdated building like this, should we get an architectural overview of the whole building. Are we using in bet way? What are other big building issues? Larger questions include: Fix vs. sell and start from scratch in a new building. We need evaluate multiple scenarios.	
7:00 – 7:20	<b>Minyan</b>		
7:25 – 7:45	<b>Sanctuary design, cont. – Vivien</b>	Time frame: "Big Thinker" group should present to board within next month or two. Sarah: In terms of fundraising, large capital campaigns like this	Start with Big Thinker group presenting on next-step ideas for sanctuary redesign, next

		<p>typically require special skill set; wary of leading this internally.  Becky: Capital budgets are a major process, can be 10 years for buildings.  It makes sense to start with feasibility study. What experts do we need, e.g. a real estate person agent who can advise on the prospects of actually selling the building. Are there interim changes that we can make while this assessment is taking place? We can move piece by piece, and have an overall conception.  Naomi: What is our list of priorities? "Services" vs. having services?</p>	month or two.
7:45 – 8:05	<p><b>Annual Appeal – Vivien/Sarah</b>  Outcome: To agree on a strategy and key details for this year's appeal</p>	<p>Sarah and Vivien are preparing major fundraising recommendations, with \$25,000 budgeted for fundraising income.  Discussion: Can we make fundraising be for a particular "cause"?  Explore a more targeted "ask" -- something precise that people can feel their money is going toward.  Adam: What about using email in conjunction with call, and enlisting super-schmoozers, people who would just be good at making calls?  Discussion of using text messaging? These campaigns can be very successful, especially if there is a direct link to make donations in the text. We should explore all options, used appropriately. Email, plus phone calls, is good way to go for now.</p>	<p>Work on fundraising "scripts" and options for targeting the fundraising ask. (Adam is available to support Sarah.)</p> <p>List of volunteers to make calls?</p> <p>Should we combine with "Giving Tuesday," Dec. 3 somehow?</p>
8:05 - 8:12	<p><b>Congregational meeting and board changes – Vivien</b>  Outcome: To prepare for next congregational meeting and appointment of new board member</p>	<p>Congregational meeting is December 15. How get better attendance? Door prizes? How get more HS families to attend?  Put childcare on to-do list. IF something we should add to agenda, please tell Vivien or Sarah.  Should there be a theme? Music? Tie that in when doing fundraising calls.</p>	<p>Arrange childcare for Congregational Meeting.  Door prizes? Theme?</p>
8:12 – 8:18	<p><b>Upcoming events – Vivien</b></p>	<p>Calcutta event is coming up; Grace and Sharon P. will emcee.  Should we reinstate a new member event? Yes. What kind of events can we do outside of building, around town? We need to form a Membership Committee to work on these things.</p>	<p>Create Membership Committee?</p>
8:18 – 8:20	<p><b>Retreat planning – Wayne</b></p>	<p>Wayne would like another board member to help put together a proposal for next board retreat, aimed at improving board effectiveness. Jeff Priest agrees to help Wayne.</p>	

8:20 - 8:42	<b>Preschool benefit – Bill/Sarah</b>	Discussion before moving into executive session. Should OZ offer a preschool benefit, providing tuition assistance and priority access to preschool for OZ employees? Sarah has done research on what other Conservative congregations are doing, found 65% average subsidy. Issues to resolve: Is this a staff retainment issue? There is precedent, from former ED, but that was an exceptional case. Do we put a dollar cap on plan? Is it like a health benefit? What about those who don't use it? Broad agreement that if implemented, this should be a benefit that's part of total compensation across board for applicable employees. Should not be an individual negotiated issue.	
8:42 - 9:25	<b>Executive session</b>	Sergey moves, Jessica seconds to enter executive session. Board exits executive session at 9:25. Mindy moves to adjourn meeting, Adam seconds. Meeting adjourned.	Vivien will pursue additional discussions regarding preschool benefit and we will revisit at next meeting.

**A. Ongoing Action Items**

- “Big Think” group to review ideas/proposals with board. **TBD**
- Invite new Kehillah Manager to visit OZ. **Vivien.**
- Succession planning: **Wayne working to convene subcommittee.**
- *The Voice*: Include information in an upcoming issue ways to give and what different funds are for. **Bill and others, ongoing.**
- Find new Treasurer. **Ongoing.**
- Presentation on pros/cons of an ethical investing approach for endowment. **TBD**
- Continue work on ongoing security coverage for OZ. – **Vivien/Sarah, and who?**
- Where do OZ policies “live”? **Vivien/Sarah reviewing**