

MINUTES – OZ Board Meeting

Date: Thursday, March 19, 2020

Present (via Zoom): Naomi Barell, Vivien Rabin Brown, Mindy Evnin, Erika Geremia, Sarah Glassman, Jessica Schecter Kane, Josh Kernoff, Nat Lew, Bill Miller, Jeff Priest, Judy Rosenstreich, Wayne Senville, Rabbi Amy Small, Rebecca Stern, Becky Wasserman, Cantor Steve Zeidenberg

Facilitator: Vivien **Meeting Recorder:** Jeff

| | Topic/Outcome – Who | Objective* | Discussion |
|----------------------------|---|-------------------|--|
| 5:45 - 5:47 | 1. D’var Torah –Rabbi Amy | | This week’s Torah parashat focuses on all of the finery brought to build the sanctuary in the wilderness. It’s hard to focus on finery in our current climate. But the question to pose is what are the gifts we bring to make holiness? Sometimes it’s finery to build sanctuaries. But this is a moment to bring other gifts such as time, effort, patience, resilience, and flexibility. We have lots to bring. |
| 5:33 - 5:35 | *2. Approve minutes and review action items—Vivien | Approve | Wayne moves to approve. Bill seconds. Minutes approved. |
| 5:35 - 5:45 5:47 - 5:55 | *3. Coronavirus update—Sarah | Inform | <p>Emails have been sent from OZ to the congregation about a variety of responses to COVID-19. Full Circle has been closed since Monday. Hebrew School classes were cancelled this week, but the program will move online as of Sunday. Services and minyanim have been moved to Zoom, the community Passover seder has been cancelled, and the office and Shuk have been closed. OZ is operating virtually now. Shabbat services, iEngage, and singing community will all happen virtually.</p> <p>An OZ COVID-19 task force has met a couple of times as needed, made up of health professionals consulting with Rabbi Amy, Vivien and Sarah.</p> <p>The G’mach committee is available for members. Email about this help was sent to members this afternoon.</p> <p>Judy called the governor’s office to let them know employees of places of worship are not eligible for unemployment insurance due to exemption of religious organizations paying unemployment taxes. She also called a state senator who is a close friend of the governor and who meets with the governor every afternoon. She expressed concern about employees of places of worship not being eligible for unemployment insurance. She encouraged him to change state law.</p> <p>Will there be long-term planning of OZ’s operations, given pandemic could last for months? We’re just looking at the issue this first month and seeing what happens. Will engage in more planning next month. Perhaps we need to convene a long-term task force.</p> |

| | | | |
|----------------------------|---|----------------|---|
| 5:55 - 6:10 | 4. Clergy reports—Rabbi Amy, Cantor Steve | Inform | <p>Rabbi Amy: There has been constant activity over days with little time for reflection. Trying to be as creative as possible. People are connecting to activities via Zoom. Some fear that reliance on technology now will lead to more reliance later when we can come back together in person. Using Zoom technology has been very challenging for some people. Once people get the hang of using Zoom, they seem positive about using it. Using Zoom for Shabbat services will be challenging initially because of camera issues. It's still remarkable what is happening in spite of the circumstances.</p> <p>Cantor Steve: We are truly in different times. Trying to create community. He is creating a system to call elderly members to relieve a sense of isolation and find out if any supplies are needed. Mostly he is finding people want help with Zoom. He will provide a Shabbat experience with preschool tomorrow via Zoom. Doing singing community on Sunday.</p> <p>2-hour video of the concert for Cantor Steve's installation will be made available to members.</p> <p>OZ was planning on sharing events with Temple Sinai and Islamic Society of VT. We are still trying to collaborate. Will offer resources via Google Docs soon. Also, the Jewish community nationally offers lots of resources.</p> <p>Cantor Steve and Rabbi Amy have talked with Rabbi Edleson about plans for combining resources. There is a possibility of working together for a Pesach video.</p> |
| 6:10 - 6:55 7:25 - 7:45 | *5. Review of budget structure & Treasurer's report—Bill | Inform/discuss | <p>Action: Discuss overhead fees for programs and generate policy statement.</p> <p>We reviewed the Structure of OZ Budget document from Nat. There are 6 important departments (classes) at OZ and then a long list of smaller departments. First and most important is General. Revenue includes dues, unrestricted endowment, space rental, and donations. The unrestricted endowment currently stands at about \$1 million, which generates \$40K/year for OZ's operating budget. Sarah, Tari, and bookkeeping are grouped under General. Expenses include salaries and benefits (the largest expense), membership in USCJ, insurance, telecom expenses, and endowment loan repayment.</p> <p>The second department is Facilities, which includes Raul and Michelle. Facilities fees generate revenue (i.e., preschool overhead, Shuk overhead). Members' facilities fee (\$72 per household) also generates revenue, 50% of which stays in operating revenue</p> |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| | | <p>while the remaining 50% goes into a long-term facilities fund (e.g., roof replacement).</p> <p>The third department is Clergy. There is generally no revenue in this department, but generous donors have made (and will make) contributions over a 3-year period to cover the cantor's salary.</p> <p>The fourth department is Hebrew School. Revenue comes from tuition and two restricted endowments for scholarships and general support. Money for scholarships has been used to cover unpaid tuition bills. Finance Committee has suggested professional development for Hebrew School happens every other year.</p> <p>The fifth department is Full Circle Preschool. Revenue comes from tuition, application fees, and special gifts. Salaries and benefits are the main expenses. Professional development is included due to the importance of teacher certification. Erika is currently working toward certification to ensure Act 166 funding. If the net income from the preschool's budget exceeds expenses, the surplus is split 50/50 with OZ, after subtracting special gifts. This surplus is used for emergency funding if a teacher is out sick, a family leaves unexpectedly, and improving the playground. The preschool also pays an overhead fee.</p> <p>The sixth department is the Shuk. Revenue comes from sales. Expenses include salaries and benefits, donations totaling \$3K a year to other charities, and an overhead charge. This department has also committed funds annually to repay the kitchen loan. If their net income exceeds expenses, the surplus is also split 50/50 with OZ. The surplus that stays in the Shuk's account is often devoted to maintaining its separate building.</p> <p>The remaining departments are lengthy in number but generally generate little income for OZ, other than High Holidays seating, the Annual Appeal, and the Parish House. Programs highlighted in green keep any income they generate.</p> <p>The gift shop is managed by Natalie, a volunteer member. The shop is a relic of Sisterhood. It generates a small profit each year.</p> <p>Review of budget numbers</p> <p>Clergy: Salaries and benefits will total \$192K this year because of member donations,</p> |
|--|--|---|

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | | <p>rising over time as donations decrease.</p> <p>Preschool: The main source of income is tuition. Tuition revenue is projected to rise over time because of a decision to accept more children per teacher in older classrooms. Some donations and authorized endowment have helped. Main expense: Salaries and benefits. Transfer income refers to half of the surplus generated by preschool (after deducting special gifts). This year's surplus looks small. But it could be as large as \$40K in future years.</p> <p>Facilities: Revenue is from rental fees. Transfer income is overhead fees from preschool and Shuk. Expenses: Salary and benefits, supplies, computer, repairs, maintenance, landscaping, and utilities. Net cost of \$128K this year.</p> <p>General: Revenue include dues, authorized endowment income (\$40K), and special funds. Expenses: Salaries and benefits, other professional fees, loan repayment, and USCJ dues. There is a separate line for computer technology because of Kesef (licenses for Microsoft, Quickbooks).</p> <p>Hebrew School: Tuition is main source of income, along with fundraising activities, authorized endowment income, and special funds. Expenses: Salaries and benefits remain consistent. Overhead is a new item recommended by Sergey. Bill has added this item to the budget for now. He is happy to drop the item since it will just reduce Facilities revenue and have the same effect on OZ's bottom line.</p> <p>Naomi states they are planning on raising tuition. Their income will decline next year because 13 kids will exit the program.</p> <p>The Board needs to consider generating a policy statement about programs' overhead fees. It is acknowledged there are general expenses incurred by OZ to run the preschool and Hebrew School. Can any of these expenses be shared? We should discuss this topic at a future meeting.</p> <p>Shuk: Had budgeted \$86K of income initially and doing better than expected, closer to \$92K. But this will change because of the recent closure. The budget includes the kitchen loan repayment. Overhead totals \$3K. Surplus is still to be split 50/50 with OZ.</p> <p>Can we increase the percentage from the endowment used for operating expenses?</p> |
|--|--|--|

| | | | |
|-------------|--|-----------------|---|
| | | | <p>There is a policy in place to limit this percentage. Increasing the percentage would involve changing the policy.</p> <p>The Finance Committee has proposed charging credit card fees to members and reducing dues to USCJ. We should pay \$17K, but we're paying \$11K this year.</p> |
| 7:00 - 7:20 | 6. Minyan break | | |
| 7:45 - 8:30 | *7. Preschool recommendation— Rebecca/Becky | Discuss/approve | <p>The proposal (<i>see below</i>) results from building the preschool's budget this year and dealing with the Finance Committee. When the preschool was created, discussion evolved around the program breaking even. It did not deal with the possibility of a surplus.</p> <p>The Finance Committee has recommended raising tuition, but Erika believes tuition should remain the same.</p> <p>The proposal basically states the preschool's director (Erika) should be in control of building the budget and the person who makes decisions about tuition changes.</p> <p>Why isn't the preschool a freestanding non-profit like Fern Hill? Preschool is an entity within OZ for some purposes but separate for others. When Full Circle was created, the Finance Committee recommended creating it as a separate entity. But the rabbi, OZ's executive director, and the preschool's director at the time argued it should be part of OZ. The Board voted to keep the preschool a part of OZ.</p> <p>The program needs to maintain flexibility with changing families and teachers. Erika still intends to split any surplus 50/50 with OZ. She wants to raise tuition at some point but wants to wait until Act 166 funding is in place, among other factors.</p> <p>We need to be careful not to offend preschool parents. Preschool is key to OZ's future.</p> <p>The proposal will still involve the Board in reviewing the preschool's budget on a monthly basis, since the numbers will be included in regular budgets provided to board members.</p> <p>Is there sufficient oversight of the preschool's budget? Is the proposal addressing a specific case that will create issues when directorship of the preschool changes? The threshold of breaking even should not be the issue. It should be how much the</p> |

| | | | |
|-------------|---|-----------------|--|
| | | | <p>preschool meets its proposed budget.</p> <p>Erika proposes monthly budget meetings with the executive director and treasurer as oversight.</p> <p>We should not expect Full Circle to generate surpluses every year. Policy does not need to legislate surpluses.</p> <p>Full Circle needs to prepare for the possibility of OZ not existing in the future and, thus, becoming its own entity.</p> <p>Mindy motions to vote on proposal. Judy seconds.</p> <p>Wayne offers two amendments to the proposal. First, in the event that Full Circle is not meeting its budget, the Finance Committee has the right to make recommendations. Second, Full Circle’s director will hold monthly meetings with OZ’s executive director and treasurer.</p> <p>Josh offers amendment that any language to break even should be replaced by meeting its budget.</p> <p>Judy offers amendment to revise language about the preschool director having “autonomy”. Change it to “authority”.</p> <p>Board approves proposal as amended unanimously.</p> |
| | *8. Jeff Priest recommendation | Inform/discuss | Vivien will coordinate by email. |
| | 9. Agree on date for June congregational meeting—Vivien | Discuss/approve | Vivien will coordinate by email. |
| 8:30 - 8:35 | 10. Hebrew School - Naomi | | Online instruction begins this coming Sunday. |
| 8:35 - 9:25 | 11. Executive Session to discuss Treasurer situation and personnel-related budget issues | | <p>Nat motions to enter executive session. Jessica seconds.</p> <p>Jessica motions to exit executive session. The motion is seconded.</p> <p>Motion to pay hourly Shuk employees and cleaning staff through April 15. Mindy moves. Jessica seconds. Board approves.</p> <p>Judy moves to adjourn. Seconded and approved.</p> |

Action Steps from Previous Board Meetings

| Month/Year | Action Step |
|---------------|--|
| January 2020 | Sarah, David R. et al. will develop plan for implementing a key card system |
| | Sarah et al. will gather estimates for a PA system |
| | The Board will review prospective surveys from Jeff P.’s group and the Religious Committee |
| December 2019 | Create a working group focusing on sanctuary redesign |

***2. January board meeting minutes for approval (attachment A) and Executive Committee meeting minutes for your information (attachment B)**

***3. Coronavirus update**

Rabbi Amy, Sarah and I have sent two e-mails to the congregation announcing what we’re doing. Since this can all change at any time, we will keep the congregation informed. At the 3/20 board meeting, we will let you know of any other changes. I plan to go around the room to let each of you share any other ideas/thoughts you have.

***5. Budget structure review and treasurer’s report**

See the following attachments:

Attachment C – OZ budget structure

Attachment D – February 2020 Treasurer’s report – summary

Attachment E – February 2020 Treasurer’s report – details

Attachment F – Draft 20/21 budget

Note that Bill will be using attachment C (our budget structure without numbers) for our Budget 101 class on Thursday, as part of the meeting. Concerning Attachment F, the draft 20/21 budget, Bill will begin to review it with us and explain changes recommended by the Finance Committee. At the meeting, we will share some information, in hard copy, that we didn’t want to send by e-mail. Just fyi, in case anyone is wondering, we are not recommending cutting any positions at this time.

***6. Proposal for preschool budget from the Preschool Committee (Rebecca Stern, Chair)**

Premise:

Full Circle Preschool (FC) operates as part of Ohavi Zedek, but it is unlike any other program at the synagogue. The FC Director manages a full-time, year-round professional staff and program. As such, the FC budget needs to remain within the jurisdiction of the FC Director to plan and implement the program.

Additionally, upon the establishment of FC in 2017, the arrangement made between FC and the Board stipulated that FC was required to break even and not draw on other synagogue funds. It has far exceeded this expectation.

FC Preschool is an integral part of our Jewish community; it nurtures and educates the future of our Jewish community both literally and figuratively. This program is vital to multiple aspects of current and future synagogue life, and should be supported by our community.

Proposal: We propose that the Director of Full Circle Preschool be given autonomy of the FC budget, with a once-a-year meeting with the Executive Committee to review FC's budget. When the Finance Committee completes its yearly review of each program's budget, the Finance Committee can look at FC's budget to determine that FC is holding up to the agreement of breaking even..The Finance Committee may review the FC budget, but it does not have the authority to request changes to the budget unless the FC does not break even.

In the event that Full Circle's budget does not break even, the Finance Committee has authority to make recommendations on the budget to the Executive Director, which shall be presented to the Board during the budget process.

Rabbi Amy has indicated her support of this proposal.

***7. Jeff Priest recommendation**

Jeff Priest has made the following recommendation, which I support. This does not require board approval, but I would like some board volunteers to be part of this important work:

“In response to comments made at a few recent board meetings about "future visioning" data generated within the past couple of years (e.g., the UVM/OZ collaboration, congregational meetings, etc.) that have not been shared with the board in any aggregated form, one working group can synthesize these data and present them to the board, hopefully leading to some effort to identify and prioritize actions.”