

OZ Board Meeting - MINUTES**Date: Thursday, Oct 15, 2020**

Present: Naomi Barell, Suzanne Brown, Eric and Karen Corbman, Mindy Evnin, Sarah Glassman, Zoe Hecht, Judy Hershberg, Josh Kernoff, Harvey Klein, Deb Lashman, Nat Lew, Bill Miller, Jeff Potash, Jeff Priest, Judy Rosenstreich, Yoram Samets, Wayne Senville, Lila Shapero, Rabbi Amy Small, Brett Smith, Becky Wasserman, Suzi Wizowaty, Cantor Steve Zeidenberg

Facilitator: Nat

Meeting Recorder: Jeff

		Item	Discussion, Action Steps
1	5:35	Dvar Torah	In B'reishit, the world is created and filled with chaos. It serves as an example of how the creative process can lead to a good outcome. We have to map out what will be first, second, etc. in our process. This is a resounding message for our current times. Take a step back and realize we cannot reduce the chaos at once. We have to take steps one at a time.
2	5:40	Approve minutes	ACTION: In September's minutes, in the section on the Treasurer's report referring to the use of \$15K, remove "and the rest will be recorded as non-operating income". MOTION: Wayne motions to approve minutes. Mindy seconds. Board approves unanimously.
3	5:40	Clergy reports	Rabbi Amy went to shul on Monday morning to help a rabbinical colleague in NY. A member of the NY rabbi's shul has ALS and came to VT to escape COVID. This individual wished to "attend" a family member's B'nai Mitzvah on Monday morning being held in NY. Rabbi Amy met this individual at OZ and helped the person use the lift to enter the building and "attend" the service via technology. The family is very grateful. High Holidays Debriefing meetings were held with the filmmaker and Dan Rome. Learned interesting lessons. Met with Cantor Steve to plan for the rest of the year, as well as working with Adult Ed and Social Action committees. She will also speak with Judy H. about events. This coming week begins the interdenominational event called HeshbonHeshvan. Clergy will get a break. Nat and the Religious Committee are helping to make it happen. Cantor Steve: Thank you to everyone who made High Holidays events possible. He looks forward to bringing more music alive this coming year. He also wants to thank Eric and Karen for G'Mach effort. Will be in Toronto the next 2 weeks but will join meetings online.
4	5:50	ED report	Nancy Baker has joined OZ. MOTION: Nat motions to approve Nancy's membership. Board approves. Judy R. abstains.

			<p>Once the Board votes on a new member, Sarah emails Richard, who does personal outreach. Richard asks the new member how s/he would like to be involved, and sends her/him information about what's going on at OZ.</p> <p>Judy R. believes the Board should have direct contact with a new member before voting to approve membership. Mindy believes such a meeting would be intimidating.</p> <p>Staffing Tari's last day was September 24. Sarah signed a contract with Westaff today to hire a person to work 20 hours per week, for a total term of 300 hours.</p> <p>Karen remains on medical leave probably through the end of the year. Sarah is working to make sure the Shuk is staffed as needed.</p> <p>OZ's building is not currently open for members or volunteers to gather.</p> <p>Dues There hasn't been much change in the last month. A few new pledges have been made this week. Kesef sent bills today to about 80 people who have yet to pledge dues. Current membership is 203 families, much lower than in the past. Last year we had 284 pledges. Hope to have structured conversations with families who still do not respond to Kesef's mailings. Board members will be asked to call families that have not pledged yet, and to keep calling until a person is speaking on the phone. Messaging for these calls will be delicate. We need to emphasize any pledge is acceptable to maintain membership.</p> <p>Should we create a special deal for Hebrew School families and preschool families, many of whom have not become members?</p> <p>High Holiday Donations The total was \$36K, higher than anticipated.</p> <p>Security Sarah is completing a lot of federal paperwork to spend \$1,800 of unallocated funds on window proofing, since it needs to be approved by HHS. Have applied for extension since all funds need to be spent by Oct. 31 but the key card system is still being installed. Should be no problem to get extension.</p>
5	6:15	Other HHD debrief	No further discussion about High Holidays.
6	6:15	Queries about written reports	<p>Nat received report from Cemetery Committee today, which has been reconstituted.</p> <p>Do new committee chairs need to be approved by Board? Yes.</p>

			<p>MOTION: Brett Smith and Ingrid Pels want to be co-chairs of the Hebrew School Committee. Nat motions to approve. Board approves unanimously.</p>
7	6:20	Fern Hill motion	<p>Lila: Fern Hill is weathering the pandemic well. Want to make changes to the Synagogue Corporation's (Fern Hill Board) by-laws. But the original by-laws, which are more than 40 years old, set it up so that OZ's Board of Directors must amend them. What should be the relationship between OZ's Board and the Synagogue Corporation? Deb and Suzy have examined this issue.</p> <p>Deb.: Wants Board to approve two changes, sent in advance.</p> <p>MOTION: Delete section 5e of Articles of Association of the Synagogue Corporation (<i>see below</i>).</p> <p>Josh motions to close debate. Mindy seconds. Board approves unanimously.</p> <p>Board approves motion. Wayne abstains.</p> <p>MOTION: Amend Article VII of by-laws of Synagogue Corporation to include new language (<i>see below</i>).</p> <p>Mindy motions to close debate. Bill seconds. Board approves.</p> <p>Board approves. Wayne abstains.</p>
8	6:30	Treasurer's report	<p>Bill: Until we have a budget, it's hard to compare numbers. But we're doing well at this time because of dues pledges. We have \$300K in the bank, due in some part to large donations. We will move this amount to restricted funds to be able to pull out for specific needs. Budget that was not passed would call for using \$15K to add to operating budget. But this has not been adopted yet.</p> <p>How is budget affected by the Westaff contract? We will pay a 50% surcharge to Westaff. Will begin marketing the position at \$18/hour. We have a limited term of 300 hours (about 25 hours per week for 3 months), which totals about \$8K. This fits well within the "budget". Afterwards, we could hire the person who assumes the job and pay less than Westaff's rate because of no surcharge, or we can decide to terminate the relationship.</p>
9	6:40	Development Committee report	<p>Josh: Requests Board members make calls to congregants who have yet to pledge, to retain as members.</p> <p>Last year we made about \$35K on High Holidays. This year we made \$36K, which is great.</p> <p>Resilience Campaign</p>

			<p>We should report money received rather than pledges. We have received \$104K thus far. Conversations have been going very well. Will be rolled to full congregation in coming months.</p> <p>ACTION: Monies actually received from the Resilience Campaign will be reported to the Board via Sarah's monthly report.</p>
10	6:50	Form selected working groups and set report dates	<p>See the list of possible working groups below.</p> <p>The "old" Dropbox folder of Board-related files was put together by John Blatt. There are hundreds of documents in the folder. We need to clean this up for use by future Board members. Need to decide if these files should reside in Dropbox or Google Drive.</p> <p>The Membership Engagement Plan is part of a long-range visioning process. This is a missing piece of OZ's operation.</p>
	7:00	MINYAN	
	7:25	Form selected working groups and set report dates (<i>cont.</i>)	<p>Working group on prorating health insurance: Mindy will work on this group since she serves on the HR Committee.</p> <p>Working group on standardizing overhead fees: Should be assigned to the Finance Committee. A process for determining overhead fees was started a year ago, but it did not proceed very far.</p> <p>Working group on by-law revisions about officer succession process (particularly Pres. and VP): Judy R. is willing to work on succession issue. Wayne is also willing to work on this issue.</p> <p>Working group on cleaning up old Board Dropbox files: Jeff will work on this issue, with Adam. The executive director can eventually manage it.</p> <p>Working group on Membership Engagement Plan: Nat will work on this issue.</p>
11	7:40	Discussion of membership engagement strategies	<p>Notes from the Dec. 2019 congregational meeting that Nat culled from minutes about ways to better engage members (see below). Almost everything on the list has been discussed before, across multiple visioning processes. But we need to inform the congregation about what has been done in response to these ideas. Use work that has already been done and raise it to the next stage. There are conflicting items on the list. We need to set priorities.</p> <p>A Membership Committee Audit from USCJ provides additional ideas. A Marketing Committee Audit from USCJ also provides ideas, but we have no marketing committee.</p>

			<p>What excites members of the Board? Are there at least two items on the list that Board members are excited to move forward with?</p> <p>What will be the process to engage members? A small working group should focus on this issue and try to understand current membership and how to reach prospective new members.</p> <p>How will COVID affect the synagogue's future operations? What will OZ look like post-COVID? We might need to continue virtual connections even after we return to live gatherings in shul. Our current reality is in such flux that we need to be careful about what we decide to do. One example: Members have been bringing relatives and friends from around the world to connect to Zoom services. Can we monetize these connections, asking these far-flung individuals to donate to OZ?</p> <p>We should have a committee that checks in with members at all stages of their membership journey. We need more than a "welcome wagon." We also need a committee to engage members.</p> <p>Rabbi Miriam Terlinchamp of Cincinnati, OH convinced her congregation to sell their building because it was too expensive to maintain and didn't serve their purposes. Where is our imagination going to take us?</p> <p>ACTION: Could check in with visioning part of ad hoc committee to see where they are going with their discussion. But Nat would like someone else to do so. Josh will reach out to the committee.</p> <p>Perhaps we could invite members of the ad hoc committee to discuss their visioning ideas at the November Board meeting, if time allows (or the December Board meeting as an alternative).</p>
12	8:15	EXECUTIVE SESSION (with ED for first part)	<p>Wayne moves to enter executive session. Bill seconds. Board approves.</p> <p>Josh motions to exit executive session. Mindy seconds. Board approves.</p>
13	9:15	Adjournment	Wayne moves to adjourn. Seconded. Board approves.

Possible Working Groups:

1. [SMALL] To make a policy recommendation on prorating health insurance for part-time workers.
2. [MEDIUM] To make a policy recommendation on standardizing overhead fees for in-house programs, or just leaving them *ad hoc* as now.
3. [MEDIUM] To propose by-law revisions and design an officer succession process.
4. [BIG] To clean up and update the old Board Dropbox files.
5. [BIG] To begin work on a Membership Engagement Plan by reviewing the ideas from the Membership Committee discussion at the July Board meeting, the ideas generated at the Dec 2019 Congregational Meeting, concrete implementable ideas from Big Picture processes over the last few years, etc.

The Synagogue Corporation (Fern Hill Board)

1) Section 5 (e) of by-laws:

(5) (e) The members of this Corporation shall consist of a single class of members which shall consist of persons as from time to time hereafter may become members in the manner provided for the in the By-laws and under the terms and limitations of the said By-Laws.

2)

Current language:

ARTICLE VII
AMENDMENTS

These By-Laws may be altered, amended, or repealed solely by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members at any annual or special meeting of the members called for that purpose under these By-Laws.

Proposed language:

ARTICLE VII
AMENDMENTS

These By-Laws may be altered, amended, or repealed solely by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Directors at any annual or special meeting of the Directors called for that purpose under these By-Laws.

Notes from Discussion at December 2019 Congregational Meeting

What ideas do you for how OZ might attract Jewish individuals in our area who are not currently involved here?

- Make services more accessible to families. Saturday morning is tough for kids.
- Test lower-cost membership for two years; make more like monthly gym memberships.
- Rabbi and cantor getting out into community and reaching out to unaffiliated Jews.
- The Hebrew School, preschool, and shuk are huge assets in reaching out to the community. How can we use them more? Do more preschool family outreach -- path to membership.
- Important to clarify where we stand on human rights in Israel.
- Do more JCC/non-religious things/mahjong?
- Consider fee-for-service activities, people willing to pay for specific things.
- Reconsider word "Conservative" -- it is not clearly understood.
- Replace sanctuary chairs w movable pews.
- Reduce membership cost.
- Examine religious vs. "cultural community" focus.
- Mentoring program, with free membership for a year?
- Publicize adult B'nai Mitzvot and promote these more as an option that engages and inspires people.
- Communicate our social justice mission and activities even more.
- Look for opportunities to work across congregations, aiming for affiliation. Could there be an LGTQ congregation that crosses groups.