

**KEHILLA COMMUNITY SYNAGOGUE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING - VIA ZOOM**

-FINAL-

Date: May 26, 2020

Minutes taken by Shoshana

Board members:

Present: Karen Cohn, Catherine Lyons, Ruth Atkin, Ali Cannon, Stephanie Hochman, Lisa Korwin, Barbara Petterson, Rachael Reiley and Shoshana Finacom

N/A: Ori Tzvieli

Others present: Michael Saxe-Taller, Rabbi Dev Noily, Myrna Schwartz on behalf of the EJC, Don Stone on behalf of the SLPC

Reviewed the following prior to the board meeting (in Google Drive):

- Kehilla Board Minutes Draft for approval at meeting
- Budget documents (email from MST Friday 5-22)
- Letter from MEPC (via email)

OPENING

Spiritual Opening - Rabbi Dev

Approval of the minutes

Approval of the 4/28/20 minutes. Lisa moved and Stephanie seconded. Unanimously approved.

FIDUCIARY: BOARD STEWARDSHIP OF TANGIBLE ASSETS

- **Treasurer's and Finance Committee Report and Budget Discussion**
 - **Paycheck Protection Program - FYI - Michael**

Kehilla received a \$150,000 loan from the PPP to pay for the current period of personnel costs and a few approved non-personnel costs. Michael has been in contact with some people working to understand the loan forgiveness process, and is hoping for the full 100%, and at minimum forgiveness of \$80,000. He is working with Molly and Dan Alpert, and hopes to submit the forms in early July, but it is unknown how long it will take to get the final determination.

Once we understand the amount of money forgiven, then the Board will be asked to consider and approve an amount that is "tithed" and offer it to other communities that were unable to qualify for this program.

- **Presented Survey Results re Dues Pledges - Lisa**

Thirty-seven percent of the membership participated in the survey (185 out of 502 households), which is a good rate of return for surveys. More households (HH)

without children completed the survey than those with children. Fewer lower dues paying households and more higher paying ones responded to the survey, but overall the survey appears to be fairly representative of Kehilla’s actual distribution of dues payers. Their aggregate responses allow for optimism in maintaining overall dues revenue.

Most dues/tuition pledges will be fulfilled this 19-20 fiscal year: (77 households had outstanding pledges; data was available on 68 of them)

- Paid pledged amount in full - **82%**
- Will pay less than pledged - 12%
- Will pay more than pledged - 6%

Anticipated dues in the 20-21 fiscal year: (26 households either weren't sure or didn't provide information needed to include in dues analysis)

More than 2/3 of HHs anticipate paying the same amount of dues in the coming fiscal year:

- Pay same dues - **69%**
- Pay less dues - 15%
- Pay more dues - 16%

Anticipated donations in the 20-21 fiscal year: (44 households either weren’t sure or didn’t provide information needed to include in donation analysis)

Close to 2/3 of HHs anticipate contributing the same amount of donations in the coming fiscal year, and ¼ expect to pay less:

- Pay same donations - **64%**
- Pay less donations - **25%**
- Pay more donations - 11%

Other findings:

- A comparable majority of 51 one adult HHs (69%) and 131 two+ adult households (70%) anticipate contributing the same dues next year.
- The survey indicated that HHs that self-designated in lesser dues categories and HHs with children are the most likely HHs needing to reduce their dues and donations in the coming year.

Based on survey responses, and some estimates as to how much (paying the same, decreasing or increasing) dues and donations might stay the same or change, this is one possible and very optimistic projection of outcomes for next year:

Income Source (20-21)	Low Estimate	High Estimate
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Dues	\$53,865 Possible increase	\$127,575 Possible increase
Donations	<\$31,320> Possible decrease	\$20,250 Possible increase
Total	\$22,545 Possible increase	\$147,825 Possible increase

- o **High Holiday numbers - Michael**

Refer to the tab entitled HHD Calculations in the kcs_2020_2021_scenarios document.

We expect to make the HHDs meaningful this year, and expect that we will still have a good representation of non-members. There will be a number of programs offered in advance of the HHDs, and hope to have non-members buy “tickets” (estimating 350-450 attendees) - with a price range from a high of \$360 to a low of \$10. This will be a single price for all of the events. Note, we want to message it to those who love Kehilla services and are looking for a place to come for HHDs, as making a contribution that will sustain our community to meet their needs.

- o **Review of budget planning - Michael/Ruth**

Refer to *Proposed 2020_2021 Budget tab* (in the above referenced document), and the *Notes on Draft* sent separately by Michael. The proposed budget is not balanced, but has a deficit of \$151,133. In the spreadsheet tab reviewed last month, this proposed budget represents the middle scenario.

The line item after the overall budget deficit shows the amount of PPP loan forgiveness that could be anticipated, which could then possibly close the deficit.

Discussion of Reserves - Michael/Ruth

Refer to the *Proposal for Use of Reserves* provided by Michael via a separate email before the meeting.

The proposed budget includes a deficit of \$151,133. It is possible, but highly unlikely, that the entire deficit will have to be covered by the reserves. If this were the case there would be approximately 3.6 months of operating expenses left in reserves. By October, we will be in a position to review and revise the operating budget because we will have more information concerning what repayment of the PPP loan will be, if any, and what our dues revenue will be. Therefore, the FinComm will re-evaluate the operating budget at its October meeting and bring recommendations to the Board’s October meeting as to additional use of the reserves, or, if there is a need, for further budget cuts.

Motion to Approve the Proposed 20-21 budget as presented tonight. Moved by Ruth and seconded by Barbara. Unanimously approved.

Motion to Approve: Kehilla highly values maintaining services at the maximum level possible given budgetary constraints. Due to the unprecedented nature of the economy brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, the use of reserves is warranted to minimize budgetary cuts that would have devastating effects on Kehilla operations. **Therefore the Kehilla Board of Trustees approves the use of reserves up to, but not exceeding, \$151,133 at the start of FY-2020-21 on July 1, 2020.**

Ruth moved and Stephanie seconded. Unanimously approved.

Motion to Approve: To maintain its fiduciary responsibility, the Kehilla Board of Trustees decides not to fall below three months of current operating expenses. Ruth moved and Rachael seconded. Unanimously approved.

Note: Membership renewal notices (for 20-21 dues pledges) will be sent out a month earlier than previous years, in June. Renewals will be due by the close of Labor Day weekend, with a late fee afterwards, as was done this past year. We anticipate hearing from about 80% of the households by that time.

STRATEGIC DIALOGUE: BOARD PARTNERSHIP WITH MANAGEMENT

- **ED report**

Current year budget deficit - The current budget we are operating under was anticipated to have a deficit of \$20,000. The two key areas that are being looked at are the *dues write-offs* (Molly is working very hard on this. It looks like it will not be the worst case scenario, as anticipated. Most members are able to fulfil their pledges.) The other area of concern is *donations*, our most generous donors have been reached out to, and are being extremely generous. As a result, we will be bringing in more than predicted (\$20,000 was predicted, and now we expect to bring in over \$30,000. Therefore it is pretty likely that it will be a small budget deficit, or maybe none at all. If we do have a deficit, it would most certainly be under \$10,000. More will be reported at our June meeting.

Membership - We will end the fiscal year at 502 households. There are 61 new or returning HH; we lost 41 HH.

Staff - No new staffing changes. We have made it through the transition of Maya leaving, though also training Elle, and Elle is now working full time. The staff have been working under a lot of pressure since the beginning of the pandemic, and are pretty burned out. In recognition of the staff working so hard to adapt to multiple changes, the office will be closed the second week of June, giving those staff members a week of paid leave. Michael and Elle will still be at work for that week.

Building - With State Health Order guidelines changing, along with the County guidelines, we do plan to host one or two camps starting in the middle of June. Houses of worship have been allowed to have services with reduced attendees; we will not be doing that. However, we will negotiate with and offer the option to our Agape Church tenants, with the required guidelines, to allow them to hold gatherings of 50-60 people.

- **Clergy report - Rabbi Dev**

Dev first acknowledged the passing of Annie Kennedy and Judith Montell.

HHDs - There are a lot of pieces that have to be coordinated and put together, relative to the budget, and at the same time we want to create an experience in a deep way for our members and non-members. The theme emerging is "(We are all) Together." (Thank you Bracha Stone) There are so many creative ideas circulating which we need to reduce down to 3 or 4 innovations. We will also be 6 weeks away from the election. Four teams with a central coordinator to bring this to fruition are proposed and this structure was presented in a visual. (1) Admin and Finance (Michael), (2) Ritual Content (Dev and Shu with the Bimah Team - and maybe the SLPC), (3) Tech and Production (? - may need to bring in a consultant and run it), (4) Member and Participant Engagement (Elle), and in the middle, a Coordinator (another person to be designated).

Member and Participant Engagement - we want to find a way for everyone to see each other. Some ideas that are being thought about:

(1) Invite HHD attendees to send in photographs; send out prompts related to the HHD theme, Al Cheyt, and gratitudes, and invite people to do short video in response. (Neil Davis has generously offered to put video testimonials together).

(2) Bracha Stone suggested mishpacha groups and has offered to facilitate one of those groups, and looking for a partner in the project, to invite people into those groups ahead of HHDs to make connections. We are exploring the possibility of using those who were part of the Leadership Group to help facilitate those groups.

(3) Try to make home deliveries to members, and maybe the non members participants, to include a paper Machzor, honey sticks and other holiday items, and to be done during the month of Elul.

The "we" is pretty amorphous: There is no coordinating committee as yet, though coordination is likely to include the SLPC, Dev, Shu, Michael and Elle. It isn't known yet how the Board may participate.

A big challenge is how to get more than one voice out at a time given the challenges of Zoom. Can the Bimah Team come together physically? Produce recordings where multiple voices can be heard at one time?

The State's proposed high school ethnic studies curriculum. Link to the Rabbi Dev's and Hazzan Shulamit's published letter in response to this:

<https://www.jweekly.com/2020/05/27/why-jews-should-support-the-states-ethnic->

GENERATIVE: SOURCE OF LEADERSHIP FOR THE ORGANIZATION

- **MEPC proposal:** - Kehilla Statement Against the Annexation of the West Bank (set out below) Rabbi David

DRAFT Kehilla Statement Against the Annexation of the West Bank

Since 1985, Kehilla Community Synagogue has affirmed that Israelis and Palestinians must come to a resolution in a manner that honors the rights and the dignity of all the people living there. In 2016, we affirmed in the [Kehilla Statement of Values on Israel/Palestine](#) that the Israeli military occupation of the West Bank and the siege of the Gaza Strip must come to an end in that they not only violate the dignity of the people subjected to these conditions but also can defeat the prospects for a just and lasting peace and do not ultimately benefit the security needs of the people of Israel.

The annexation of lands in the West Bank as contemplated by the new Israeli government, tentatively scheduled for July 1, 2020 will create or further an apartheid-like situation where Israeli Jews in the occupied territory will live with privileges and rights unavailable to the Palestinian people who will be surrounded by the land annexed to the State of Israel.

For the Palestinians under occupation, democracy is already highly limited, if not nonexistent. After annexation, we fear that any possibility of human rights and self-determination for those under occupation will be eliminated. This will make a peaceful resolution impossible and will create a total or near-total disenfranchisement of the Palestinian people defeating their hopes for self-determination.

In Kehilla, we aspire to live by these Jewish values that we have learned from the Tanakh and Talmud:

"Do not oppress the stranger, for you know the feelings of a stranger since you yourselves were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Exodus 23:9).

וְגֵר לֹא תִלְחָצוּ וְאִתְּמֹם יִדְעֵתֶם אֶת־נַפְשׁ הַגֵּר כִּי־גֵרִים הֵייתֶם בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם:

"There shall be one law for the citizen and for the stranger who lives among you" (Exod 12:48-49)

תּוֹרָה אֶחָת יִהְיֶה לְאִזְרָח וְלִגֵּר הַגֵּר בְּתוֹכְכֶם:

"That which is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow. This is the entire Torah" (Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 31A)

דְּעַלְךָ סִנִּי לְחִבְרֶךָ לֹא תַעֲבִיד — זוּ הִיא כָּל הַתּוֹרָה כּוּלָּהּ

Thus, as the Kehilla synagogue community, we cannot support annexation nor remain silent while maintaining any moral authority to teach Jewish values to our children.

The annexation plan represents an egregious violation of our fundamental Jewish values, and, we believe, is not in the best interest of our Jewish siblings in Israel / Palestine. We therefore oppose the annexation plan, and call on our government to do the same.

Motion to adopt the statement as presented above. Karen moved and Lisa seconded. Unanimously approved.

- **GenCo/membership engagement - Lisa/Catherine**

- Meeting the Moment/mishpacha groups/membership engagement

GenCo is regrouping and brainstorming figuring out next steps. New members are welcome.

The whole membership engagement has new energy to come together in a whole number of ways. Catherine is hoping that the Membership Engagement hub is communicated and sustainably coordinated.

- **Immigration/sanctuary Update - Catherine**

Luis, who has been sheltering at Kehilla, left this morning. He has moved back to Sacramento where he was living. It was an incredible experience and went very smoothly. Luis expressed an incredible amount of gratitude, and there is gratitude from the volunteers. Looking into the ways the sanctuary space can be utilized.

Rachele Kanigel had a published article in the J about this <https://www.jweekly.com/2020/05/14/east-bay-synagogue-hosts-former-ice-detainee-in-quarantine/>. Another article showcasing this experience will be coming out in the San Francisco Chronicle.

- **EJC update - Myrna Schwartz**

There is an interview between Karen Rachels and Myrna about the jail work that the EJC has been doing. The blog post and video can be found here: <http://kehillasynagogue.org/kehilla-members-support-limiting-reliance-on-santa-rita-jail-for-mental-health-needs-of-people-in-custody/>

In other news: Barbara will be stepping off the FinComm when she steps off the Board and Board member Rachael Reiley has joined FinComm.

AOB/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next meeting: June 9, 2020, 6:10 pm (note earlier date than usual)