

**KEHILLA COMMUNITY SYNAGOGUE  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES**

**FINAL**

**Date:** 2022-05-24

**Attending:** Rachael Reiley, Ruth Atkin, Pamela Berkowitz, Michael Myers, Ori Tzvieli, Stephanie Hochman, Nina Cohen, Dina Burg

**Staff:** Michael Saxe-Taller, Dev Noily

**Guests:** Julie Litwin, Dan Alpert, Karen Rachels, Jaime Jenett, Shoshana Finacom, Richard Spiegelman, Don Stone, Jane Hoberman

**Not attending:** Lisa Korwin

- [Kehilla Board Minutes](#) Draft for approval at meeting
- [Letter](#) from Committee chairs
- Executive Director Report
- [Budget Proposal](#) Document (sent by MST)

**AGENDA**

*Minutes taker:* Maggie Grabmeier

**OPENING**

- Group check-in
- Spiritual Opening - Dev
  - Minute of quiet
- **GUESTS:** Representatives from key Kehilla committees presented concerns and suggestions for future Kehilla communications ([Letter](#) from Committee chairs)
  - Julie Litwin: Guests present at this meeting included members of the Arc of Change committee leaders working group, all speaking on behalf of different committees. The representatives came to present on Kehilla's communications problems which impact the committees' ability to conduct their anti-racist work.
  - According to the representatives, the key communication problems include:
    - No active membership committee or ways to orient or communicate with new members
    - No congregation-wide newsletter
    - the website is hard to navigate and it's hard for committees to update their info on the website
    - Emails and phone calls to Kehilla staff go unanswered, and it's not clear who on staff committees or members can go to when they need help

- The representatives suggest that the board and Kehilla staff work to:
    - 1. Reinstate the monthly newsletter (Kol Kehilla) for sharing updates, articles, announcements and contact information.
    - 2. Develop a plan to integrate new members
    - 3. Address the issue of unanswered calls and emails to Kehilla staff and leadership. This might involve delineating what communications should go to whom, providing more assistance to current staff, or adding staff.
  - Many board members expressed appreciation for the presentation and solidarity with the call for improvements. The board members responded to these suggestions:
    - One of the examples of previously successful communication that stopped during the pandemic was a newsletter containing Tikkun Olam opportunities (which was run by Rabbi David as a volunteer). The board questioned whether Rabbi David, a different volunteer, or a staff member would have the capacity to start this again.
    - Likewise, the board questioned whether a volunteer, staff member, or committee member would have capacity to restart Kol Kehilla or another newsletter. Also, the board raised the question of whether there is a preference on whether volunteers or staff members take on responsibilities related to communication.
    - Michael S-T suggested that the issues around external communications are issues that should be discussed with staff. The concept of a membership committee is a joint conversation between the board and the staff.
  - After discussing the issues and raising further questions, the board decided to make a commitment to connect with new membership (though no formal next steps were discussed), and to discuss the external communications issues with Kehilla staff. Other changes mentioned included a potential communications plan and the possibility of making information about committees more accessible on the website.
- Approval of [minutes](#) (**VOTE: Pamela moved, Ori seconded, all approved, no abstentions**)

### **STRATEGIC DIALOGUE: BOARD PARTNERSHIP WITH MANAGEMENT**

- **Clergy Report**
  - Rabbi Dev met with a group called Synagogues Rising: a collection of synagogue leaders committed to issues of social justice. As a

participant of Synagogues Rising, in next month's meeting, Kehilla's board will be asked to formally sign on to being a part of the network. At the gathering, the group worked on its identity statement and decided to focus this year on bringing the participating synagogue communities into the network and making partnerships available to leaders in the different communities.

- **ED Report**

- Michael S-T: As Kehilla nears the end of this fiscal year, it looks like we will see a deficit of \$15-30k depending on write-offs and end-of-year expenses. The budget the board passed had a \$16k deficit, and the board made an additional agreement that it would spend out of reserves for assistance to Kehilla School if necessary, and Kehilla spent just under \$5k from reserves. In total, the board agreed to take on \$21k in deficit, and the final numbers will come in next month.

- **Budget Priorities**

- **Two budget proposals**
  - **KCS FY2022-2023 Budget**
- **The board should be prepared to vote to pass a budget at next month's meeting.** The budget committee has created two budget proposals: one has a \$50k deficit, one has a \$30k deficit.
  - The difference in income is \$5k between the two budgets. With regard to expenses, it represents a significant increase over the current year.
  - At the end of this year, Kehilla will have roughly \$45k left in reserves.
  - Sustaining dues would be \$2,714 or \$2,743 for the two proposed budgets.
  - Both budgets estimate Kehilla will earn \$755k in dues, which is \$20k over Ron Cohen's estimate.
- Both budgets include tough decisions and changes including changes with staffing.
- Kehilla has not had a deficit over the past seven years (excluding the current fiscal year), and reserves have grown slowly.
- The board expressed concern about making a habit of passing deficit budgets, but acknowledged that with commitments to make substantial financial changes, increase revenue, and reevaluate budget and revenue priorities, taking on another deficit in the next fiscal year could help Kehilla meet its goals and invest in its future. **The board agreed to reassess in October when revenue and expenses begin to become more clear.**

- Michael S-T agreed to develop a budget proposal with a \$40-50k deficit for next month's board meeting, and the board agreed.

### **GENERATIVE: SOURCE OF LEADERSHIP FOR THE ORGANIZATION**

- **Board Development Plans for the 2021-22 year**
  - Organizational Development in 2022/23:
    - After working as a member of the finance committee for a few years, Dan Alpert has agreed to expand his role at Kehilla and become the board treasurer.
    - Michael Myers and Rachael Reilly will be board co-chairs, and Stephanie Hochman will step down from her role as co-chair but remain on the board.
    - Jaime, Varya and Tadish were all nominated to join the board, and Dan will have to be appointed through another process.
  - **The board will vote on co-chairs June, and secretary/treasurer appointments in July**

### **AOB/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- [BBM & Greeter Sign-ups](#)
  - Need folks for **6/11, 6/25 & 7/16**