

**Kehillat Beth Israel
Board of Directors
December 16, 2021
Zoom Meeting
Minutes**

Present:

Norm Ferkin
Jeff Greenberg
Adina Libin
David Lyman

Victor Rabinovitch
David Roytenberg
Jeremy Rudin
Judah Silverman

Olga Strelchenko
Harland Tanner
Madelaine Werier

Secretary:

Jodi Gitter

Clergy Present:

Rabbi Eytan Kenter
Rabbi Deborah Zuker

Staff Present:

Rena Garshowitz

Special Guest Present:

Ralph Anzarouth

Regrets:

Cantor Jason Green
Jaimee Mitzmacher
Donna Strauss

1.0 PRELIMINARY MATTERS

1.1 Call to Order

Victor Rabinovitch

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 PM.

1.2 Call for Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Victor Rabinovitch

None of the members present declared a conflict of interest.

1.3 D'Var Torah

Rabbi Kenter

1.4 Moment of Silence to Commemorate Those Congregants Who Have Passed Away Since the Last Board Meeting

Victor Rabinovitch

Sally Taller
Carol Zemel

1.5 Approval of Board Minutes From the Meeting Held on November 16, 2021

Victor Rabinovitch

A motion was made by Jodi Gitter and seconded by Jeremy Rudin to approve the Board minutes from the meeting held on November 16, 2021.

All were in favour. The motion was carried.

1.6 Business Arising from Previous Minutes

Victor Rabinovitch

None

2.0 REPORT FROM RITUAL COMMITTEE

Ralph Anzarouth

As Chair of the Ritual Committee, Ralph presented his committee's proposed mandate for the year ahead, as well as the process the committee has embarked on in terms of its objectives.

Ralph presented the three main foci of the committee:

1. Ongoing activities and responsibilities which include:
 - Youth education
 - Educating and training congregants to lead services
 - Ritual items: Keeping them clean and polished
 - Bar Mitzvah family engagement

2. Issues to be resolved and implemented which include but are not limited to:
 - The revamping and completion of the Bar Mitzvah Handbook
 - Synaplex/parallel services
 - Broadcasting and streaming

- Increasing the roster of Gabbaim
3. Items that require study and consideration by the committee to be presented for Board approval, such as:
- Youth Education pertaining to amalgamation with OTT
 - OVH
 - Shabbat services architecture

Victor mentioned that this committee has a very large list of subjects for review, discussion and decisions. Ralph mentioned that sub-committees have been created to focus on specific areas, such as the Bar Mitzvah Handbook.

Jeremy commented that there is a general KBI need to refresh the membership data and that the questionnaire for members ought to inquire about the age of members' children so that interest for the new school could be explored. Jeremy also inquired as to what the Ritual Committee's priorities are. Ralph answered:

- The Bar Mitzvah Handbook
- Deciding whether or not Kaddish can be recited without a minyan
- Developing comprehensive intake data of membership
- Promoting wider knowledge of KBI's nusach for leaders in services

The Chair concluded this item by saying that the Board agreed by consensus with the objectives and focus of the Ritual Committee. Should new issues arise that are important to the functioning of the shul, the Board may ask the Committee to examine those.

3.0 REPORTING WITH DISCUSSION AND VOTE

3.1 Business Raised By Any Director Requiring Board Decision and Authority

None

4.0 REPORTING WITH DISCUSSION BUT WITHOUT VOTE

4.1 Update on Ottawa Talmud Torah

Jeremy Rudin

Jeremy reported on ongoing discussions with the OTT leadership. He hopes there will be an Agreement in Principle (AIP) in time for the January KBI Board meeting.

A Financial Risk Analysis is being developed. Olga is assisting with this component. OTT typically runs a small operational surplus, which is positive. The financial risks will be presented as part of the future AIP discussion.

Madelaine asked about OTT's current employees and whether they would become employees of KBI. Jeremy replied that a labour expert/lawyer needs to be engaged to advise on details, but he expects that this new group of employees will come under KBI's responsibility.

Rabbi Kenter mentioned his high hopes that both KBI and OTT will benefit from this new arrangement and that the school will thrive.

4.2 Update on Life and Legacy

Norm Ferkin

Norm spoke passionately about the need to ensure that we in KBI put in place financial assurances for our future existence. The Life and Legacy campaign is an essential initiative.

Norm reported that currently there are 25 Letters of Intent in which individuals express their commitment to including KBI in their Wills. Approximately 12 people have now formalized their commitment.

David Lyman asked about the process to convert a letter of intent into a firm commitment. Norm explained.

4.3 Urgent COVID Adjustments

Rena Garshowitz

Rena mentioned the "Grab and Go" Kiddushes are in place for the next two weeks. January 15th is scheduled to be a Celebration Shabbat but KBI's Staff and President will now need to assess whether that event can take place.

Rena spoke about a future shift to require proof of a booster shot for adults, and proof of vaccination for children ages 5-11, perhaps by March 1. This would be two weeks before Purim. A decision on this expanded requirement will be made as soon as the city's vaccinations become widely available.

David Roytenberg asked about the breakfasts that are offered during the weekdays, which typically attract 4-8 people. Rena replied that at this time only the Shabbat Kiddushim are being suspended.

Madelaine suggested a 1-2 week pause for all in-person activities and services. She foresees massive increases in COVID cases over the next few weeks. Norm respectfully disagreed with the suspension idea, saying that only 8-10 masked people come for morning minyan (in a space that holds 100 people) and approximately 40 come on Shabbat (in a space that holds 350 people). He felt that safety is being handled very well.

Adina asked whether the staff have thoroughly examined what the possible repercussions may be in terms of mandating vaccinations for 5-11 year olds and how that may affect participation. Rena replied that there has been very minimal pushback with respect to KBI's vaccination protocol until now.

Rabbi Zuker mentioned that having the vaccination protocol in place has provided a great sense of relief to many congregants.

Rabbi Kenter said that KBI would examine on a case-by-case basis should any family express dissatisfaction with KBI's protocol.

Judah reminded the Board that KBI has acted swiftly when OPH guidelines changed and that we have remained marginally more conservative than OPH's guidelines. He explained that the Personnel Committee was mandated to seek guidance from congregants with medical expertise and arrive at recommendations for any actions. This small committee can assist KBI's executive leadership to make decisions sensitively and rapidly.

5.0 FINANCIAL MATTERS

5.1 Executive Director's Written Statement Respecting the Status of Staff Salaries and Remittances to Government Rena Garshowitz

Rena presented the statement for employee wages to the Board. She also explained that the attestation means: salaries have been paid and government remittances have been made.

5.2 Review of Finances

Adina Libin

Adina stated that her goal is to present the finances for every quarter, as opposed to monthly. Quarterly presentations give a broader picture of personnel and operational costs, as well as revenues. She also said the Budget will need to be reviewed and possibly revised due to changes in our operating conditions.

Membership has been decreasing slightly over the past few years. A fundraising committee needs to be struck to assist with gaining more revenues for KBI. For now, the Endowment Fund invested with Ottawa's Jewish Community Foundation has provided KBI with decent income to supplement our revenues. David Lyman reiterated comments he has made before that a more fulsome discussion is needed on membership trends and on how to manage our financial needs.

Judah reported that KBI recently was approved to receive just over \$16 000 from CBSO Legacy Fund. These monies will cover the remaining rental cost of the

tents used for the High Holy Days, an upgrade of computers and laptops for remote working, and for mishloah manot for Purim. On another positive note, the Gorenstein family recently made a donation to the Malka Pass Library in honour of their late mother Jackie.

6.0 REPORTING OPTIONS WITHOUT DISCUSSION OR VOTE

6.1 Committee Reports as Circulated

Committee Reports were circulated in advance of the Board Meeting and reviewed by Board members.

6.2 Other Business Raised By Any Director

Rabbi Kenter spoke about his desire for a Board Retreat to discuss our goals and objectives for the near future. A poll will be distributed and a date will be selected based on the poll results.

7.0 IN CAMERA

8.0 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Victor said he expected that the next Board Meeting in January will be a Board planning Retreat. Details would be developed.