

**Kehillat Beth Israel
Board of Directors
March 24, 2022
Zoom Meeting
Minutes**

Present:

Norm Ferkin
Jeff Greenberg
Adina Libin
David Lyman

Jaimee Mitzmacher
Victor Rabinovitch
David Roytenberg
Jeremy Rudin

Judah Silverman
Donna Straus
Madelaine Werier

Secretary:

Jodi Gitter

Clergy Present:

Cantor Jason Green
Rabbi Eytan Kenter
Rabbi Deborah Zuker

Staff Present:

Rena Garshowitz

Regrets:

Olga Strelchenko
Harland Tanner

1.0 PRELIMINARY MATTERS

1.1 Call to Order

Victor Rabinovitch

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 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**

Ephraim Arnon
Cynthia Garonce
Mazal Ly

1.5 Approval of Agenda **All**

A motion was made by Jaimee Mitzmacher and seconded by Norm Ferkin to approve the agenda for March 24, 2022.

All were in favour. The motion was carried.

1.6 Approval of Board Minutes From the Meeting Held on February 24, 2022 **Victor Rabinovitch**

A motion was made by Jodi Gitter and seconded by David Lyman to approve the Board minutes from the meeting held on February 24, 2022.

All were in favour. The motion was carried.

1.7 Business Arising From Previous Minutes **All**

The follow-up to Rabbi Kenter's presentation about the Programs and Services provided by KBI will take place during next month's board meeting, as during tonight's board meeting financial matters will need to take the forefront.

Rabbi Kenter reported on the success of the various Purim programs.

Jeremy provided an OTT update:

- The Board will be asked to approve the final agreement with OTT, which would implement the Agreement in Principle, at the May board meeting (in time for registration to start in June).
- The financial analysis remains to be completed. It will include a projection for this year and several years forward. An update of the insurance policy will also be needed.
- Legal Counsel has been instructed to advise on options and steps to bring the two organizations together.

- Rabbi Kenter led a meeting with OTT to plan the first year of operations.
- The Governance Committee will be asked to make recommendations about what committees will need to be created to oversee OTT policy and operations. This can be done after May (and the structure may evolve over time).

Rena explained KBI’s Covid restrictions update, in view of changing government policies:

- Proof of vaccination to enter the facility will be lifted on April 1.
- Masks remain a requirement through Pesach, for reconsideration at the end of April.
- KBI will continue to be cautious, and may be more restrictive than the government’s requirements.
- Madelaine and Norm praised the shul for its prudent measures.
- Adina inquired about the increased Covid in wastewaters and asked if KBI would adapt its policies. Victor replied that medical experts would be consulted before further changes are implemented.

2.0 REPORTING WITH DISCUSSION AND VOTE

2.1 Any Business Raised By a Director

None

3.0 FINANCIAL MATTERS

3.1 Wellness Checks

Rena Garshowitz

The Membership Committee is endeavouring to reach out to all members of KBI to ask members how they are, whether they would like to speak to a member of the clergy, if they have any feedback, etc. Volunteers are still needed to help this. A script and guidance will be provided.

3.2 Budget 2022-2023 Process

Jeremy Rudin

Jeremy presented a detailed analysis on the Financial Outlook and Sustainability of KBI. He thanked Adina and Rena for their assistance in preparing this presentation, which aims at analysing KBI trends over time. Highlights include:

- Our current year's projected revenue and expenses show that we are operating on a negative cash flow.
- In addition, the synagogue has delayed making any capital improvements to the building and its grounds, thereby creating a backlog of projects. (This backlog is not included in the calculation of current negative cash flow...in other words, we face a larger problem than the numbers shown.)
- The shortfall of revenues since 2017 has been offset by funds received through the merger of Beth Shalom and Agudath Israel.
- The key question is: how much money can be reasonably taken from KBI's 'endowment fund' so that it remains stable, with modest growth? The Finance and Audit Committee view is that the Board must soon decide on an upper limit to acceptable negative cash flow.
- Choices for the 'endowment fund' and the earnings it accrues need to be discussed: Is it for current members, future members, or both? This choice will determine how we decide on what is an acceptable limit to our negative cash flow.
- The 'endowment fund' has grown, on average, about 8 per cent annually in recent years, under the management of the Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation. It may not be possible to sustain such a high rate of growth in the future..
- Jeremy suggested one possible scenario, as follows. If we assume a 6 per cent rate of growth, then using 3.5 per cent of the endowment each year means the fund would still grow by 2.5 per cent per year through retained earnings - that is slightly higher than recent average inflation.
- If we take annually 3.5 per cent of the 'endowment fund', this will generate revenues of about \$270,000. Therefore, under this scenario, KBI should absolutely limit its acceptable negative cash flow to about \$270,000.
- Some additional points on impacts of the Covid period recently. General revenues from dues and donations are down by approximately \$180,000 compared to the pre-pandemic average. This means a decline of 17 percent..
- General expenses are also down, by about \$78,000.
- The decline in general expenses is mainly due to the fact that major repairs have been exceptionally low this year. However, some significant repairs are waiting to be done, and they are in addition to any improvements we might choose to make to our ageing building.

Victor thanked Jeremy, and the other members of the Finance and Audit Committee. He said that reactions to this important report would be discussed during the in camera portion of the meeting.

3.3 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.

4.0 REPORTING WITH DISCUSSION BUT WITHOUT VOTE

4.1 Presentation on Programming **Rabbi Kenter**

This will be revisited at the next board meeting.

4.2 Other Business Raised By a Director

None

5.0 REPORTING WITHOUT DISCUSSION OR VOTE

5.1 Committee Reports As Circulated

The Adult Education Committee as well as the Life and Legacy Committee circulated reports.

5.2 Other Business Raised By Any Director

None

6.0 IN CAMERA

7.0 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:52 PM.

The next Board Meeting is April 28.