

**Kehillat Beth Israel
Board of Directors Meeting
May 29, 2025
Minutes**

Present:

Sarah Beutel
Norm Ferkin
Gillian Koh
David Lyman

Jaimee Mitzmacher
Janice Pleet
Victor Rabinovitch
Jeremy Rudin

Olga Streltchenko
Sheldon Wiseman

Zoom:

Jeff Greenberg
Adina Libin

Secretary:

Jaimee Mitzmacher

Clergy Present:

Cantor Jason Green

Staff Present:

Yaron Starosta

Regrets:

Ralph Anzarouth
Arryn Mills

1. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

1.1 Call to Order and Introductory Remarks

Jeremy Rudin

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM.

1.2 Approval of Agenda

All

A motion was made by Olga Streltchenko and seconded by Sarah Beutel to approve the agenda for May 29, 2025.

All were in favour. The motion was carried.

1.3 D'Var Torah

Cantor Green

1.4 Call for Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Jeremy Rudin

None of the members present declared a conflict of interest.

1.5 Moment of Silence to Commemorate Those Congregants Who Have Passed Away Since the Last Board Meeting **Jeremy Rudin**

Zelda Freedman (associate member)
Sharon Denofsky
Bernie Rosenblatt

Jeffry Copland (brother of Judy Lieff)

1.6 New Members **Jeremy Rudin**
Paul Giles

1.7 Approval of the Board minutes of May 1, 2025 **Jaimee Mitzmacher**

A motion was made by Jaimee Mitzmacher and seconded by Norm Ferkin to approve the minutes of May 1, 2025

All were in favour. The motion was carried.

1.8 Business Arising from Previous Minutes **All**

Terms of Reference for committees will be circulated for approval at the next meeting.

2. REPORTING WITH DISCUSSION AND VOTE

2.1. Proposed Plan for Osgoode Cemetery **L. Bronstein (guest)**

BACKGROUND:

- In 1975, 60 acres of land was purchased in Osgoode by 5 synagogues: Beth Shalom (CBSO), Agudath Israel (AI), Machzikei Hadas (MH), Temple Israel (TI) and Young Israel (YI)
- 20 acres were selected for burial purposes, divided into five pie-shaped sections of approx. 1,250 plots each
- In 2014, a survey confirmed that 400 plots of AI section were “wet” and unsuitable for burial (water table approx. 3 ft. below the surface). Some areas of CBSO’s section had the same issue, but the MH, YI and TI sections did not suffer from this problem
- In 2023, a second survey confirmed the water table in both AI and CBSO sections had not improved, even after work was done to alleviate the wet problems
- Following the merger of AI and CBSO into Kehillat Beth Israel (KBI), and the adoption of a policy to allow non-Jewish spouses to be buried with their Jewish spouse, it was apparent KBI needed a separate area of such burials, to be called the “New Traditions” section.
- In 2024 KBI established an Ad Hoc committee to come up with a plan to locate a suitable area for both immediate needs of “New Traditions” and other future burial

spaces since fewer than 100 plots remained available for burial purposes in our section

PROPOSAL:

- KBI approached MH to discuss collaboration to resolve the matter. The plan involves swapping 50% of the former CBSO section (which has yet to be used) for 50% of the MH section (also yet to be used). This plan will have no impact on any of the other shul sections or on the current road ways.
- The advantages of this plan are that:
 - o The new KBI section would be adjacent to the existing KBI section
 - o MH will have a roughly 75-year supply of plots and KBI will have a 50-year supply.
 - o There will be no cost to either synagogue
 - o Propose to flip MH and KBI sections to put “New Traditions” next to KBI
 - o The “wet” area of the AI allocation can be converted into additional parking which is much needed
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A motion was made by Sheldon Wiseman and seconded by Victor Rabinovitch to accept the proposed plan and authorize the President to move forward with MH to implement that plan.

3.0 REPORTING WITH DISCUSSION AND WITHOUT VOTE

3.1 Upcoming Elections for the World Zionist Congress D. Roytenberg (guest)

David Roytenberg explained to the board the importance of the upcoming election for the World Zionist Congress and sought the board’s support to encourage KBI members to vote, and to vote for the MERCAZ (Conservative/Masorti) slate. The board was supportive of the proposal and very comfortable with publicizing the election and the value of Slate 4 to our members.

3.2 Adult Education Committee Report D. Roytenberg (guest)

- working ideas for future calendar:
 - o Arrange a virtual tour of the National Library of Israel
 - o Where appropriate, co-brand and partner many AJA 50+ programs at KBI as Adult Education so both AJA 50+ and KBI can promote to their membership
 - o Fall event – Summit meeting on Antisemitism inviting local people from CIJA, B’nai Brith, and Ottawa Against Antisemitism and possible partnership with the Alliance of Canadians Combatting Antisemitism in Toronto
 - o Possible guest Speakers: Haviv Rettig Gur and Joshua Liefer
 - o Run a monthly discussion program on Israeli matters facilitated by John Snipper, a lawyer and arbitrator
 - o Create programming to discuss the future of Conservative Judaism
 - o Create programming directed to women’s topics
 - o Bring in another film series

- consider cost so it is not a barrier for attendance

3.3 “Transition” Year Planning

Jeremy Rudin

- Key steps:

1. engage in deeper reflection on our future
 - Board retreat in Sept. including incoming board members and officers
 - Shabbaton series: The Path Forward for Conservative Synagogues
 - 3 visiting rabbis who have had success growing synagogues like ours
 - Invite rabbinic / cantorial students
2. create space for congregants to step up
 - Rather than hire a full-time interim rabbi, bring in rabbinic resources for a weekend or a week at a time, focusing on specific needs
 - Congregants can lead Torah study, give Divrei Torah, lead planning of programs,
 - Congregants can help with shiva visits and bikur cholim
3. search for new “permanent” rabbi
 - Launch search for a July 1, 2026 start date
 - Consider going outside of the RA/USCJ process from the outset; consider possible change of bylaws if needed
 - Support recruitment effort with a marketing video
4. Other important business
 - Plan OTT school year
 - Search for permanent ED

- jobs that need filling:

- Officers and board members for 2025-2026
- team to plan the “Paths Forward” series
- team to find visiting rabbis and teachers
- Co-chairs and members of the Rabbi Search Committee
- Team for Recruitment Video
- Search Committee for Permanent ED
- Team to plan Board Retreat
- Coordinator and volunteers for shiva and bikur cholim visits
- Dvar Torah coordinator - done: Olga Streltchenko
- Torah Study coordinator - done: David Roytenberg
- Service Guide coordinator - done: Norm Ferkin
- Rabbi for High Holidays - done: Rabbi Frydman-Kohl

3.4 High Holiday Planning

Cantor Green / R. Anzarouth / S. Kathron

- Meeting scheduled next week
- Plan to keep things similar to last year
- Will report in June
- Need to find someone for the family Kol Nidre service

3.5 Financial Update Q3 and first look at Budget 2025-2026

David Lyman

- Overall we are on pace with adjusted budget numbers
- Dues line currently includes Chai Memberships; numbers are a little under what projected for dues without the Chai Memberships
- Donated revenues are a little lower than projected
- OTT numbers are lower than projected because numbers are down
- Income is above projection but our expenses are also above projection
- Maintenance staff is lower than budgeted; employee benefits are a little higher
- Continue clergy hosting as a valued expense but consider actual expense
- Higher expenses on software expenses and office supplies due to consultant expenses for Shul Cloud
- Nice donations for breakfast kiddush allowing it to stay well within budget
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The board discussed the draft budget with a view to approving the final budget in June. This to include a determination of whether and how much to charge members who are post-B'nai Mitzvah and still dependent on parents who are members.

6. Review of Board Agenda for year

Jeremy Rudin

- June/July: Adoption of budget, Nominating Committee Report (interim), OTT Committee Report, BLC Report (tentative), Personnel Committee Report, Transition Year Planning Update
- August/September: financial update Q4, High Holiday planning, Personnel Committee Report, Transition Year Planning Update
- Sept. 7 or 14: Joint Board Retreat (incoming and outgoing)
- October: Nominating Committee Report (final), Review of audited financial statements, prep for AGM

4.0 REPORTING WITHOUT DISCUSSION AND VOTE

4.1 Committee reports as circulated

- Director of Youth and Education Programming Report

4.2 Other business raised by any Director

All

No additional business was raised

5.0 IN CAMERA

6.0 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:23 PM.

The next board meeting will be held on Thursday, June 26, 2025; in person if possible

with Zoom option.