

**TEMPLE SINAI BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES**  
**March 18, 2020**

**Present:** Ellen Agler, Michael Baratz, Naomi Camper, Jill Chenok, Laura Croen, Andrew Engel, Laurence Freedman, Gary Friend, Nancy Golding, Cathy Goldwyn, Hannah Goldstein, John Hellerman, Katie Herman, Kenneth Jaffe, Julia Kepniss, Nancy Liebermann, Deborah Lewis, Matthew Pachman, Deitra Reiser, Catherine Ribnick, Rebecca Robins, Jonathan Roos, Elizabeth Rose, Todd Rosentover, Adam Rosenwasser, Stephen Sacks, Perri Iger-Silversmith, Marcie Solomon, Seth Speyer, Laura Steel, Anita Stoll, Michael Sussmann, Lisa Tucker, D. Jean Veta, Regina Ziegler

**Call to order:** Deborah Lewis called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm, held via video conference during COVID-19 Isolation

**COVID-19 Update:** Rabbi Roos informed the Board the Temple received notification earlier that day of the first instance of a confirmed positive for COVID-19 in a congregant and their family of four. The test results first became available on March 18, but the family attended the Temple Sinai Purim Carnival on March 8 and one child from the family attended a Chug Ivrit class on March 11. The family is faring well, in self quarantine, recovering at home.

Ellen Agler reported that the staff is working under the recommendations of the District of Columbia Department of Health; sending email notification to the congregation with details, recommendations, and resources. DC DOH protocol calls for anyone at potentially exposed on March 8 and/or March 11 to self-isolate for fourteen days from the date of possible exposure and to practice all commonly conveyed protocols for hygiene, including: avoiding contact with others; maintaining 6 foot distance from others; and hand washing.

**D'var Torah:** John Hellerman provided the D'var Torah (Thank you, John)

**BOARD OPERATIONS AND GENERAL BUSINESS:**

- **Board Meeting Minutes** – the February 2020 Board meeting minutes were approved, with following modification: Andrew Engel was present at the February Board meeting and absent for the January meeting.
- **Membership report** - the March 2020 membership report was approved, with Jill Chenok, Nancy Golding, and Todd Rosentover volunteering to reach out to new members.

- **Capital Campaign and Renovation:** Andrew Engel and Naomi Camper shared \$9.85M in pledges have been secured to date. In light of COVID-19 Public Health Crisis and volatile securities markets, active solicitations for the campaign have been paused to allow time for community care. A reevaluation would occur with regard to campaign and construction timeline as there is more opportunity for clarity in the current climate.
- **The Financial Report:** presented by Marcie Solomon. FY 2021 Budget planning was conducted prior to recent escalation of COVID-19. The Finance Committee has narrowed what was a projected FY 2021 \$145,000 deficit to \$22,000. Budget modeling includes assumption of member commitment & annual fund increase by 1.5% (correction, model assumes 1.2% increase); labor expense increases by 3% COLA & 2 contract increases; 8% health insurance increase; and eliminating plan to hire senior development professional, relying instead on lower priced development consulting services.

Additionally, the Finance Committee recommends utilizing the balance of the Temple Sinai surplus fund, allocating it in equal amounts over 3 years with somewhat more than 1/3 in the first year with \$169,000 for FY 20-21.

Finally, the Finance Committee recommends transferring \$15,000 from the existing \$33,000 cemetery fund to support operations, with the outstanding loan to the Temple to be repaid through sale of cemetery plots in seasons ahead. Motion for use of funds from cemetery fund carried unanimously.

The Finance Committee also recommends a transfer of \$141,575 from capital campaign sustaining fund to FY 2021 operations, including \$43,664 for social action purposes. The amount from the sustaining funds was determined using a seven-year amortization (as no money was taken from the Sustaining Fund from the time that the first pledge was made seven years ago), less 3% for anticipated bad debt. A discussion was held regarding intended use of the capital campaign sustaining fund, whereby the capital campaign chairs and Temple leadership reminded the board the sustaining fund was intended as a 10 year spend down fund to support clergy, pastoral care, & transformative social action – all of which are underwritten by the operating budget. There was consensus that there was not sufficient time for Board members to assess the language of the resolution during the video conference, so language for a resolution would be circulated to the board and made available for electronic motion and vote in days ahead in a manner permitted by the Bylaws.

- **Security:** Ellen Agler shared a new recommendation that grew from completing a Security and Threat Assessment with the Regional Security Advisor for Secure Community Network (SCN) to enhance security by adding armed off duty DC metropolitan police presence during shabbat and holiday service hours, as well as Nursery School, Religious School, and special program hours. It was noted that security expenses overall have increased \$150,00 over two years. As follow-up to a request from the Officers on learning of this recommendation, Agler benchmarked security levels and special security fees levied at other congregations. Agler found other congregations in same situation with special annual assessments for a security fee of \$100 to \$350 per member family. A recommendation was made that the Board approve the Temple's hire of the advanced security for the recommended coverage

hours and that an initial \$100 fee be added for each Temple Sinai congregation family unit as well as each non-member family participating in the Religious School or Nursery School. A motion was made that this occur and be orchestrated in coordination with the Multi-Racial Sinai initiatives to ensure all increased security be carried out in a manner sensitive to maintaining Temple Sinai as a welcoming, equal, inclusive community. Motion carried with one vote opposed & one abstention

- **B'nai Mitzvah Postponement:** In light of Center for Disease Control recommendations with regard to containment of COVID-19, including gatherings of more than 10 individuals be avoided, the Temple Clergy have recommended B'nai Mitzvah services be postponed and rescheduled moving forward. In anticipation of this the Clergy preemptively reached out to families scheduled for shabbat of March 21, offering to be flexible on rescheduling, allowing for reading of Torah portions as prepared; Motion carried and approved unanimously.
- **Sinai House:** The Sinai House 2019-2020 Annual Report and 2020-2021 Board Slate were circulated to the board in advance of the meeting. Due to time limitations the 2020-2021 Board Slate vote will be postponed to the April board meeting.

## REPORTS

- **President's Report** (Deborah Lewis): As provided throughout meeting, including invitation to Religious School and Nursery School leaders to share on programs to support families during the proliferation of COVID-19.
- **Senior Rabbi's Report** (Rabbi Jonathan Roos): As provided throughout meeting, including updates on handling of COVID-19 and Rabbi's decision to come back early from sabbatical to support community through COVID pandemic.
- **Executive Director's Report** (Ellen Agler): As provided.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

- Meeting adjourned into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters @ 9:50PM

Respectfully submitted, Seth Speyer, Secretary