

**TEMPLE SINAI BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING – March 15, 2023**

Present [meeting conducted in person and on Zoom]: Michael Baratz, Lori Berman, Naomi Camper, Dora Chen, Ellen Croog, Glenn Engelmann, Larry Freedman, Nancy Golding, Cathy Goldwyn, Ken Jaffe, Katie Joselow, Audrey Kramer, Deborah Lewis, Myron Marlin, Howard Oppenheim, Jonah Perlin, Debbie Rappaport, Catherine Ribnick, Steve Sacks, Marcie Solomon, Seth Speyer, Laura Steel, Anita Stoll, Michael Sussmann, D. Jean Veta, Regina Ziegler, Senior Rabbi Jonathan Roos, Rabbi Hannah Goldstein, Cantor Educator Rebecca Robins, and Executive Director Ellen Agler.

Call to order: With a quorum of the Board members present, the meeting was called to order at 7:31 p.m. by Temple Sinai President Marcie Solomon.

D’var Torah: Catherine Ribnick delivered the D’var.

BOARD OPERATIONS AND GENERAL BUSINESS:

- **Board Meeting minutes:** The February 2023 Board Meeting minutes were approved.
- **Membership report:** The February 2023 membership report was approved.
- **Financial report:** Ken Jaffe presented a summary of the Financial Report and advised that we are doing approximately \$27k better than budget. We are now projecting that, at year end, we will have a somewhat smaller deficit to cover from a surplus fund release: about \$389k instead of \$416k. However, member commitment revenues continue to run behind budget and the projected investment in the Nursery School continues to be greater than projected in the budget.

The Finance Committee has started to work on the budget for next year. As we work towards a balanced operating budget, the Committee has set a target for next year of a surplus fund release no greater than \$350k that takes into consideration inflation and other factors that tend to drive costs up. The Committee is looking at revenue enhancements and advised the various committees that support from the operating budget will be limited and increased draws on various funds can be expected. The Committee has also asked staff to scrutinize costs and eliminate those that are unnecessary as part of the effort to balance the operating budget.

UPDATES AND DISCUSSIONS:

- **Renovation and Expansion:** Ken Jaffe provided an update on the Temple’s renovation and expansion. The project remains on track to be substantially complete by early September and a major milestone has been reached with the start of structural steel erection. He also reported that, in the course of erecting some of the steel columns, the subcontractors made changes in the field to address certain unforeseen circumstances.

Unfortunately, these changes were not adequately documented and the necessary approvals were not obtained. Some of these conditions were discovered by Temple's owner representative/project manager; others were discovered by the general contractor, Scott-Long, who is addressing these technical issues. Meanwhile, we have urged that the general contractor strengthen its management team to avoid the recurrence of such issues. Scott-Long has been responsive and its Vice President of Operations is taking over as the executive responsible for the project and additional site supervision resources have been added.

Ken also provided an update regarding the budget progress and about the financial aspects of the R&E project. As previously advised, inflation and the phasing of the project costs have increased the renovation costs significantly. Although the Capital Campaign fundraising has exceeded expectations, thanks to generosity and hard work, the Temple still needs to obtain financing to cover some of the increased costs. The amount of the financing will depend on how much more the campaign can raise.

Staff provided the Finance Committee with an analysis of the projected financing requirements for Phase 2 of the R&E project, which Ken shared with the Board. Because the financing requirements depend on additional fundraising, which is difficult to predict, the analysis includes two possible scenarios. Both scenarios assume a Phase 2 project cost estimate of about \$10.6 million, which includes contingency allowances and playground replacement/enhancement (with the expectation is that most of those costs will be covered by separate fundraising or separate fund). Taking available funds into account, \$4.5 million remains to be covered by additional fundraising and/or financing. The first (worst case) scenario – if no additional campaign pledges are received – would require financing to cover approximately \$4.1 million. The second scenario assumes \$1.5 million in additional pledges, leaving about \$3.6 million to be financed. Ken pointed out that the Temple is strong financially, so the Finance Committee expects that financing can be obtained and will be available. He notes that we already have \$1.5 million in financing available under our existing credit facility. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that debt servicing will put additional pressure on the operating budget. At present, the Temple has a line of credit that should be adequate to fund the construction, but it must be replaced in early 2025. The current plan is to approach the bank to seek an extension to give us additional flexibility, to be followed by exploration of available financing options to identify the one most favorable for the Temple. Additional details and recommendations will be presented at a future board meeting and a decision will ultimately require congregational approval.

- **Sinai House Report and Board Slate:** Sinai House President Amy Shear presented the annual update regarding Sinai House operations over the last year, which has been challenging as the program transitions from providing virtual services virtually during the height of the pandemic, to increasingly meeting with residents in person. Last year,

\$500k was spent to renovate the building and to make necessary repairs. The staff continues to work with the four new families we welcomed to the residency program. Amy presented the proposed slate of Sinai House Board of Directors and officers, which was approved upon motion and vote by the Temple Sinai Board.

- **Security Fee:** Ken Jaffe provided a summary of the proposal to begin assessing a Security Fee in the 2023-2024 fiscal year. The fee would be set at \$200 annually and would be charged to each member unit and to each non-member family with a student in the Religious School or the Nursery School. This measure is necessitated because the costs of security have risen substantially in recent years and this year security costs are projected to total \$337,000, which is an increase over \$90,000 from last year. Further increases are projected in the upcoming fiscal year. Increased security costs represent a major strain on the Temple's operating budget. Staff's conservative estimate is that this proposal will produce about \$114,000 in the first year (factoring in that certain members may seek a waiver of the fee and that collections may be lower since pledge forms have already gone out). Ken also summarized the response of other congregations that have charged comparable security fees to their members. Upon motion and vote, the proposed resolution for the adoption of the fee (the text of which is attached) was approved.
- **The Ruach Fund for Spiritual Connection:** Rabbi Ross provided an overview of a proposal to establish the Ruach Fund for Spiritual Connection. On February 27, 2023, Temple Sinai entered into an agreement with Peter Scher and Kimberly Tilley ("the Donors") to establish the Ruach Fund. The Donors wish to support implementation of the rabbinic vision for our congregation as a place for connecting members to each other and to the sources of our tradition that can provide comfort, fulfillment, and joy, and create meaning in our lives. Rabbi Ross provided a brief teaching from *Bamidbar* (The Book of Numbers) wherein Moses seeks to achieve similar goals for the community and advocates that this is the very outcome we should aspire to achieve: *ruach* should find its way to all members of the community and that each one would feel more connected to the others and that all of us, in our best moments, would be elevated to a state wherein we feel as close to the Source of Life as Moses did in his best moments.

In establishing the Ruach Fund, it is the Donors' wish to support the Temple Sinai clergy team's ability to provide, deepen, and expand pastoral care and teaching, as well as guest scholars and artists along with clergy professional development. The purposes of the Fund are to: 1) enhance the accessibility of clergy's teaching capabilities by creating digital content and adding technology to teaching spaces; 2) improve pastoral care; 3) broaden and deepen the community's spirituality with enriching programming and guest speakers; and 4) provide professional development for clergy to better serve the needs of the community. The Fund shall be administered by Temple Sinai's Office of fiscal year, and as needed throughout the year, the Senior Rabbi, in consultation with

the Executive Director, shall identify uses for the principal of the Fund that meet the guidelines listed above. The principal of the Fund shall be drawn down for use as outlined above and in accordance with the policies as set and revised from time to time by the Temple Sinai Board.

The Board extends its sincerest gratitude and appreciation to Peter and Kim for this beautiful and generous gift. Upon motion and vote, the attached proposed resolution to establish the Fund was approved.

- **Capital Campaign:** Naomi Camper gave an updated report about the Campaign, which is expected to close by the end of the year. Future activities will include a dedication ceremony for the new Addition, asking donors to extend their pledges, engaging in an effort to encourage philanthropic giving by the 500+ member units that have not yet contributed to the Campaign, seeking additional volunteers and encouraging gifts from group cohorts within the wider Temple Sinai community.

REPORTS:

- **President's Report** – as submitted.
- **Senior Rabbi's Report** –Rabbi Roos provided an oral report, highlighting the following: events celebrating Cantor Croen on her retirement, the transition of incoming Cantor Rhodes and preliminary High Holiday planning, and post-pandemic operations.
- **Executive Director's Report** – as submitted.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Confidential and personnel matters were discussed in Executive Session.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 10:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Laura Steel, Secretary

Resolution Establishing the Ruach Fund for Spiritual Connection

LET IT BE RESOLVED that Temple Sinai accepts the gifts of Peter Scher and Kimberly Tilley to establish the Ruach Fund for Spiritual Connection and establishes this fund in accordance with the gift agreement signed by the Executive Director on behalf of Temple Sinai and the Donors on February 27, 2023.

Resolution To Adopt Security Fee

WHEREAS, the costs Temple Sinai incurs to maintain the security of its facilities have increased substantially;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE BOARD that, effective June 1, 2023, a Security Fee in the amount of \$200 per year shall be assessed on each Member Unit in the Congregation and on each non-Member family with one or more students in the Temple Sinai Nursery School or the Temple Sinai Religious School.