

Temple Sinai Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 18, 2023
6:30 p.m. Board Meeting (in person)

Present

- **Board Members:** Liz Daoust, Becky McEntee, Stephanie Eckhaus, Julia Fromson-Mayhew, Eva Fostovsky-Geckeler, Kate Lucas, Jon Braslaw, Jill Saper, Michelle van Tijen, Sean Sawyer, Natalie Crouch, Glenn Oleon, Anne Schmitz, Laurie Leiber, Bill Bonnet, Dayna Orange, Lori Waltzer, Susan Kagan Waitkus, Karen Tiedemann, Ari Levy
- **Staff:** Cantor Keys, Rabbi Bressler, Molly Peritore

Absent

- Aaron Saxe, Myriam Easton, Sydney Firestone Schimmel, John Ehrlich, Calvin Gibbs, Terrie Goren, Rabbi Mates-Muchin, Hadas Rave

1. Call to order

- The meeting was called to order at 6:36 p.m.

2. Opening prayer/reading (Cantor Keys, Rabbi Bressler)

- First Board Meeting since Oct 7
- Prayer for Peace read by Rabbi Bressler, Oseh Shalom led by Cantor Keys

3. D'Var Torah

- Laurie Leiber - Shared her concern about the future of the Hospitality Committee and the next generation
- Reminder to come to *The Bialy Eaters* and Bake Your Own Amazing Bagels, the Musical, Sunday October 29, 3pm, a production of Temple Sinai's Fine Arts Committee on Culture and Community

4. Action - Approval of Minutes – September 20, 2023

- **Motion to approve minutes with Julia Fromson-Mayhew's non-substantive edits:**
Natalie Crouch
- **2nd:** Bill Bonnet
- **All in favor**
- **Motion passes**

5. Action - Bimah and Usher sign-up

- Please sign up, Michelle will send reminders
- Stephanie Eckhaus signed up for 10/20

6. Information and Action - Consent Calendar - Membership Report

- 11 new families
- Board Members signed up to call all new families to welcome them

7. Information and Action – Letter Writing to Not Yet Renewed Members

- 89 members not yet renewed; each board member wrote several personal letters that will be mailed to them

8. Information – Financial Report (Lori Waltzer)

- **Income:**
 - Membership: 95.42% subscribed, we still have 89 members not renewed through today's date per Terrie's report (last month was 130 unrenewed); still hope to reach budgeted number, membership calls will begin soon and we will write letters tonight to unrenewed members. Need another \$99k to reach our budget. \$139k is not renewed to date.
 - Breakdown: 5 Tzedakah (\$27k), 8 Sustaining (\$33k), 61 Contributing (\$79k) for \$139k total
 - School & Youth revenue: 98.35% to date (last month was 62.72% for comparison)
 - Fundraising income: 4.49% to date, events to come later this fiscal year
 - High holiday income: \$42k of \$40k budget collected, so that is closed out and looks good
 - Other Income: 10.6% to date on \$96k budget, still early in the year (note this category was missing on the board report but it is included in the total)
- **Operating Expenses**: Generally speaking, things look relatively on track from the expense side when we compare 25.00% of expenses (3/12 months of the year) as a benchmark as compared to 22.26% spent. No issues or expected savings to highlight at this point.
- **Mortgage balance**: As of 9/30/23, mortgage balance is \$2.0mm, no change from last month. The \$250k line of credit does not have a balance on it and we do not expect to need to draw upon it for *operating* support this year.
- **Cash Reserve**:
 - Cash balance is approximately \$3.2 mm at 9/30, when we subtract remaining \$700k excess loan draw allocated for the remaining dome costs (pre-drawn due to banking crisis), we are at approx. \$2.5mm. This is where we expected to be at this point in the year.
 - Ending cash at 6/30 from the cash flow is tracking in the \$1.6mm range. This is related to us spending \$165k of capital project dollars put aside as well as covering the projected \$86k budget deficit this fiscal year, and we will continue to monitor.

- **Endowment balance history (net change from prior quarter is primarily investment gains of +\$84k and -\$4k of management fees paid to JCF):**

\$2.92mm at 6/30/23
 \$2.84mm at 3/31/23
 \$2.57mm at 12/31/22
 \$2.59mm at 9/30/22
 \$2.52mm at 6/30/22

- **Annual Meeting Prep:** First round of the review is done, and the Finance Committee will prepare slides for the annual meeting.
- **Capital Needs:**
 - **\$1.6mm Dome:** Dome repair underway, we are tracking costs to date – approx. \$1.12mm spent of the \$1.6mm (through end of September), which is about 70%. We still project dome to be on budget.
 - **\$125k capital improvements other:** Smaller other amounts spent for seismic, boiler and other projects under investigation total just over \$70k to date (\$10k more than last month). This is part of the \$125k approved for capital needs consultation and investigation by the Board in April 2023.
 - **\$165k capex 2023-24:** Of the \$165k budgeted for office/admin & sound improvements, we have spent \$80k to date.

9. Information – Capital Campaign Update/Campaign Consultant

- Liz stated the committee has interviewed 2 firms
- Recommendation to move forward with 1 firm
- Next steps are checking references and scope drafting
- Majority of cost of firm was covered by private donation, but the remainder of the cost will exceed \$5k so will come back to the board next month for approval
- 4-5 month engagement working with the consultant
- Campaign will begin the very early stages next year (2024)

10. Information and Action – Capital Needs Task Force Update/Recommendation for Heat Exchange Unit for Sanctuary (Lori Waltzer)

- The CNTF is asking for board approval for path forward for Heat Exchange Unit
- Will be much more efficient, offers filtration and cooling (that a traditional boiler does not)

Board Approval of Capital Needs Task Force Recommendation for Heat Exchange Unit for Sanctuary

At the Board's request, the Capital Needs Task Force has been assessing, among other things, options available for replacing the aged boiler that serves the sanctuary. The

CNTF has confirmed that the current boiler has far outlived its useful life, is no longer operational or repairable, and must be replaced as soon as possible.

After consulting various experts in the field, the CNTF has determined that the Temple has two options. One, install a new gas-fired boiler in the basement beneath the sanctuary. Or two, install a new heat exchange system on the roof of Stern Hall. The committees advise that the principal advantages of a heat exchange system are (1) the system is powered by electricity rather than natural gas and, therefore, is better for the environment, and (2) the system provides both heat and air- conditioning. The principal disadvantages of a heat exchange system are (1) it is more expensive than a gas-fired boiler, and (2) it will require new ducting in tight wall spaces and the installation of registers visible within the sanctuary.

Very preliminary estimates obtained by the committee's CNTF indicate that a new gas-fired boiler would cost in the range of \$1 million and a new heat exchange system would cost approximately 30 percent more (or \$1.3 million). At this stage of their analysis, the CNTF unanimously recommends the heat exchange option because the extra expense appears reasonable in light of the significant benefits.

Additionally, \$1.3mm is still available from the mortgage to draw to pay for this project, The CNTF advises that various matters remain to be analyzed before it is prepared to make a final recommendation. For example, will any structural work be necessary to support a rooftop installation? Can the necessary ductwork and registers be successfully installed and will they be aesthetically acceptable? And will final cost estimates remain in the range of the preliminary estimates? The CNTF reports that the experts they have consulted believe these and other outstanding questions can all be satisfactorily answered.

On the basis of the CNTF's findings and recommendations, the Board states its agreement that a heat exchange system is the preferable option for the sanctuary and authorizes the CNTF to focus on that option and to report back to the Board once remaining questions have been addressed and Board approval for expenditures is required.

Motion to approve: Michelle van Tijen

2nd: Karen Tiedemann

All in Favor: Yes

Motion Passes: Yes

11. Action – Sanctuary Sound System

- **Sound and Streaming Upgrades in the Sanctuary (Lori Waltzer)**

- Now that dome is completed, staff and clergy would like to add Livecontrol to the sanctuary and upgrade sound system (total cost is \$55k)
- However, there is \$29k remaining in the sound capex budget (of the \$165k approved) and when we apply that, we get to \$126k needed.
- We had budgeted \$40k for sound this year and we have spent 11k in Chapel
- During last Friday's Shabbat services, it was very hard to hear Cantor- good example of the problem, lots of electrical circuits blowing, too much on one circuit
- Once it is all connected, will be able to control digitally, and the speakers will be white and smaller on Bima next to podium
- Will not create a big bump in the operating budget

We are requesting board approval for spending on upgrades to the sound system in the sanctuary. As we are waiting to receive quotes from various sources, we are seeking approval for a not to exceed amount of \$26,000 to cover these expenses. We will be applying \$29,000 from our capital expenditures budget as explained below for a total expenditure of \$55,000.

History

We are currently using rented sound equipment in the sanctuary remaining from the high holy days. The reason for this is that our sound gear in the sanctuary was installed in 2010-11 when we had our last upgrade of the sanctuary and made our major renovations. For technical gear, 13-14 years is quite old and much of the gear is quite worn or unusable. Now that we are back in the sanctuary after nearly four years due to the pandemic and the dome repair, we now need to replace the sound equipment.

In addition, our technical needs have evolved, and we would like to install LIVECONTROL in the sanctuary. This sound upgrade is the second part of a 3-phase plan to upgrade sound in all 3 of our large gathering spaces. The chapel has been completed, we are now working on the sanctuary and the last step will be to integrate Stern Hall so that all 3 gathering spaces have clear, intelligible sound.

Cost estimates for the sanctuary sound upgrades:

1. Sound Equipment \$13,000
2. LiveControl cameras and installation 4,000
3. Acoustic panels 11,000
4. Installation 21,500
5. Contingency 5,500
- TOTAL \$55,000

The 2023-24 capital expenditure budget contemplated spending \$40,000 on sound upgrades. To date, we have spent \$11,000, leaving \$29,000 of unspent funds. Therefore, we request an additional sum of \$26,000.

Motion to approve the \$26,000: Stephanie Eckhaus

2nd: Jon Braslaw

All in favor: Yes

Motion passes: Yes

12. Information – Security Update

- Oakland Police Department has been very helpful the past month
- Hired extra security guard last weekend and this coming weekend; primary concern is protesting and what would come from protests, no current threats detected
- OPD has been present for preschool pick up and drop off time
- Preschool families - 87 students, but 41 attended on Friday October 13
- Sinai has strong security policies and procedures that are constantly being reviewed and evaluated

13. Information – High Holy Days Review

- Looking to possibly do all services next year in the Sanctuary

14. Information- Annual Meeting

- Sunday, November 5
- We will have a survey to get feedback from attendees

15. Information- Review of URJ Board Member Goals

- In January 2023 we thought about the meaning of board service and set goals for this year
- The goals were revisited to see what we have accomplished and how things have changed
- Each board member looked at their goal and reflected on whether or not they met their intention yet

16. Information – Important Dates – Mark your Calendars!

- Annual Meeting – Sunday, November 5
- New Board Member Orientation- Tuesday, November 14
- Board Workshop- Sunday, January 21

Meeting Adjourned 8:05

Executive Session

The Board met in Executive Session