

# **Minutes of Young Israel of North Netanya AGM held on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2020 on Zoom**

## **Attendance**

Attendance as per register attached to the AGM minutes held on file.

Apologies from Aubrey Blitz and Vivienne Oster

## **Welcome**

Given by the Chairman, Graham Nussbaum

## **D'var Torah**

Rabbi Boudilovsky gave a D'var Torah and thanked the current Executive and Board and encouraged the incoming Executive and Board.

## **Minutes of last year's AGM**

Ivor Lewis proposed and Janet Elkoubi seconded last year's AGM minutes.

## **Matters arising from those Minutes**

There were no matters arising.

## **Chairman's Report**

Given by Graham Nussbaum.

In accordance with the requirements of the Amutot law, I present my Annual Report for 2020.

The question is, has YINN fulfilled its purpose and achieved its objectives as required by the constitution during the last 18 months? Let's see what the constitution requires and analyse our compliance.

### **1a We have to maintain and operate a Synagogue.**

1a The Building is being maintained very conscientiously. Every repair includes an upgrade. We feel that this it is the best way to modernise and thereby improve, in an affordable but effective way.

We have recently refurbished the foyer of the Shul and all the toilets. Money was not thrown at this project. Each aspect was analysed and what needed to be replaced was, and what was ok was left. The result was a significant upgrade at low cost. The cost of the refurbishments was covered by donations

**1b Our religious services and customs are to be in accordance with the Orthodox Jewish traditions as specified in the Shulchan Aruch and as interpreted by the Chief Rabbinate of Israel.**

1b Rabbi Boudilovsky is the custodian of our religious wellbeing and it is in the safest hands possible. The Rabbi's Divrei Torah are meaningful and inspiring because they are pertinent and original. The Rabbi's knowledge of halacha is extensive, which ensures we stay on the straight and narrow and it also enabled us to cope with so many halachic considerations when planning this year's services for the Yomim Noraim, Succot and Simchat Torah.

**2 We have to provide proper facilities for the dissemination of knowledge of the Jewish faith, history, literature and Orthodox Jewish life and its ideals.**

A large part of the last 18 months has been lived under the cloud of the Coronavirus. An amazing group of people using the medium of Zoom have certainly disseminated knowledge of the Jewish faith, history, literature and Orthodox Jewish life and its ideals as well as an amazing variety of superb entertainment. What's more, Zoom provides, along with regular Whatsapp and email communications, the glue to keep the Community together.

The tremendous new website is the heart beat of the Community the "go to" place for information.

**3a We have to conduct educational, charitable and social activities.**

3a We certainly provide high quality virtual educational and social activities and we are a very charitable Community. All charitable donations are distributed by the Charity Committee in a professional, efficient and compassionate way.

**3b We have to prepare and encourage the younger generation to take part in and lead services.**

3b This a difficult one, but I suppose those in their 80s consider those in their 60s the younger generation and they are encouraged to take part in and lead services. So we seem to be ok. Actually we do have a few real youngsters who were encouraged to learn Anim Zemirot and became a source of great pride for the Community. We also love sharing the nachat when visiting grandchildren sing Anim Zemirot.

**4 We have to commemorate Yom Hashoa, Yom Hazikaron, Yom Ha'atzmaut and Yom Yerushalayim.**

Meaningful services, albeit truncated, were held on Zoom to mark these special days. Entertainment was provided for our Community on Yom Ha'atzmaut, when we were enthralled by a magician and on Yom Yerushalayim when we were taken on an amazing and interesting virtual tour of Har Habayit.

**5 We have to promote the welfare of the members of the congregation.**

When members are in hospital they are visited, when permissible. Contact is also maintained by phone, email and WhatsApp.

A group of volunteers who love to chat to our members, endeavour to keep in regular contact, which supplements our member's natural care and concern for each other.

We also have a group of "befrienders" who visit members, when regulations permit.

Probably the most important welfare vehicles are the virtual connections by Zoom, email, WhatsApp and the Website reaching out to our members and ensuring that the Shul remains an important part of our lives.

And finally –

## 6 We have to assist the local community in which the Congregation is located.

YINN's connection to Laniado hospital was initiated by Rabbi Morowitz. This is maintained by many of our members who serve or have served on the "Friends of Laniado Hospital" committee. Such an excellent way to assist the local community!

So there we have it, we have managed to stay compliant even in these challenging times, which is testament to the total commitment of so many people.

My feelings are beautifully articulated by Chief Rabbi Mirvis, when he said, "The functioning of the Community is reliant on every task no matter how big or small. There is no such thing as a menial task. Every single person's work is of crucial importance for the functioning of the Kehillah and that is actually what makes a Kehilla, the contribution of absolutely everybody".

Whatever your role may be, thank you very much.

These are crazy times, every Shul service is a challenge, nevertheless the services are well run and those who conduct them do so expertly. "Out of the Box" solutions have become the order of the day but they would not have succeeded without the team spirit, experience and resilience of the members of the Executive, the experience and integrity of the members of the Board and the support and understanding of you - the members.

THANK YOU ONE AND ALL

### **Report of the Charity Commission.**

Eze Silas reported on behalf of the Charity Committee.

"I am reading this report on behalf of Anthony Felix who has so ably chaired and steered the Committee in the last year, and indeed since its inception in July 2017.

It has been a busy year for the Committee. Donations received and grants distributed have been higher than in previous years. Between the last AGM on 27 May 2019 and a few days ago, 31 October 2020, donations received were 270,700 NIS of which 246,095 NIS has been distributed.

Members of the Committee meet as required and are in touch constantly between meetings to deal with the needs of the community and of charitable organisations in Israel.

This year we made a special appeal for those affected by the Coronavirus. The Congregation responded generously with 25,397 NIS of which 15,000 NIS has already been committed. Other applications are presently being considered.

The Committee observes strict confidentiality, and we involve a professional social worker to advise us when appropriate.

Our activity depends considerably on the funds donated in response to the Kol Nidre appeal. The 2019 appeal was remarkably successful due to the considerable effort put in to collect pledges. The appeal this year has so far brought in 31,592 NIS and although there have been

no pledges due to absence from Shul, the Committee will be writing to members to remind them of the appeal.

Money received at Purim and Pesach are all used to meet immediate needs as dictated by Halacha.

We hope that the Congregation will continue to generously support the work of the Committee. You can be assured that your contributions will be carefully used to bring light into the difficulties and darkness of many private homes and to worthwhile organisations.

If members know of cases of general need, and in particular relating to Covid-19, or wish to talk with members of the Committee about its work, would they please contact one of us.”

## **Treasurer’s Report and Presentation of the Annual Accounts for 2019**

Andrew Kaye gave his report

I have pleasure in presenting our 2019 Accounts for the year to 31 December and will start this report with comments additional to notes made within the accounts.

1 There was a reduction in income from the previous year, that primarily relates to lower receipts of donations, bequests, appeals and other sponsorships on which the Shul relies for part of its core income. While income from membership is only slightly lower, this includes NIS 14,000 still unpaid at current date.

2 Donations to the Shul’s Charity Fund were slightly higher this year. More than NIS 120,000 was received nearly half of which was donated in response to Kol Nidre Appeal the main source of funds to meet our distributions for personal needs in our own community and local people in need. The Purim and Pesach donations were all used to meet immediate needs, as dictated by Halacha, and a donation for NIS 10,000 was “ring fenced” for specific purposes stipulated by the donor. In the event, distributions of grants authorised by the Charity Committee consisting of Anthony Felix, Eze Silas and Rabbi Boudilovsky were made of some NIS 120,000 in support of those in need and NIS 12,960 to Laniado Hospital for a nursing scholarship that in previous years had been treated as a YINN expense.

These figures cannot be interpreted as if the year was a self-contained period since a proportion of the Kol Nidre Appeal monies, particularly those remitted through British Friends, are not received until after the year end.

3 Donations from the sale of stained-glass windows in 2018 were not replicated in 2019 although further donations from window sales in 2020 could produce, net of costs, some NIS 32,000 of which NIS 22,000 has already been received.

4 Participants of 2 Eilat trips that took place in 2019 donated NIS 28,337 to Charitable causes including NIS 9,337 to YINN Shul. Regrettably there will be no 2020 trip; this is currently deferred to February 2021.

5 Repairs and maintenance in 2019 included unavoidable expenditure on electrics, that included noticeable improvements to lighting in Shul and Goddard Hall, as well also to air-conditioning. During 2020 urgently needed

refurbishment and redecoration works being undertaken to the foyer and all toilets has largely been covered by specific donations.

6 Magazine production costs now include an external designer for work previously undertaken by Anthony Felix without charge.

7 Our 2019 accounts cannot really form any basis for decisions into 2020 and beyond as the Shul and community have since mid-March been operating under Covid-19 restrictions. This has resulted in cessation of income from community and Shul events with their associated costs as well also hire of Shul facilities. For these reasons I cannot quantify any need to increase 2021 membership fees that will remain unchanged, although it is likely fees payable in UK may be increased by £25 to reflect changes in FX rates and increased costs of transmission from UK.

8 The Shul administration office was closed at the end of March, since which date callers to the Shul office telephone and visitors to office e-mail are directed to contact those who will be specifically able to assist with their enquiries.

9 Finally, we are currently investigating the possibility of members accessing their personal details and account with the Shul through our new website as well also their ability to securely make payments and donations by credit card and PayPal.

### **Report of the Audit Committee**

David Gillis gave the following report:

“We have reviewed the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2019 and the notes and treasurers report supporting the accounts. We have made inquiries with the treasurer as we deemed appropriate including internal controls to safeguard the assets of the shul and to ensure income and expenditure are appropriate and properly overseen by the Executive. We have no reason to doubt that the financial statements do not show a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the shul at 31 December 2019”.

### **Report of the Senior Gabbai**

David Feiler gave the following report:

“I started in my role May 2019 after last year’s AGM. I took over from Mike Kay who had served in this position for over 10 years. Since Mike moved away from the area I did not have an opportunity to transition with him but my good friend Hilton Share was able to fulfil that role so I believe together we made a smooth transition.

Like everything else we are discussing here today there is a period of normalcy prior to Purim 2020 (BC, Before Corona) and then AC period (After Corona). In the BC period the role of Gabbai that I aimed to fulfil was basically the standard Gabbai activity of keeping track of members’ Yahrzeits in order to give the men aliyot, arranging for Baalei Tefilla, Baalei Kria and Haftarah readers and scheduling members and, occasionally guests, to speak at the weekly Seuda Shlishit. With a large membership such as ours there are always numerous family Yahrzeits each week which means that aliyot not associated with a *chiuv* are few and far between. However, we initiated a renewed effort to make sure all men receive an aliya at least once every six months, by maintaining a detailed record of aliyot so as to make sure that no-one was left out.

The *Yamim Noraim* last year (2019) were celebrated successfully. We made great efforts to ensure that every man received a *kibud* of one sort or another. A lot of work goes into

planning the honours including a review of who received honours every year back to 2013, again all this in an effort to implement an equitable distribution. The Gabbai's job is not just implementing the technical aspects of shul service management; it also demands consideration of individual members' feelings and expectations. We all have an emotional tie to our shul and, as with the human body, if one limb hurts the whole body suffers. Asher, Hilton and I worked closely with Barry and Ruth Lyons who allocated the seat assignments and therefore they were the source of the attendance lists at each tefilla.

With the advent of Covid-19 our lives changed completely. Around Purim time you will recall we maintained services in shul on a restricted attendance basis, we stopped shaking hands and hugging, we discontinued the Kiddushim and seudot shlishiot. The social aspects of shul life came crashing to a halt. It all seems so long ago. Then for a few weeks we continued tefillot with 50, then 19 then upstairs and downstairs, outside the building etc. Every time the regulations changed we had to comply and, truth be told, we complied extremely strictly. From the Gabbai's perspective that meant arranging multiple services in parallel, multiple baalei kria etc. Eli Berlin and Ronnie Lawrence deserve our thanks for being willing to lein twice every Shabbat that we needed them. For a while you will recall we had no organized services and spent Shabbat at home. Then we set up a weekday Shacharit on Zoom which about 15 men attended regularly and at which Rabbi David Woolf gave a brief Dvar Halacha. This was not a minyan in the halachic sense but it afforded an opportunity for us to daven together and get the day off to a positive start as we would do in normal times.

Now, we again are permitted reduced scale tefillot which need to be organized and planned in advance. You have all seen the weekly surveys we send out designed to facilitate assigning people to their preferred minyanim. Everything now is Zoom-based; the Seuda Shlishit has been replaced by the Zoom Melave Malka where we invite various speakers to address the community. Without the side benefits of food and drink we manage to hold the attention of some 40 people each Motzei Shabbat. If anyone has suggestions for additional speakers, please contact me afterwards. As the Rabbi said on a previous occasion, Zoom is the glue that now binds us together whether it be shiurim, Melave Malkas, Monday Club or Chazanut and Chassidic music programs which Rabbi Ed Feigelman and I organize periodically.

We should also mention the role that WhatsApp now plays in maintaining contact between the shul and our members as well as between members themselves. Rowena of course is the Queen of Chatty Corner. You will recall that we used to make robo phone calls to inform members about *levayas*. We then replaced that system with WhatsApp intending to use it sparingly for urgent communication needs. Now, in our semi-lockdown situation, WhatsApp is the second component of glue binding us together. Information overload is welcomed by the vast majority of members.

The *Yamin Noraim* this year were a special challenge but you all know how that worked out. Graham and I had many meetings with the Rabbi to design a workable plan compliant with Halachic time constraints, yet also reasonably convenient for our membership. We held up to five services each day in multiple locations, indoors and outdoors and at highly unconventional times. I thank the deputized gabbaim, Tony Plaskow, Neville Gatoff, Alan Gold, David Gillis, Yitzchak Bakst and Andy Kormornick for rising to the challenge of managing these minyanim. Hilton was in charge of allocating people to places with the aim, as much as possible, of satisfying each member's first choice of locale. We almost managed to run everything using members only except for Rosh Hashanah where we needed some outside help from a chazan and a baal tokea. Thanks to coordination by Tony Plaskow we blew shofar for all our home-bound members. Thanks also to Ian Marks and Alex Stuart for handling all the physical aspects of these ad-hoc services: chairs, tables, mechitzot, lighting, water bottles and even port-o-toilets. The feedback we received from the membership was

extremely positive which leads us to at least consider that in future years we might be better off davening the Yamim Noraim in shul using the skill set of our own members in place of hiring an outside chazan.

For the foreseeable future we will continue to run multiple weekday and Shabbat services where permitted. We see overall the shul, its Executive, Board and membership have risen to the occasion to collectively share in the burden and the resulting rewards of running a shul in an extremely difficult environment. One of the side benefits of our situation is increased democratization in the sense that members who had previously tended to be more passive have now had an opportunity to take a leadership role in one way or another.

One other change that will become permanent is the way we remind members about their upcoming family yahrzeits. The new Website that Alex runs will eventually take over this responsibility by sending out e-mail notices in place of the hand-delivered paper notifications we used to use. We are heading as much as possible toward the paperless office model. In the interim I e-mail these notices monthly to the members around the middle of the preceding Hebrew month. Those who do not have e-mail are notified verbally by Eze as a Chevra Kadisha task.

In conclusion I want to thank the other gabbaim, Hilton and Asher for their support as well as Michael Plaskow who, for the early part of the year, was able to contribute also in his own unique way. I welcome Andy as he takes over some of Hilton's responsibilities. With a gabbai team consisting of an active solicitor, a retired hotel owner/manager and a retired electric utility business analyst what can possibly go wrong?!"

David Feiler informed the meeting that both Michael Plaskow and Hilton Share had retired as Gabbais. Andy Kormornick had joined as Gabbai. Comments were made after his report by Janet Elkoubi and Hazel Broch: they both congratulated David for all he has done for the community especially the support he has given to everyone during the Corona period.

## **Report of the Irgun Nashim**

Joanna Rosenberg gave the following report.

"Rabbi Boudilovsky, ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the support that I have received over the past year and a half. It had been busy with functions until the Corona crisis put a stop to everything.

The new function that the Irgun Nashim were involved with was the Melava Malka at Chanucah and we organised the food which was very well received and Holy Bagel did themselves proud.

It would be remiss of me not to thank the Ladies of the kiddush teams and the other ladies for their hard work when required for functions. All the food left over from the Kiddush, seudah shelishit and functions goes to where it is needed, and people are very thankful.

Notices for functions are arranged by Ruth and Barry Lyons who are always dependable and fulfil their duty with a full heart and we thank them. We are delighted to say that Ruth has, thank G-d, made a wonderful recovery from major surgery and we wish her well.

David Glass, my thanks for making certain that the Irgun Nashim functions were always put on the website and also to Alan Gold for printing the Irgun Nashim report in the wonderful magazine.

My thanks to Graham Nussbaum for welcoming me to the Board meeting and giving me the opportunity of joining in all the discussions of the board.

Lastly to all the Ladies, please do not forget that you are automatically a member of the Irgun Nashim and I hope that you will continue to work for our community. Please keep well and take care”

Joanna was thanked by Graham for all her hard work.

### **Election of Auditors**

The Shul Auditors are Zeev Kaufman CPA.

It was proposed by Hilton Share and seconded by Tony Plaskow that they continue.

The meeting agreed.

### **Executive and Board of Management**

The election was not contested and as such the following have been elected:

#### Executive

- Chairman – Graham Nussbaum
- Vice Chairman – Alex Stuart
- Treasurer – Andrew Kaye
- Secretary – Vivienne Simenoff
- Senior Gabbai – David Feiler

#### Board Members:

- Gerald Barnett
- Janet Elkoubi
- Alan Gold
- Sharon Carr
- Ivor Lewis
- Ian Marks
- Tony Plaskow
- Hilton Share
- Eze Silas
- Paulette Woolf

Three members on last year’s Board have retired - Hazel Broch, Anthony Felix and Elkan Levy. They were all thanked for their outstanding work while on the Board.

David Gillis and Neville Gatoff. were appointed to the Audit Committee.

## **AOB**

Leonard Klahr said that one of the benefits of using Zoom for the AGM is that members who are abroad can link in to this and indeed other shul meetings, shiurim and programmes. He was very appreciative.

Sender Lees commented on the efficient and professional way the Shul has been run over the past year. He felt that no other Shull has provided the kind of service that we have had from our Executive.

Hazel was concerned that the Charity Committee has recently been an all-male committee and she feels that one or two women should be on this committee. Anthony has recently retired from it and she proposed that the committee re-think its make up to include women. She proposed a committee of two men, two women and the Rabbi. Graham said that it will be discussed at the next Board of Management meeting.

Mervyn Leviton thanked Alan Gold, who has been running the Virtual Monday Club since Covid restrictions began. It is something we all look forward to every week.

David Feiler thanked Sender Lees for his help, in a very practical way, when we had to organise services with limited numbers in Shul. Sender also sends Refua Shlaima emails to members when they are in hospital.

Alan Gold proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman who was a pleasure and an inspiration to work with.

The meeting closed at 8.55pm.