

178th ANNUAL CONGREGATION MEETING Thursday, June 25, 2020

The meeting began at 7:00PM via Zoom.

Nancy Solomon (NS) welcomed the congregation and made her opening remarks.

NS asked Rabbi Greg Weitzman to give the Invocation. Following the Invocation, NS introduced Rob Steinman (RS).

RS asked for a motion to waive the reading and approval of the minutes from last year's Annual Meeting. The motion was made and seconded. He asked if there were any objections to note them in the chat function; seeing none, the motion was approved.

RS gave the President's report which is attached to these minutes. RS then presented the Gemilut Chasidim awards to the following recipients:

Refugee Resettlement Taskforce

Candice Braun
Maxine Borowitz
Robyn Epstein
Liz Lasdon
Betty Rauch
Lisa Timmel

For leading a special support group: *Pregnant in the Time of Covid*

Isabel Blumberg

Madrichim

Alexa Fener, Josh Stern, Sydney Shankman, Veronique Mintz, Sadie Katzenstein

RS asked Stacy Kanter to present the Budget Report and the CRS Budget for 2020-21. The complete report is appended to these minutes.

The overall revenue for CRS (including the Synagogue as submitted by the Synagogue Budget Committee and approved by the Synagogue Board of Trustees; and the Rodeph Sholom School as submitted by the Rodeph Sholom School Finance Committee and approved by the Rodeph Sholom School Board of Directors) for the coming year amounts to \$33,327,365. Projected expenses are \$32,952,365, which includes a contingency of \$798,241. This results in a surplus of \$375,000, all of which is earmarked for Capital Expenditures.

RS asked for a motion to approve the FY 2020-21 CRS budget. A motion was made and seconded. RS asked if there were any objections, to note them in the chat function. Seeing none, the budget was approved.

Peter Ehrenberg (PE) presented the amendments to the bylaws, included within amended and restated bylaws presented to the Congregation. RS asked for a motion to approve the amended and restated bylaws. A motion was made and seconded. RS asked if there were any objections, to note them in the chat function. Seeing none, the amended bylaws were approved. A copy of the amended and restated by-laws is appended to these minutes.

RS asked Nancy Solomon to conduct the elections of the CRS Officers and Trustees.

The following Officers are to serve for a one-year term ending in 2021:

Peter Ehrenberg, President
Judy Gallent – Assistant Treasurer
Stacy Kanter - Treasurer
Andrea Kretchmer – Vice President
Cara Lown – Vice President
David Markus – Vice President
Denise Sobel – Vice President
Martin Flumenbaum – Co-Chair of the CRS Board
Rob Steinman – Co-Chair of the CRS Board

NS: The following incumbent trustees are to be re-elected to serve for a three-year term ending in 2023.

Eric Berman
Eileen Kleiman
Jeff Ravetz
Beth Rubin

NS asked if there were any objections to the election of these congregants as Officers and Trustees to note them in the chat function. Seeing none, she declared these approved.

The RSS Board Chair representative to be elected to the CRS Board of Trustees for a one-year term, commencing July 1, 2021 is Eric Mogelof

NS: The new trustees to serve for a three-year term ending in 2023 are:

Brian Perman
Suzanne Waltman.

NS asked David Markus to introduce Brian Perman.
She then asked Judy Gallent to introduce Suzanne Waltman.

NS asked if there were any objections, to note them in the chat function. Seeing none, these Trustees were approved

NS invited the new trustees to turn on their cameras and asked Rabbi Levine and Cantor Garfein to give them their blessing.

NS then asked Peter Ehrenberg, as the new President, to say a few words.

PE asked Rabbi Robert N. Levine (RNL) and Cantor Rebecca Garfein (RG) to conduct the Memorial to the Departed.

RNL announced the names of the CRS members who died from May 21, 2019 to June 25, 2020.

Linda Lipay
William Paulson
Stephanie Abramson
Paul Kronish
Lorraine Laighold
Werner (Chuck) Weiss
Stephen Swid
Janet Neuberger
Jerry Fishman
David Fleischer
Monica Kaiser
Jackie Greenstein
Robert Lewy
Phyllis Farley
Arlene Kirsh
Jennifer Friedman
Judith Stecher
Doris Elfman
Gil Kohane
Roberta Gayster
Albert Lasher
Cantor Ephraim Biran
Janet Fenton
Jackie Rogers

PE asked if anyone had any special matters to bring up. There being none, he called for a motion by a Member-at-Large (Betty Rauch) to confirm and ratify the acts and proceedings of the Board of Trustees for the past year. PE asked for a second to the motion, and asked if there was any opposition. Hearing none, PE declared the motion passed.

RS asked Rabbi Spratt and Rabbi Karol to give the benediction.

PE adjourned the meeting.

REPORT OF THE FISCAL 2021 BUDGET

Good evening and thank you Rob. I am pleased to present a brief overview of the Congregation's budget for the 2021 fiscal year which runs from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. Our consolidated operating and capital budget includes all of the activities of the Synagogue, including Union Field Cemetery and the Religious School. It does not include the operations of the Rodeph Sholom School, which, consistent with our governance structure is established by the School's Board of Directors. If you have questions during my report, please raise them using the chat function. We will monitor them and try to address them at the end.

I am very grateful for our professional staff, led by Executive Director, Barbara Zakin, Chief Financial Officer, Marc Fried and Director of Finance and Accounting, Allison Ball, who each devoted countless hours during the last few months to our budget process and on our financial stability and operations. In mid-March, just weeks before they were scheduled to share a proposed balanced budget for fiscal 2021 with the Budget Committee, the entire process, and indeed our lives, were derailed by the Coronavirus global pandemic. We postponed this annual meeting and delayed our scheduled Budget Committee meetings. There has been nothing typical about our budget process this year. With guidance from the Budget Committee, Barbara went back to our clergy and senior staff and all sharpened pencils and tightened belts. Marc and Allison ran model after model with different assumptions for the financial effects of the pandemic and actions we could take to reduce expenses in order to fill the expanding hole in our budget. It was important to us to stay true to our values – we are a community of people and we did not want to, and have not, laid off or furloughed anyone. Everyone involved in the process has ensured that our budget reflects the values and priorities of the Congregation even in light of the significant uncertainty created by the pandemic. I want to thank the members of the Budget Committee for their wisdom and thoughtful contributions throughout this challenging process.

Despite the pandemic and reduced revenue as a result, for our 2020 fiscal year, which ends on June 30, 2020, we are projecting to break even, excluding a surplus at the Cemetery as a result of higher grave sales and burials. The generosity of our congregants, on which we rely heavily, as well as conservative budgeting, have enabled us to achieve these results with reduced draws from the Foundation Fund and our Operating and Capital Reserve Funds (3.2% instead of 5.0%) and funding the FY20 capital budget from our operations instead of the Capital Reserve Fund.

Looking ahead, our fiscal 2021 budget continues to reflect our values and focus on our priorities. The most significant component of our revenue is our dues. However, even with rising expenses, our Budget Committee and our Board of Trustees felt strongly that, with the physical, emotional and financial pain that many in our community and our world are facing, we could not and would not increase our dues or religious school tuition this year. We applied for and obtained a loan for the combined organization (Synagogue, School and Cemetery), from the Paycheck Protection Program, which both the Synagogue Board of Trustees and the School Board of Directors determined was necessary for our financial stability and which has enabled us to avoid layoffs and furloughs and present a balanced budget for fiscal 2021. We have also relied on the strong commitment of our congregants and sacrifices by our clergy and staff to present a budget that allows us to continue to promote connection and community, deliver meaningful worship and learning opportunities and focus on social action and social justice.

The budget comprises approximately \$10.4 million of revenues and approximately \$10.4 million of operating expenditures. The budget is net of the allocation of shared expenses with the Rodeph Sholom School. Our budget also includes a 3.5% expense contingency (up from our typical 1%), because of the uncertainty we face. Our budget assumes that we will draw 5% from the Foundation Fund and our Operating and Capital Reserve Funds to support our operations.

While the impact of the pandemic on membership, enrollment and philanthropy is unpredictable at this time, in addition to freezing membership dues and religious school tuition at 2020 levels, the fiscal 2021 budget assumes an 18% decline in all major revenue streams (dues, tuition and the YKA), but we are relying on the continued commitment and generosity of our congregants to at least meet that assumption. On the expense side, our largest expense category continues to be personnel expenses which represent approximately 73% of total expenses. To offset the anticipated revenue decreases, we have had to freeze salaries at fiscal 2020 levels, and we have also suspended our contributions to our staff and clergy pensions for fiscal 2021. This has been difficult and painful particularly in light of the extraordinary contributions by all to keep us open, engaged and connected over the last few months.

Turning to the Religious School, tuition and fees cover roughly 75% of Religious School expenses. When our Youth Programs are included, tuition and fees cover 68% of total expenses. This investment in our Religious School and our Youth Programs is in line with previous years, and enables the Congregation to continue to strengthen, and build our Religious School and Youth Program initiatives.

At Union Field Cemetery, the Congregation is the beneficiary of another record-breaking year of sales, enabling us to discontinue drawing from the Perpetual Care Fund early for the fifth straight year. The Perpetual Care Fund now sits at a level which, together with the assumptions for the Cemetery's operations, results in a budget that is projected to continue to stand on its own without support from the Synagogue and to generate a modest operating surplus which helps to balance the Synagogue's budget.

We are grateful for the dedicated and caring lay leaders and professional staff before us whose forward-looking, strategic planning has provided us with financial resources to help the Congregation fulfill its vision and weather downturns. However, future budgets, even without the risks and uncertainty created by the pandemic, will continue to be affected by increasing expenses, many of which, like health insurance, are out of our control, and in case you couldn't tell, I fear greater uncertainty and negative economic effects going forward. Our leadership will continue to address all of these challenges to maintain the fiscal soundness of the Congregation for our children and their children. L'dor V'dor.

The overall fiscal year 2021 budget for Congregation Rodeph Sholom, including the Rodeph Sholom School, is as follows: The overall revenue for CRS (including the Synagogue as submitted by the Synagogue Budget Committee and approved by the Synagogue Board of Trustees; and the Rodeph Sholom School as submitted by the Rodeph Sholom School Finance Committee and approved by the Rodeph Sholom School Board) for the coming year amounts to \$33,327,365. Projected expenses are \$32,952,365, which includes a contingency of \$798,241. This results in a surplus of \$375,000, all of which comes from the School's budget which had been adopted prior to the Coronavirus pandemic and which is earmarked for Capital Expenditures at the School.

Thank you all.