

**EMANUEL BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**9-19-23**

**In attendance:** Andrea Goldenberg, Lori Gottlieb, Lara Bomzer, Hilda Slivka, Lisa Sadinsky, Ray Weinstein, Gail Weinstein, Mark Jacobson, Joanne Pasternack, Michael Kamins, Jackie Isaacson, Meredith Smith, Gail Adler, Jeff Adler, Tammi Kraushaar, Mickey Libbin, Faith Helene, Meyer Frankel, Alan Goodman, Howard Smith, Don Miller, Rick Lasker, Emily Lebovitz-Miller, Marsha Wolfberg, Rabbi Small, Reesa Olins, Ken Simon, Rona Gollob, Mel Simon, Michalee Merritt, Tamar Margolis, Louis Blumenthal, Carolyn Topol, Rachel Arnett, Ken Malley, Ben Engel, Lisa Levy, Sheila Silverman, Deb Zuckerman, Hanna Zweibel, Marc Resnick, Kobi Benita

meeting called to order at 7:30pm

*" I thought our Rosh Hashanah services were joyous and meaningful. We had approximately 800 people on Day 1 (up from about 500 last year) and about 550 on Day 2. It was wonderful seeing long standing members return to the synagogue and to welcome the many new families who have joined over the past year and a half. Youth and family services were all well received, and I had the opportunity to witness each personally.*

*Clergy, staff, and lay leaders worked well together leading up to and during Rosh Hashanah to provide a safe experience for our members. I want to mention the Security Team led by Kobi Benita. They include Mel Simon, Ken Simon, Joel Kent, Rick Lasker, Jeff Cohen, Tamar Margolis, and Josh Cohen. We met several times, participated in training in preparation for the High Holy Days, and reviewed and developed security protocols to keep us all safe.*

*Our hard-working office staff provided a warm and helpful atmosphere in the weeks leading up to Rosh Hashanah and continued to welcome everyone at the check-in tables on Shabbat and Sunday. Wishing you all a healthy, happy, and meaningful New Year!"*

Motion to accept President's Report and Adult Ed Report from consent agenda passes unanimously.

Motion to accept minutes from 8-15-23 BOT meeting with one correction passes unanimously.

**ARTS AT THE EMANUEL** Ben Engel

Ben's fifth play: Domitilla. Performance will be Sunday, November 19, 2023, at 7pm. Ben directs his love of writing to the benefit of The Emanuel. Tickets will go on sale in early October. On Wednesday, November 8, at 7:30, Yale Professor of the History of Judaism Steven Fraade in conjunction with Emanuel's Adult Ed will give a talk about what Domitilla was really like. *Looking for the BOT to donate to this fundraiser.* Also looking for someone to operate the lighting board for rehearsals and the performance.

**EMPLOYEE RETENTION CREDIT UPDATE** Mel Simon

CohnReznick is reviewing the work done by the Accounting Doctors pro bono, thanks to Brian Newman. Dana Fried is preparing amended returns for five quarters of 2020 and 2021. It appears we will be eligible for monies from quarters one and two of 2021 using the gross receipts test. Two checks, one for \$99,038.28, and one for \$102,692.25 will be able to be deposited. The accounting doctor did NOT properly offset monies the synagogue received from the PPP Program. In addition, the IRS has placed a moratorium on *all* ERC refunds due to an influx of improper claims, in order to protect small businesses from scams. We may return some of the other checks with amended returns. We need to figure out how much is owed to the

Accounting Doctor, as they did NOT properly compile figures or follow procedures in several of the returns. Mel will update the BOT again in October.

**CEMETERY BUILDING RENOVATION** Kobi Benita and Lisa Sadinsky

A synagogue member approached Kobi about renovating and living in the apartment above the chapel on the grounds of the Emanuel Cemetery. The member anticipates spending approximately \$100,000 for the renovations, and asked for a three to five year lease. The roof is leaking, and that would be the responsibility of the synagogue to repair. The upper floor is in complete disrepair, other than the windows, which have been replaced. Any work done by the contractor would require insurance, permits, inspections, and must be done to code. Questions raised about renter's liability. What will happen during funerals? Would put in writing in the lease about honoring Jewish customs. Two uses in one structure: would this effect our tax liability, effecting our exemption? We should take care of our assets. Would this permit us in the future to offer temporary housing to a congregant in need? Is it legal to use part of the cemetery property for a rental property? We need a residential attorney to look into the matter, including the potential property tax issues. What happens if the contractor/tenant doesn't finish the project? Financial obligation to us? Should this person come to BOT meeting to answer questions in person?

**MOTION:** (Made by Ken Simon/seconded by Howard Smith) **Move forward with exploration of renovating and renting cemetery apartment, gathering answers to many open questions**

**YES 24      NO 5      ABSTENTIONS 7**  
***motion passes***

Lisa Sadinsky departs meeting

**TASK FORCE ON OUTSTANDING CEMETERY ISSUES** Tamar Margolis and Reesa Olins  
*"Before I ask Tamar to present, I would like the following to be reflected in the minutes: I want to thank Meyer Frankel for his leadership of The Emanuel Cemetery. He, along with Karen Piacenta, our Cemetery administrator, and the Cemetery committee, have raised the profile of our Cemetery. Together, they have developed processes to address and resolve concerns and to offer the highest level of customer service.*

*The motion that Tamar will be presenting does not question the excellent work that is already happening. As leaders, we need to be thorough in our policy decisions and examine how they will impact our members and community. It is within our purview and responsibility, together with and in cooperation with the Cemetery Committee, that we address some outstanding issues."*  
The BOT had previously passed increases to plot/internment costs which were to take effect October 1. Those increases have been put on hold due to some outstanding issues, including the updating of cemetery policies and procedures and conveyance documents. The Executive Committee has recommended a task force made of up *Tamar Margolis (VP of Ritual Affairs), Finance, Cemetery, Membership, Ritual, and Rabbi Small* to look at all issues involving a price increase.

**MOTION:** (Made by Tamar Margolis/seconded by Ken Simon) **Form a task force with the members recommended by the Executive Committee to look at all outstanding cemetery issues**

**YES 32      NO 2      ABSTENTIONS 2**  
***motion passes***

**TREASURER'S REPORT** Michael Kamins

Looking at Cemetery profit and loss statement. \$74,609 is paid annually to US Cemetery. Perpetual fund is used to offset operational deficit. Is the cemetery underfunded? yes Issue is tabled while Treasurer Michael Kamins and Cemetery Chair Meyer Frankel examine numbers and questions. In addition, the cemetery needs new financial advisors, as RBC no longer wants to do the job.

**MOTION:** (Made by Jeff Adler/seconded by Michalee Merritt) **Proceed with recommendation of Cemetery Committee to hire Stifel as financial advisor**

**YES 30      NO 0      ABSTENTIONS 2**  
*motion passes*

**TORAH RENEWAL PROJECT** Tamar Margolis

Roll out event October 7, Simchat Torah. One scroll will be rolled out from the bimah to the stage in Silverman. There will be opportunities for group aliyot at 10-12 tables. There will be an acappella group performing during the festivities as well as at the cafe afterwards. There will be a family program with the sofer. There will be an opportunity for individuals to sit with the sofer while he transcribes. The fundraising goal is \$175,000, with monies raised going to offset expenses incurred from the events as well as fundraising. The budget for the kickoff event is \$10,700.

**MOTION:** (Made by Tamar Margolis/seconded by Don Miller) **Accept budget of \$10,700 to cover expenses of roll out event**

**YES 29      NO 1      ABSTENTIONS 2**  
*motion passes*

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY TRAINING** Lou Blumenfeld

The purpose of this Conflicts of Interest Policy ("Policy") is to protect the interests of the Emanuel Synagogue (the "Synagogue") when considering a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the financial or other personal interests of a Trustee, other Synagogue decision-maker or Employee. These situations may, but do not necessarily, give rise to a conflict of interest for the Synagogue, Trustee, Synagogue decision-maker and/or Employee. Therefore, this policy requires that Trustees, Synagogue decision-makers and Employees disclose to the Board of Trustees (the "Board") that they have actual or potential financial or other personal interests and either recuse themselves from participating in discussions and decisions regarding transactions or arrangements when an actual or potential conflict of interest may exist or submit the identified conflict of interest to the Board of Trustees to determine the existence of an actual conflict. Compliance with this Policy will allow the Board to determine if an actual conflict of interest exists and, if so, take appropriate steps to assure that the Synagogue is acting in a fair and transparent manner. This Policy is intended to supplement but not replace any Connecticut and federal laws governing conflicts of interest applicable to the Synagogue. This Policy is also intended to ensure that the Synagogue continues to operate in accordance with its tax-exempt status.

Lou went over various provisions of the policy, and considered those in attendance "trained". Members were asked to sign an annual statement form and hand it in to the Secretaries.  
*The message: when in doubt, report it!!*

**LEON CHAMEIDES SPONSORSHIP** Reesa Olins

Dr. Chameides is being inducted into the Immigrant Hall of Fame. The Emanuel is sponsoring the induction at a \$1500 level, with \$750 to come from Rabbi Small's discretionary fund, \$250 from the Reserve Contingency Fund, and \$500 from community donations.

**MOTION:** (made by Hilda Slivka/seconded by Ken Simon) **Take \$250 from the reserve contingency fund and \$500 from community donations for our share of the Chameides sponsorship**  
*motion passes unanimously*

**SELICHOT 2022 BOOKKEEPING** Reesa Olins

For Amy Dembo to close the books, monies spent for Selichot last year must be allocated from appropriate funds.

**MOTION:** (Made by Hilda Slivka/seconded by Ray Weinstein) **Take \$500 from the Paul and Libby Wolfberg Fund and \$3178.56 from the Emanuel Music Fund to cover expenses for Selichot 2022**  
*motion passes unanimously*

**MEMBERSHIP and LIFE CYCLE** Michalee Merritt

There are now 17 new students in the religious school, and four more may be added. There are 18 new family units since July.

**New Members**

Rabbi Marc Rudolph and Middy Fierro

Debra Grainsky and Nico Rodriguez (grandson)

Helene & Joshua Leder, with Evan

Jennifer & Kevin Nejfelt with Sadie and Henry

Jennifer Levine & Ryan Albrycht with Hailey, Daniel and Cameron

Amy & Scott Levine, with Hannah and Brayden

Dr. Gabriela Spielberg with Lea

Jaime Smolin with Benjamin and Elizabeth

Henry Zachs

Judith Zachs

Barbara Douglas

**motion to accept new members** (motion made by Rick Lasker/seconded by Jeff Adler)  
*passes unanimously*

**Mazal tov**

**Rabbi David Small and Debbie Chameides** on the birth of their grandson, Nadav Shaked, son of **Gabrielle Salomon-Small and Eyal Salomon**. Mazal tov also to great-grandparents **Dr. Leon and Jean Chameides**.

**Melissa and Guy Graff** on the marriage of their daughter, Danielle Graff to Adam Brody

**Naomi and Joel Kleinman** on the birth of their granddaughter, Meredith Frances Kleinman, daughter of Aaron & Elena Kleinman

**Resignations from August - still in discussions**

Sandy & Steve Brown

Joel Gothold

Marlane/Louis Fleisher

Lea Chayes

Aaron & Amanda Katzman

**New resignations: tabled (Kobi and Rabbi will contact)**

Donna and Harold Cohen

Jeremy and Audrey Sobel-Pressman

Lewis and Shirley Stengel

Gary and Susan Toubman

**Nehamas**

*El Malei Rachamim:* God, full of compassion, grant perfect peace in the shelter of your Divine Presence to the souls of our dear departed Emanuel Family members who have gone to their Eternal Home during the past month:

**Stewart Kleinman**—Emanuel Past President 1983-85

Master of Mercy, gather their souls into the bond of eternal life. We cherish their memories and appreciate the years we shared together with them in our beloved Emanuel Synagogue. We will remember them, their good deeds and good ways. Grant them eternal rest in Your Presence. Bring comfort to their mourners. May they rest in peace and may their memory be a blessing.

And let us say, Amen.

**SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER/JCF GRANT** Michalee Merritt

We have the opportunity to receive a grant of \$10,000 for 2023-24 from the Jewish Community Foundation for the position of a social media manager. However, the synagogue must commit to funding the position for additional years in order to be given the grant. The position would entail 4 hrs/wk, to give us a continuous presence on Facebook, Instagram, and the like, creating content, advertising our events, etc. A job description is being put together, and at least one hour/wk would be spent “at” the weekly staff meeting, so the person would be informed of all upcoming events.

**MOTION:** (Made by Michalee Merritt/seconded by Ken Simon) **Make the new social manager position 4 hr./wk a permanent position for a minimum of two years.**

YES 28

NO 0

ABSTENTIONS 3

*motion passes*

**EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK** Jeff Adler

New handbook will be e mailed to BOT members for review. It will be discussed and voted on at the October BOT meeting.

good and welfare

*please turn in executed conflict of interest documents*

meeting adjourned at 9:38pm