

Jewish Reconstructionist Congregation  
Annual Congregational Meeting  
May 2, 2021  
Online via zoom

**Religious School Siyyum**

The Religious School Siyyum, which ritually marks the closure of the school year, began at 10:02am. There were 98 participants via Zoom.

Cantor Howard Friedland led the Shehecheyanu blessing.

Rabbi David Eber thanked the Religious School teachers, madrichim, and families for their participation and efforts over the past, challenging year. A video review of the year featuring Rabbi David and each of the teachers was shared.

The Junior Choir shared a thrilling theatrical presentation and musical performance entitled ATF – Afikomen Task Force.

Rabbi Weiss ended the Siyyum with special thanks to Rabbi David, the entire clergy team, all the teachers and all the madrichim. It was announced that Rabbi David has renewed his contract with JRC for another 3 years. Rabbi David was thanked for his flexibility, perseverance, and creativity during the past year and into the future.

**I. Welcome and Call to Order – Elliot Frolichstein-Appel, President:**

Elliot called the Congregational Meeting to order at 10:31 am. He reviewed the meeting’s agenda.

RRW offered blessings, words of wisdom and thanks. Thanks to all board members, and noted those ending their time on the board. Special thanks to Elliot Frolichstein-Appel who ends his two-year term as President this June. Many thanks to the entire JRC staff, especially Micky Baer who is completing her first year as Executive Director.

**II. Nominating Committee – Robin Trilling and Lou Weiss:**

Robin spoke on behalf of the Nominating Committee members: Co-chairs Robin Trilling and Lou Weiss, Kyra Auslander, Debi Lewis, Stan Cohn, Becca Sperling, Maria Tolpin and Michael Grossman

Robin thanked departing Board members for their years of service to JRC's Board (with the beginning year of their Board service noted).

- Debi Lewis (Member at Large, 2017)
- Carrie Elsberg (Member at Large, 2019)
- Michael Grossman (Secretary, 2020)
- Max Straus (Youth Member, 2020)

Lou introduced the proposed slate:

Returning Board members continuing their terms:

- President: Emily Harris (2021-2023)
- Immediate Past President: Elliot Frolichstein-Appel (2021-2023)
- VP Education: Robert Israelite (2019-2022)
- VP of Strategic Planning: Becca Sperling (2020-2023)
- VP of Administration: David Tabak (2020-2023)
- VP Financial Development: David Block (2019-2022)
- VP Membership: Hannah Shearn (2019-2022)
- VP Ritual Practices: Marla Baker (2019-2022)
- Treasurer: Jonathan Markowitz (2019-2022)
- Member at Large: Lisa Servedio (2020-2022)
- Member at Large: Kyra Auslander (2020-2022)
- Member at Large: Carolyn Shapiro (2020-2022)

New Board terms:

- VP of Tikkun Olam: Anne Wildman (2021-2024)
- Secretary: Robin Byster (2021-2023)
- Member at Large: Nick Heinzmann (2021-2023)
- Member at Large: Elias Murciano (2021-2023)
- Member at Large: Irv Miller (2021-2023)
- Youth Member: Katie Segall (2021-2022)

Michael Grossman explained the remote voting procedure on Zoom. At the time of the vote, 83 Zoom screens were participating. Since more than one voting member could be present on a single Zoom screen, participants were instructed to use the Zoom feedback icons to vote as follows: "yes" = 1 vote in favor, "no" = 1 vote opposed, "slow down" = 2 votes in favor, "speed up" = 2 votes opposed, "thumbs up" = 1 vote abstaining, "heart" = 2 votes abstaining.

MOTION: Approve the slate of new Board terms as nominated.

**Motion by Robin Trilling, Second by Lou Weiss**

VOTE: 66 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions. APPROVED.

### **III. Review of Past Year and Looking Ahead – Elliot Frolichstein-Appel:**

Elliot reviewed of the past year, focusing on JRC’s financial status. JRC is going to be fine this next year and the year after that. But the challenge is to make sure fellow JRC members are OK, too. Thanks for all those who have been Zoom Gabbai, but we need more people to fill this role. JRC is hoping to keep its rituals online, even when we gather in person. The Zoom Gabbai role is here to stay. Elliot highlighted the design thinking that was applied to the Chidush program. Shifting religious school into one session came out of this process. As Emily steps into the presidency in the coming year, a fierce leader, she is stepping into JRC with strong support. JRC has strong tikkun olam involvement.

This fall, we plan on coming back into the building. Elliot urged everyone to get vaccinated.

### **IV. Budget – Micky Baer and Jonathan Markowitz:**

(JRC Annual Meeting Financial Report FY21)

Micky thanked Elliot for all his help and the welcome she’s had, over the past year, from the entire JRC community.

The PPP loan, which was received in April 2020 of \$179,715, was forgiven in December of 2020. A second PPP loan of \$179,707, was awarded in March 2021. This second PPP loan will likely be forgiven in the future. These have both been factored into the budget, though only one-half of the second PPP loan has been recognized as revenue.

There have been a number of assumptions made about next year when completing the FY22 budget. There will be a \$174,244 surplus end of FY21. There would have been a \$95,324 deficit had JRC not received the PPP loan. Although revenue was down in many categories, expenses were also down. Any surplus will be rolled into the next year and perhaps the following year.

Rachel Sherman's position will increase to staff full-time, and she will be spending additional time recruiting new members who are needed for JRC to be sustainable into the future without any additional PPP funding.

We assume religious school will be open in the fall with a hybrid model.

For budgeting purposes, we assume high holidays will not at the FUMC church. In person services and events will remain flat, in terms of revenue generating events.

Membership will likely be flat.

Early Childhood will enroll 21 children

A large, in-person gala will bring in additional funds.

Based on these assumptions JRC should have a FY22 \$53,000 surplus, thanks to the two PPP loans.

Jonathan said that the Budget Committee is aware of the long-term deficit. A Membership Task Force is being created. Thanks to the Budget Committee for a difficult budgeting year. The committee includes Elliot and Emily, Micky, Sandy, Lisa, Brian – thanks for sitting in those meetings and hammering out those numbers. And thanks to Robert Israelite for his help on the education budget. Giant hugs to members who gave generously. Congrats and thanks to Micky on the last year.

#### **V. Capital Campaign Report – Sandy Spatz, Reese Gratch:**

Reese is excited to share that over a week ago, JRC was able to amend the terms of its building loan. In 2006, the loan was \$6.8 million. Over the years, generous pledges whittled this down to \$3.3 million. Over the past week, we've been able to pay this down by \$2 million. The new loan is for \$1.3 million. We've come an incredibly long way. This refinancing results in a substantial savings of \$15,000 a month in loan payments. This became possible due to the generosity of the entire congregation. A \$1 million anonymous gift was made to the campaign, and an additional \$1.8 million was raised. The high holiday appeal raised more. And every pledge has brought us where we are. In order to retire the loan by December 2022 we only have \$350k left to raise.

Sandy shared that many, many people helped achieve this: givers, solicitors, strategic help, communications, and more. A consulting company assisted and JRC could not have done it without them. Clergy and staff have been crucial. And thanks to the donors from when the building was originally devised. Singling out Elliot as supporting behind the scenes with the bank processes. Thanks to the loan amendment, JRC is saving \$15,000 a month. Thanks to Jonathan for crunching the numbers. And thanks to Micky who jumped into JRC in the middle of a pandemic.

WE ONLY HAVE TO RAISE \$350,000! This was unimaginable a few years ago.

Rabbi Weiss jumped in and remarked that if we have been able to do this impossible thing, especially during a pandemic, what else can we do?

#### **VI. Early Childhood Center Report – Shelli Patt:**

Shelli remarked that this year began with unexpected challenges. Many families were not ready to send their kids back to in-person learning. When ECC did not open in September, Shelli and her staff re-invented ECC. Families could come play together outside in the fall – new families and existing families joined. During summer and fall, Cantor Howard and Rabbi Rachel led an online class for the youngest ECC students. ECC opened in person in January and had a class with 10 children. ECC is enrolling for summer and fall, in accordance with health regulations. Thanks to

Robert Israelite, JRC clergy, and Micky for keeping the pre-school healthy and sustainable for years to come. ECC is JRC's future.

Musical send-off from Cantor Howard.

Elliot Frolichstein-Appel adjourned the annual meeting at 11:21.