



**Jewish Federation of Ottawa
Board of Directors Meeting
Summary of Discussion as a Report to the Community
Wednesday, December 17, 2014 at 5:30 pm**

In Attendance: Stuart Ages, David Appotive, Lauren Bronstein, Jennifer Kardash, Linda Kerzner, Steven Kimmel, Mike Shahin, Jason Shinder, Hartley Stern, Neil Zaret, Lenora Zelikovitz

Staff: Bram Bregman, Shelley Crawford, Andrea Freedman (partial), Arieh Rosenblum

Observers: Rabbi Dovid Hayes, Jeffrey Miller, Lynne Oreck-Wener

Recorder: Rachel Abenhaim

I. Welcome

Steven Kimmel welcomed the board and thanked everyone for attending. He introduced Rabbi Dovid Hayes, Executive Director of Cheder Rambam day school.

II. Agency Presentation: Cheder Rambam

Rabbi Hayes thanked the board for inviting him to present and for their support of Rambam, a day school that offers Judaic learning to the Orthodox segment of the Ottawa Jewish community. His primary challenge as executive director is to ensure the school's sustainability.

In response to a board question, Rabbi Hayes explained that Rambam's location on campus offers the school a secure location and closer proximity to the Jewish community.

Rabbi Hayes emphasized that the school offers education to any willing student and will grant enrollment regardless of tuition affordability. This is because they believe that every Jewish child should be given the opportunity to receive a Jewish education.

Steven thanked Rabbi Hayes on behalf of the board for his presentation.

III. Summary of Discussions

The meeting was called to order by Steven Kimmel at 5:45 pm.

Neil Zaret **moved** to accept the summary of discussions from the Nov 25, 2014 board meeting. Jason Shinder **seconded**. **Carried.**

IV. Jewish Education

Steven Kimmel introduced the Jewish education discussion by providing a brief background to the topic. Jewish education enrollment in Ottawa is struggling. In the past, discussions took place between Rambam & Torah Academy, the two Orthodox day schools. More recently, talks have emerged around a closer relationship between Rambam and the Ottawa Jewish Community School. Steven asked that the board to discuss what, if any, role the Federation should play in these types of discussions.

A vigorous dialogue ensued. The following points were highlighted:

- All Jewish day schools struggle with finances & enrollment.
- There is a sense of donor fatigue from recurring day school “asks”.
- Should Federation be funding schools or should it be assisting families to afford a Jewish education via tuition subsidies?
- In the past, Federation’s involvement as “authoritarian” did not produce results.
- There is a belief that Federation’s role should be the “convener”.
- A shared services model that allows for economies of scale, but retains institutional autonomy should be explored.
- Should we be asking how the Federation can stop the decline of Jewish education in Ottawa instead?

It was decided that the Federation’s role should be to assemble a task force and research the best possible model to assist day schools in finding a solution for a secure future.

V. Audited Financial Statements

Shelley Crawford presented the year-end audited financial statements for the Ottawa Jewish Bulletin Publishing Co. Ltd. (Bulletin). She asked members to refer to the Executive Summary that was pre-circulated. Shelley highlighted that this is the 4th consecutive year of losses for the Bulletin. She noted that some changes have been implemented to reduce bad debt and a commissioned salesperson has been hired, but the Bulletin continues to run at a loss. She noted that the deficit and receivables of the Bulletin are being funded by advances from the Federation on the expectation that the Bulletin would return to profitability and have the ability to repay the loans. However, it now appears that this is unlikely and as such, it is recommended that Federation record the advances on its books as uncollectible. This will result in a loss on the Federation’s books of approximately \$141,600. The board agreed. It was also agreed that in the near future, we will investigate whether the Bulletin should continue to function as a corporation or if it should be treated as a department of the Federation. The benefit of it being its own corporation (reduced postage rates) is no longer an enticement.

Jason Shinder **moved** to approve the audited financial statement for the Ottawa Jewish Bulletin and approve that Federation record advances to the Bulletin on its books as uncollectable. David Appotive **seconded. Carried.**

Shelley then presented the year-end audited financial statements for the Jewish Community Campus of Ottawa Inc. (Campus). She asked the board to refer to the Executive Summary that was pre-circulated. Shelley noted that this is the first year for reporting the operations of the Kerr building (11 Nadolny Sachs Private) on the Campus statement. She noted that the audited statements differ from the monthly reports to the Board due to adding the campus share of the new telephone system of \$5,800. She noted that campus reserves at June 30th were \$1,583,000 in total: \$833,000 in cash and \$724,000 loaned to the Federation to support its past investment in Education Renewal. She noted that several board-approved projects have been undertaken since year-end including the recently approved Security upgrades. Shelley noted that a tenant in chronic arrears has now settled their account. Shelley noted that the auditors wanted clarification of the allocation of the cumulative surpluses, recommending that \$100,000 be allocated as “unrestricted net assets” (essentially for working capital) and the remainder be allocated as “restricted net assets” as the campus reserve funds. The Board agreed.

Jason Shinder **moved** to approve the audited financial statements for the Jewish Community Campus of Ottawa Inc. and the allocation recommended by the auditors. Neil Zaret **seconded. Carried.**

VI. Campaign Update

Jeffrey Miller provided the 2015 Campaign update.

- To date, Federation has raised approximately \$4.05M, a 4.7% increase from last year on a gift by gift basis.
- Approximately \$350,000 in open cards remain, although not all these funds will be realized.
- Women’s Division is up by 5.8% on a gift by gift basis.

VII. Campus Update

Neil Zaret presented the Campus update. He referred the board to the property index map pre-circulated in the board package. He explained that to move forward with any sale or activity on the Kerr land, the laneway that is currently owned by the City has to be acquired.

Jason Shinder **moved** to approve that the Campus committee start the process of acquiring the laneway, with a maximum \$10,000 in expenditures. David Appotive **seconded. Carried.**

VIII. Jewish Federations of Canada-UIA (JFC-UIA) Board Meeting Report

Andrea Freedman provided the board with two updates from the national board meetings that took place in Montreal.

- 1) JFC-UIA & the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) have finally reached a resolution to their long-standing discussion on several important issues, including funds for advocacy, educational experiences, and projects in Israel.

- 2) In October, the Federation board approved a one-time \$15,000 allocation to JFC-UIA with the stipulation that Ottawa would be represented when the national system review took place. Andrea confirmed that Linda Kerzner will participate in the review.

IX. Security Update

Stuart Ages provided a security update to the board. He explained that Campus is moving forward with the upgrades approved at the November meeting. The next phase will involve developing policy, putting protocols in place and conducting training for staff.

David Appotive **moved** to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 pm. Hartley Stern **seconded**. **Carried**.