



**Jewish Federation of Ottawa  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Summary of Discussion as a Report to the Community  
Thursday, February 5, 2015**

**In Attendance:** Stuart Ages, David Appotive, Lauren Bronstein, Linda Kerzner, Steven Kimmel, Mike Shahin, Jason Shinder, Hartley Stern, Arlene Wortsman, Neil Zaret

**Staff:** Bram Bregman, Shelley Crawford, Andrea Freedman, Leslie Kaufman, Arieh Rosenblum

**Observers:** Sharon Appotive, Jeffrey Miller, Stephen Victor (partial)

**Recorder:** Rachel Abenhaim

**I. Welcome**

Steven Kimmel called the meeting to order at 5:45 pm.

Steven welcomed the board and thanked everyone for attending. He welcomed Sharon Appotive, the 2016 Women's Campaign chair, who will be observing Federation board meetings throughout her term.

Next, Steven welcomed and introduced Mr. Stephen Victor, chair of the Ottawa Jewish Community School (OJCS) oversight committee; he joined the meeting by phone to provide an update.

**II. OJCS Update**

Steven Kimmel began the update by providing history and context to the school campaign, which began November 2012, with a goal to raise \$6M.

He explained that an oversight committee was put into place to ensure accountability. Steven highlighted some of the benchmarks met by the school and other areas of success and areas requiring improvement; however he noted that enrollment benchmarks remain an area of struggle. Last spring, OJCS struck a sustainability committee to revise the benchmarks and recruitment strategies.

Stephen Victor explained that on January 27, 2015 the OJCS sustainability committee made its presentation to the oversight committee and school campaign donors. The presentation brought to light the challenges the school faced in maintaining the high school. They expressed a need for a minimum additional \$250,000 per year to maintain the high school. Mr. Victor was a strong, personal advocate for the high school.

The board discussed the following topics at length with Mr. Victor:

- Relationship between Federation and OJCS and the board's decision to support the OJCS board's autonomy
- Concerns about efforts to improve enrollment & recruitment in the elementary school at the same time that efforts were made to have an incoming grade 9 class
- The importance of Jewish education to the community and its relationship to a thriving Jewish community in the future
- Alternate funding options for the high school, with no clear sources identified
- Funds currently available to OJCS from the School campaign

Steven Kimmel thanked Mr. Victor for his efforts.

Steven Kimmel focused the topic of discussion to the role of Federation in this matter. This discussion continued at length around the following points:

- Is there community interest in Jewish high school education? And to what extent?
  - *Since its inception, high school enrollment has been a challenge and 3-year enrollment projections reflect a decline.*
- If Federation funds the high school, what impact would it have on the allocations made to other community agencies?
  - *Out of a total \$787,339 allocated by Federation for Jewish education, OJCS receives \$554,526. It was unclear where the additional \$250,000 could come from.*
- Should Federation fund the high school to allow the currently enrolled students to graduate without changing schools?
- What is Federation's role in relationship to a funded agency?

Mike Shahin **moved** whereas the Jewish Federation of Ottawa provides an annual allocation of \$787,339 to support Jewish education, and whereas it supported a campaign to raise \$5.3M to help OJCS return to sustainability, Federation is unable to provide additional funding to the school. The Federation urges the OJCS leadership and families to do everything possible to continue to sustain and support Jewish education in Ottawa. Jason Shinder **seconded. Carried.**

### III. Audited Financial Statements

Jason Shinder explained the Finance, Audit and Administration committee had thoroughly reviewed the audited financial statements for the Federation and Vaad Ha'Kashruth. Since the board meeting had gone over the allotted time, Jason offered to take any questions. The board was satisfied with the financial reports.

Jason Shinder **moved** to approve the audited financial statements for the Jewish Federation of Ottawa and the Ottawa Vaad Ha'Kashruth for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2014. Neil Zaret **seconded. Carried.**

#### **IV. Soloway Jewish Community Center (SJCC): Financial Request**

Andrea Freedman explained how the SJCC recently learned of the loss of a significant source of revenue and has approached Federation for financial assistance to help them address the situation. Several years ago, owing to the success of the SJCC's sports dinner, their allocation was reduced. Accordingly, a precedence was set to adjust funding when an agencies' financial situation changes.

The following three requests were discussed by the Federation board:

1. Increase rent charged to the Federation
2. Additional allocation from the Federation to the SJCC "Building Envelope"
3. Re-allocation of funds to the SJCC from other agencies who now receive these revenues instead of the SJCC

The board referenced the audited financial statements, Schedule of Agencies Allocations, under local community services. Of the \$469,680 allocated to cultural and recreational related agencies, \$373,880 is given to the SJCC. The board noted that the SJCC receives the most dollars in this category. There was a strong feeling that the integrity of the grants and review process should be respected and that Federation should not play the role of "banker" and back-stop agencies facing a financial challenge. The board did express a strong desire to assist the SJCC with fundraising and membership.

It was strongly suggested that the Federation put together an audit committee to conduct a thorough review of the SJCC financials.

Stuart Ages **moved** that the SJCC request to Federation for additional funds is not viewed favourably by the board, although the board welcomes the SJCC to put forward a request for an increase in funding in the next allocation cycle. Jason Shinder **seconded. Carried.**

The board moved to an "in-camera" discussion.

The meeting was then adjourned.