



## Minutes of the Annual General Meeting The Hamilton Spectator | May 29, 2019

Present: Members of the Community.

### Welcome

Jacki Levin welcomed everyone to the 2019 HJF AGM and recognized the presence of our dear friend Linda Kislwicz, former President and CEO of UIA. All previous Federation presidents and board members were asked to stand and be recognized.

### D'var Torah

Rabbi Hillel Lavery-Yisraeli delivered the D'var Torah. He spoke about how good things will happen to us if we follow G-d's ways. He wished a hearty Mazal Tov to all the award winners for the work they do for our community.

### Ora Markstein's Sculpture Dedication

Unveiling of a special gift to our community from a tremendous local artist, Ora Markstein. The sculpture is titled "At the Gates of Sheol" depicted the period when her family was taken by the Nazis prior to being sent to Auschwitz. This gift will be displayed at J Hamilton. Ora donated the piece to thank the community for welcoming her.

### Welcoming Israel Bonds to J Hamilton

J Hamilton is the premises for four Jewish organizations, JNF, Beth Tikvah, JCC and HJF. It will soon become the home to 5 organizations as Israel Bonds will have a presence in Hamilton several times a month.

### Message from our Shlichah – Adi Biton

Through a partnership with Hamilton Jewish Federation, Canadian Zionist Federation and the World Zionist Organization, Adi Biton is in Hamilton for 2 months to help infuse Israeli culture into our community through programs and summer camp programming. Adi commented on her wonderful experience in Hamilton and the joy she is experiencing celebrating the holidays outside of Israel for the first time and still feeling so at home.

### AGM Business

Only those who have made and honored their pledge to the annual general campaign are eligible to vote.

### Motion to approve the agenda

Moved by Max Lightstone, seconded by Mike Dressler | Motion carried

### Motion to approve the minutes of the last Annual General Meeting on May 24, 2018

Moved by Stan Tick, seconded by Yves Apel | Motion carried

### Special thanks to our CEO

This meeting is an opportunity to celebrate the volunteers from all organizations in the community. We give out several awards to volunteers this evening, however Jacki gave special recognition to our CEO who has been here for almost two years and has been transforming our community. We are thanking Gustavo Rymberg for bringing a new energy to Hamilton, for his creativity, intelligence, and ability to be future focused and promoting unity. Jacki presented Gustavo with a gift to thank him and to let him know that he is loved by his new Jewish community.

### Installation of the New Board

All board members have decided to stay on except for one. Gerry Fisher is stepping down from the board and he was sincerely thanked for his work as the chair of the Advocacy and Community Engagement committee. We are the only community in North America where a previous CEO was a board member after retirement.

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New slate, Jacki as President, Howard Eisenberg – Vice-President, Mike Dressler – Treasurer, Janis Criger – Administration. Board members: Daniel Hershkowitz, Lester Krames, Larry Levin, Alice Mendelson, Arie Pekar, Josh Rauchwerger, Peter Smurlick, Sandee Smordin, Laura Wolfson.

## **Induction of the new Board**

Rabbi Green inducted the new board. He spoke about how things are not always bright and shining in leadership roles. He asked, why are these people involved, are they crazy? There are curses in this weeks' Parsha however, there are also blessings and these people are stepping forward to be change agents and we bless them for the work ahead in the next year.

## **State of our Community – Treasurer Mike Dressler**

This is an opportunity to be transparent about the funds that are coming in from our amazing donors and sponsors and how we spend it. He explained how the Hamilton Jewish Federation, the United Jewish Welfare Fund of Hamilton and the Legacy Endowment Fund were officially combined into one entity, the Hamilton Jewish Federation (HJF) as of July 1, 2017. The statements we are reviewing this evening are for the year ending June 30, 2018.

## **Highlights of the following statements were reviewed:**

Statement of Financial Position or Balance Sheet:

- Assets increase of \$27,000, total cash amount to \$642,000 to put us in a good position for the 2019 fiscal year
- Invested a portion of income into a one-year GIC and kept a specific amount liquid

Statement of Operations or Income Statement:

- Total revenue increased by \$89,000
- (7.2% increase due to campaign and program revenue, of which 2.1% is an increase in campaign revenue and the 5.1% increase in program revenue) expenses in programming jumped \$90,000, due to new staff member, marketing initiative, increased programming, concert, and part of the CEO's salary which was not previously split
- staffing costs increased due to a return to the budgeted amounts
- we have partnered with other organizations to share in staffing costs which benefits the entire community.
- endowment fund increase of 10.6% administered by the Jewish Federation of Greater Toronto. All returns are accumulated within the funds and the fund distributes 4% of its value annually. Annual administration charge is only 1% of its assets.

We want to thank our donors, sponsors, and partners for enabling the Hamilton Jewish Federation to carry out our mandate of providing funding and support to local, national, and overseas causes.

## **Motion to appoint Vine and Partners as the Auditors of the Hamilton Jewish Federation.**

Moved by Steve Arnold, seconded by Paul Roth | Motion carried

## **Motion to accept the financial statements as presented.**

Moved by Laura Wolfson, seconded by Larry Levin | Motion carried

## **Allocations Report**

Jacki Levin, chair of the committee explained how they are responsible for making recommendations to the board for the distributions of the campaign funds. The allocations committee is comprised of a small and dedicated committee made up of people who are involved in many partner organizations. For this role, what is best for the whole community is most important. Committee members include Paul Roth, Sandy Morris, Yves Apel, Jacki Levin, Peter Smurlick, Mike Dressler, Lorraine Cohen, Yuval Bavly, and Gustavo Rymberg.

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Each beneficiary organization is required to submit financial information as well as other information about the agency in their request for funding in the coming year. Allocation decisions are based on our four pillars. This year we are allocating \$1,521,016, which includes campaign and other revenue.

## Strategic Planning Report

Howard Eisenberg briefly outlined the strategic planning process, to identify the needs and future priorities of our community. He spoke about the focus groups in progress and the results so far: identifying the priorities of engaging young adults, conducting community wide events, fighting anti-Semitism, Holocaust education, Jewish education and protecting the vulnerable. More details were provided in the AGM program. The process began last fall and we are working towards the final report being available in about 6 months.

## Ratification of Board Actions

A handout of the HJF Board 2018/19 approved motions was circulated for review.

Motion to approve by Yves Apel, seconded by Bonnie Loewith | Motion carried

## Report from the CEO - State of our Community

Gustavo commenced by saying that this evening is an opportunity to thank many people and to welcome new colleagues. He introduced Alexis Wenzowski, CEO, Jewish Social Services and Renee Guder, Executive Director of Shalom Village.

He thanked Jacki Levin for all her hard work and expressed his gratitude for their great relationship and how well they learn from each other.

Gustavo thanked the staff for their help in working towards our goals and visions: Elaine, Chris, Wendy, Ron, Jonathan, Aimee, Jenn, Jackie, and our special guest Adi. He thanked the Board members, committee chairs and members, campaign cabinet and all Federation volunteers.

## Accomplishment Highlights:

Opening of J Hamilton – 4 organizations learning from each other and working together

Special thanks to Lowell and Jason for their role in the closer partnership between the JCC and Federation.

New Jewish community high school, more information coming soon.

March of the Living 2020 – more affordable program and hoping for a student and adult delegation

Thanks to Judi Caplan and her family, we are presenting the Marvin Caplan annual Jewish Book Festival here in Hamilton

5 new Lions in Hamilton, symbol of caring of the organized Jewish world and minimum of \$5000 to the annual community campaign. There was \$117,000 increase in endowment income. This year the campaign was our highest total ever.

Gustavo introduced a video, featuring some highlights of the past year.

## Book of Life Ceremony

We are excited to be having our inaugural Book of Life ceremony this evening, dedicated to the celebration of Jewish lives and values through the inspiring stories of donors who have left a legacy for the future.

Fourteen families have made a gift through a charitable fund, life insurance or bequest and have assured the future strength and vibrancy of our community and of Israel. For their forward-thinking philanthropy, these generous members of our community deserve our thanks. Their stories inspire us, they lift our spirits and they unite us with a common bond of gratitude. This evening we celebrate the stories of eleven families.

Allen and Milli Gould Family Fund  
Elaine and Cuppy Katz Endowment Fund  
Loewith Family Endowment Fund  
Susan and Paul Roth Endowment Fund  
Lillian and Marvin Goldblatt Family Endowment Fund

Lore and Erwin Jacobs Holocaust Education Fund  
Terri Lewis Lion of Judah Endowment Fund  
Morris Family Philanthropic Fund  
Marisa and Gustavo Rymberg Endowment Fund  
Allen Wynperle Endowment Fund

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## Volunteer Award Presentations

The CeCe Schreiber Award was presented to Laura Wolfson for her impact in both formal and informal Jewish education over more than two decades. Laura spearheaded several initiatives including youth scavenger hunts, escape room programs, a community mosaic project that twinned with a school in Israel, a community professionals dragon boat team, and others. Laura is currently the chair of the Grow Hamilton Initiative and she volunteers as a shiva minyan leader and she teaches workshops for children and adults.

The President's Award was presented to Cindy and Lowell Richter for their selfless volunteerism that is fundamental to the health and vibrancy of our community. Both as individuals and as a couple, they have significantly made a difference in many lives. Cindy has worked tirelessly on behalf of the Beth Jacob Synagogue and at our Jewish community's Out of the Cold program. Lowell's passion for the Jewish Community Centre and his commitment to its future success is exemplary. For their many contributions to Jewish life in the city, we are delighted to award them with the President's Award.

## Shem Tov Awards

The Shem Tov Awards were created to honour and recognize volunteers for their work in the Jewish community. Each organization presented the Shem Tov award to their recipient. The Hamilton Jewish Federation is pleased to be the vehicle for these awards.

Adas Israel Congregation – Shlomo-Eli Schweitzer  
Hamilton Hebrew Academy – Jonathan Sapir  
McMaster Hillel – Max Librach  
Jewish Genealogical Society of Hamilton – Joyce Dain  
Jewish Social Services – Barbara Abraham  
Na'amat Hamilton – Annette and John Richardson  
Shalom Village – Marilyn Foreman

Beth Jacob Synagogue – Donna Vine  
Hamilton Jewish Federation – Alice Mendelson  
Jewish Community Centre – Jason Waxman  
Jewish National Fund – Haim Goldstein  
Kehila Heschel Community Day School – Yoav Farkash  
Shaarei Beth-El Synagogue – Michael Freeman  
Temple Anshe Sholom – Haim Goldstein

## Award for Excellence in Jewish Education

Laura Waltman, a member of the education committee, presented the Harold Grinspoon Foundation Award for Excellence in Teaching to Zehava Chaimovitz.

The Hamilton Jewish Federation partnered with the Harold Grinspoon Foundation to establish and maintain a customized award program to recognize excellence in Jewish education. This award is to recognize outstanding educators who teach with distinction and model and instill Jewish values of kindness, tzedakah and community responsibility. Since Kehila opening 18 years ago, Zehava has been making a lasting impact on the lives of Jewish students.

**Closing Blessing**      The closing blessing was delivered by Rabbi Selevan.

**Closing Remarks**      Jacki thanked the Federation staff for their hard work this past year. She also thanked everyone in attendance this evening for their support.

**Motion to Adjourn**      Motion to adjourn at 9:10 p.m., by Larry Levin, seconded by Paul Roth

**Hatikvah**

**Dessert Reception**