

Jewish Federation of Greater Orange County
Annual Meeting
June 9, 2023
10:00 am at Temple Sinai

Rissa Cutler called the meeting to order at 10:10 am.

Welcomed everyone to the 48th annual meeting of the Jewish Federation of Greater Orange County and thanked everyone for being there to join in our commitment to the important work that we do.

Slide show of the work done in 2023 was shown.

Rissa acknowledged the ongoing wars in Israel and Ukraine, increasing incidents of antisemitism and other hate here in the U.S. She explained that now, more than ever, we must dedicate ourselves to continuing the mission of our Federation to support a strong Jewish community and open our hearts to our fellow citizens in need.

Nava Herzog to lead us in our national anthem and Hatikvah.

Rabbi Kohn provided an invocation.

Rissa thanked elected officials and representatives as friends and supporters of the Jewish Federation, and recognized Janet Davis and Nikki Ronsini from JFS and Amanda Pearl from the Newburgh JCC, who wasn't able to participate due to an illness. She recognized Rabbi Kohn and Nava Herzog, the clergy who were able to join us today. And, she acknowledged and thanked the many Past Federation Presidents who were present.

A motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes and approve them as written was taken and seconded. The minutes were approved.

President's Report

Rissa thanked the Federation staff for their hard work and dedication:

Georgia Mason, our bookkeeper, and so much is starting her 38th year with us.

Pam Mason is completing her second year with Federation as our administrative assistant and communications and web administrator. Working alongside her mom, Georgia, the Mason Legacy continues to be a valuable part of our operations.

Wendy Cedar, our executive director, is completing her third year with us. Since joining our organization, Wendy has become a member of the Orange County Human Rights Commission and has represented our Federation at the Orange County Chamber of Commerce. She has worked to participate in the work of our committees and has been closely involved in our responses to antisemitism in partnership with our Community Relations Council. I am looking forward to our continued partnership in the coming year.

Judy Ronay, our Zachor Antisemitism Initiative Director, reached more than 4,500 students and adults in 2023 and is already impacting more than 1800 this year. She works with Wendy and the CRC to combat historic levels of antisemitism, continue to collaborate with local Orange County authorities, the ADL, the Rockland Holocaust Museum and Center for Tolerance and Education. Judy has worked with the Newburgh, Washingtonville, Monroe-Woodbury, Goshen, Warwick, Valley Central, Florida, Highland Falls, Middletown and Pine Bush schools. Our Stop Hate Essay Contest had 140 submissions this year. These important programs will continue to be strong in the coming year as we work to educate and partner with our community against antisemitism.

And thanks to the support of our donors, we are able to welcome Loretta Trinco as our new Teen Coordinator and Liz Frederick as our new PJ Library Coordinator. Loretta is already planning exciting events for our local teens to connect them to each other and our community. Liz will be working to expand our PJ Library programming and add to the wonderful events we have sponsored this year.

We have sponsored and participated in many important events for families with young children, to help keep them involved in Jewish life. These include; community wide Purim Carnival, a teen program for Israel at 75, and Jewish Jubilation Day at the Hudson Valley Renegades.

For our youngest children and their families, after receiving a grant from PJ Library, we partnered and collaborated with the Newburgh JCC for 5 Choose Your Own Adventure Shabbat experiences. We have requested this grant for a second year so that we can expand this program to other areas of the county. We also participated in a 3-county collaborative PJ Library program at Kedem Winery to broaden our family connection throughout our area.

The microgrant program, chaired by Steve Rubinsky, continues to receive increased requests for funding. Our microgrant program started in 2019 with a budget of \$2,000 and had 4 program requests. We funded 7 programs in 2021, 6 in 2022, and 12 in 2023. This year's budget allows for \$10,000 in microgrants and we have already funded 5 programs.

Among other programs we were able to provide in 2023 are; the Israel @ 75 event, 4 programs through our Jewish Book Council, our first annual Federation Fun Day (save the date for our second one on August 18!), our Standing with Israel and Prayers for Israel events in conjunction with our Klei Kodesh, our major donors thank you event shortly after the October 7 attacks, a community-wide Shabbat service and dinner, and SUNY Orange Jewish Club's holiday table at a college event.

Congressman Pat Ryan has been a staunch supporter and Federation thanked him with a letter delivered to his Kingston office earlier this year. In addition, in collaboration with AIPAC, we held a conversation with the Congressman. We partnered with several organizations to educate our community and bring a greater layer of security to our partner organizations. Among them are the NYS Hate and Bias Prevention Unit, where we were able to bring an MLK movie and

discussion to Kol Yisrael and a virtual Bystander Intervention training to the community. Recently, we also sponsored a Faces of October 7 program at Temple Beth Shalom.

Last year we began a collaboration with LiveSecure, a security program supported by JFNA, to bring a Security Director to the community. To be able to continue this initiative, we will need sponsors to help keep this going in the years ahead. Please let us know if you are able to help support this effort.

We count on our donors to support us so that this important work can continue to make a difference in Orange County and abroad. Thanks to the hard work of many dedicated volunteers, we have had some success with our efforts. Our Life and Legacy program has secured commitments from members who will leave an after-life gift to our Federation.

Our endowments provide a vital foundation. We welcome Raena Korenman as our new Endowment Chair.

Planning for our annual Major Gifts event is underway. Save the date for September 22 and stay tuned for details to be shared shortly. We hope many of you will join us for Major Gifts and consider increasing your pledge to support our campaign and make our community stronger and safer.

Jeff Harmer was introduced to give a financial report.

Jeff thanked everyone for both your donations and your participation in the activities which we sponsored.

The Annual campaign had been declining each of the previous three years, BUT in 2023 it has increased due to the asserted efforts of Rissa, Wendy, Georgia, Pam, and the group of volunteers that worked with them. Our volunteers of the year are some of those volunteers that help with these efforts.

He thanked the families who donated to our Federation Endowment Funds. These endowment funds provide us with perpetual money from their income streams while their principal remains intact.

During 2023, new Endowment Funds were established, and old endowment funds continued to receive additional contributions.

Information on our current Endowment Funds can be found on our website or you can ask any of our staff or board members how you can open an endowment to help ensure our future viability.

We are continuing the Life & Legacy program. This means that you have put in writing your intent to donate a gift of part of your estate after you pass away to the Federation to help support Jewish life in Orange County. You can also find more information about this on our website, or ask anyone here today who is wearing a Life & Legacy pin.

Jeff explained the Required Minimum Distribution from an IRA to reduce the donor's tax burden while helping the non-profit organization. Anyone with questions can speak with Jeff about it.

In summary, the Federation is financially sound ... thanks to your giving.
But we could do more if we had more money!

Rissa resumed:

She recognized our outgoing board members and officers: Bill Cieplinski, Past President from 2 separate terms, Jeff Rubin, and Rob Lipkin. She thanked them for their service and many contributions to the Board as they step down from their positions.

Rissa introduced Nominating Committee Chair, Steve Rubinsky.

Steve presented the Nominating Committee report.

The Nominating Committee proposes the following officer to fill the vacancy of secretary and whose position will conclude in 2027:

First Vice President, Ronit Mayerson

Rissa Cutler, President and Jeff Harmer, treasurer, will continue in their previously elected positions whose terms conclude in 2025.

There were no additional nominations from the floor. Doris Rubinsky motioned to close nominations. Steve directed the current secretary to cast one ballot on behalf of all those nominated. Seconded by Leslie Green. The motion is carried with no abstentions. Steve congratulated Ronit.

To fill vacancies on the Board, Diane Row will fill an open board positions concluding in 2027. Abbe Distelburger and Dr. Leslie Green will continue in Trustee positions which will conclude in 2025;

The following Trustees will continue in their Board Positions which will conclude in 2026: Betty Grossman, Joseph Herzog, Irv Kadish, Gay Miller, Rachelle Harmer, Elizabeth Frederick, Janet Kass.

There were no additional nominations from the floor. Ronit Mayerson motioned to close nominations, Rissa Cutler seconded. The motion passed with no abstentions. Steve congratulated the new trustees.

Rissa to installed the Trustees and new 1st Vice President.

Rissa introduced Ronit Mayerson, newly installed first Vice President, to honor the county's Volunteers of the Year. Bios of the volunteers will be on the Federation web page and in the upcoming newsletter.

Leslie Green motioned to conclude the meeting. Leslye Joseph seconded.
Rissa Cutler adjourned the meeting at 11:25am.

Respectfully submitted by Wendy Cedar, Executive Director