Board Meeting Minutes

March 23, 2022

7:30pm via zoom

**Attendance:**

David Gordon, Diane Sloyer, Dov Ben-Shimon (Presenter), Robert Abrams, Edith Samers, Cathy Satz, Kerrin Behrend, Ellen Weber, Susan Kostin, Beverly Stein, Greg Waldstreicher, Joshua Esses, Linda Hurwitz, Caryn Halbrecht, Rhonda Schaffer-Maron, Mike Schlessinger, Robin Fischel, Ami Soifer, Dinah Miller-Marlowe, Jill Kaplan

Absent: Nan Gordon, Rachel Klein, Jonathan Ostroff, Jessica Greenberg Batkin, Sherry Steiner, Jessica Batkin, Tara Shapiro

**Approval of February Minutes:**

Minutes were clarified and changed to reflect that the annual cost of the Shaliach is $90,000 per year. Linda made a motion to approve the minutes with the correction. It was seconded by Dinah Miller-Marlowe and unanimously approved.

**Presentation** - Dov Ben Shimon, CEO of Greater MetroWest Federation,

Dov discussed the Poland/Ukrainian Border immigration situation. He described the different make-up of the Eastern and Western sides of Ukraine. The Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) and the Jewish Agency For Israel (JAFI) (responsible for rescue and Aliyah) have been cooperating with each other in the need for shared money and services. This, Dov said, was very inspiring. Israel has been helping at the border. You can see the Israeli flag at the Poland border. Israel is providing translators as well as supplies, health care, and settlement. There is huge volunteerism from all the countries surrounding Ukraine. Putin has managed to unify Europe with all his destruction. So far $34 million has been raised in the Federation system. Our UJF has sent $95,000 to date. It was reported that 5,000 refugees may have made Aliyah from Ukraine to Israel and that the number of Russian Jews making Aliyah is also rising.

JFNA is preparing, in collaboration with JAFI and JDC, to send Russian- and Ukrainian-speaking volunteers to the war-torn region to provide humanitarian support and assist Jewish refugees who wish to make Aliyah. We anticipate that the first cohort will depart in early April.

On Saturday evening April 2nd, UJF CEO Diane Sloyer and Board member Kerrin Behrend, will travel to Warsaw Poland as part of a National Jewish Federations of North America "Fly-In". They will visit the border and bear witness to the suffering of the Ukrainian refugees and bring much needed aid to relief efforts on the ground.

From Monday, March 28th to Thursday, March 31st, there will be collection bins for the items listed below at the following locations: UJF Offices at the JCC, Temple Beth-El, Temple Sinai, Congregation Agudath Sholom, and Bi-Cultural Hebrew Academy.

Diane is asking for unopened non expired items that are needed:

Cold and flu remedies, Cough medicine, Allergy Medications, Heartburn remedies, Laxatives ,Anti-diarrheal, Gas relief, Gastrointestinal relief, Sleep aids, Band Aids and Bandages, antibiotic ointments or creams. Rhonda volunteered to supply Diane with duffels for supplies.

**Shaliach discussion, update and vote on moving ahead.**

Diane made an offer to Yoav to be a shaliach to our UJF. This will need to be confirmed by our vote tonight. He is a near-30 year-old Israeli from a kibbutz who now lives in Jerusalem. He did army service has an undergraduate degree, has experience in education as well as a master’s degree in American Jewry. He is currently teaching. Yohav wants to work with the communities. He has a lot of interest in farming which could help with our JCC farm to table initiative. His sweet spot is pre-teens through adults. So he can teach classes, work with groups, etc. He will need less hand-holding due to his age, education and travel experience. He speaks fluent English as well as Hebrew and his communication skills are excellent. He can start Mid-August. His training in Israel will start right after Passover.

Finances: $56,000 has been raised so far for each of years 1 and 2, and $35,000 has been committed to for years 3 and 4 of a shaliach. Our budget is a minimum of $86,000 as we must pay the Jewish Agency $40,000/yr, and we still have to also provide an apartment, a car, etc. We have an ‘ask out’ to a foundation for $25,000.

The Board voted to approve the hire of Yoav and move forward with the fund raising. If we don’t get the rest of the funding for the full commitment, we will take money from the $19,000+ allocations money for contingencies and/or dollars from the additional staff we are going to hire but have not yet brought on board. We would need to raise an additional $30,000 to fully fund the first 2 years and not touch the contingency, but additional funds could be raised by including the shaliach as a “menu item” in our campaign.

A motion was made by Dinah, and seconded by Bob to approve the hiring of Yoav for 2 years, and the vote was unanimous to proceed.

**Campaign Analysis**

Diane shared the FY21 Campaign Analysis. The trends are on par with other federations. Diane reviewed slides with campaign trends from the last several years. Jigsaw prepared the report and is helping with the campaign and going after new donors.

Revenue reviewed was ONLY from Campaign contributions. The number of donors increased by 2% in FY21, continuing the increase from FY20. Dollars increased 12% in FY21, up 25% from the low of FY18.

33% more donors increased their FY21 giving from FY20 than in the previous year (288 increases in FY20 v. 217 increases in FY20). There were 31% more new donors in FY21 v. FY20. Recovered donors decreased by 43% due to the large recovery efforts in FY20. There is a very healthy donor pipeline but a noticeable bottleneck at $250 giving tranche. Middle section on graph is area of greatest growth potential. 73% of the donors give between $1-$999, 19% give between $1000 - $4999, and 7.8% give $5000+

All three giving categories (Community Campaign, Mid-level, and Major Donor) are distributed exactly on par with most Federations.

Retention rates across the board are incredibly high and there is very little available for improvement in any of the giving levels.

Next Steps/Recommendations include:

Continue investing in relationships! Stewardship matters and it shows that Stamford has been focusing tremendous resources on maintaining donor relationships.

Establish a Thanking/Appreciation Committee

* + Call and/or send personal notes to as many donors as possible as soon as gifts come in.
  + Prioritize $1,000+ donors, new donors, and recovered donors.

Promote monthly giving as the primary way of supporting the organization

* + Monthly giving will help with retention, especially with donors giving under $500, as we focus on prospecting for new donors

Establish a recognition society for consistent donors (“Faithful Friends”)

**SNEC Update**

Our new SNEC director in Israel is Mia. Diane spent several days with her and visited several areas where we partner with SNEC including hospitals. The UJF trip and mission will be visiting her in May. Mia is here in Hartford, CT now and will be joined by Diane and others this week.   
Afula was bustling with lots of new growth since last visit. Diane spent time with the Governor Lamont, the Ambassador, and President Herzog. This was a highlight of the trip. On a positive note, Yoav works with the partnership as well. Lamont was the first Governor to visit Israel in 25years and loved the visit.

**Upcoming Events**

* UJF JCRC Yom Hashoah event with Greenwich is on April 27 & 28
* Greenwich Federations and Upstate Federations cosponsors for Israel Independence Day at the JCC on May 5th.
* March 30th Passover education session for how to make Passover fun for kids
* Affinity events coming up. Check scrolling banners.
* Relaunch of Chapter 2 as a Federation Affinity Group.
* UJF Women’s Philanthropy Spring Dinner, May 18, 2022.

**New Business**

* We are redoing the UJF website. Jewish Federation of North America is doing it for us for free.
* Israel mission is booked. There is still time to sign up. So far it is a small group of 10, but it will be a wonderful and worthwhile trip. Some attendees are going ahead of time to extend the visit. The trip is scheduled for May 8-May 15, 2022.

**Good and Welfare**

* Nan Gordon has a new grandchild, Mazel Tov.
* Ellen Weber has a new granddaughter, Pearl, Mazel Tov
* Michael Weber, Ellen’s son, is president of Frutero ice cream. Frutero was in ShopRite and is now also at Stop and Shop. Congratulations!
* Birthday and Passover cards were made up to go out to donors. Happy birthday David!!

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Hurwitz, Secretary