

**Congregation Shomrei Emunah**

**Annual Meeting 2021**

**Monday, June 28<sup>th</sup>**

**Agenda**

- **D'var Torah**
- **Approval of the Minutes of the 2020 Congregational Meeting**
- **Report of the President**
- **Approval of the 2021-2022 Budget**
- **Election of Officers and Trustees**

**Minutes of the 2020 Congregational Meeting**  
**June 22, 2020**

President Sara Ann Erichson called the meeting to order. Meeting held via Zoom.

Rabbi David Greenstein gave a d'var torah.

The minutes of the 2019 Congregational meeting were approved.

Sara Ann Erichson delivered the president's report which included a final financial forecast for the fiscal year ending June 30<sup>th</sup>, results of the 2020 SSFC campaign, the operation of the synagogue pre pandemic and the subsequent shutdown due to COVID restrictions, a programming recap, a membership update, a review of the Shomrei pre-school and JLC, among other items.

Bela Schwartz and Pam Golden presented the 2020-2021 budget and fielded questions. The budget was accepted and approved by the congregation without changes.

Sara Ann presented the slate of officers and trustees for election. A motion was made to elect them, and it passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned.

## **Report of the President**

Given the unusual environment caused by COVID 19 this past year with all its uncertainties and the inability to gather in person for most of the year, I am pleased to report that the Shomrei Community had a very active and meaningful year. We remained flexible and worked together to find new ways to communicate and worship. It has been a difficult time for many of us and none of us predicted that the pandemic would keep us apart physically for such a prolonged period. With that said, there are a few topics that I would like to highlight.

### **Moving Forward Task Force**

When the synagogue shut its doors in March 2020, we thought that we would be back together in a month or two. When it became apparent that gathering in person would not be a possibility for the foreseeable future, we put together a committee of committed synagogue members to help us identify ways to bring the synagogue into each of our respective homes while continuing our sense of community. We split into various subcommittees including Ritual, Education, Programming, Building & Technology and Communications. We met weekly for close to a year and examined the needs, both physical and spiritual of the Community. We funded technology and building improvements so that we could be together virtually and open our preschool, planned virtual services and programs. We always kept the safety of Shomrei members front and center in our discussions and relied on our Medical Advisory Group for advice. We created a multi phased COVID policy that was ratified by our Board of Trustees so that we had a common understanding of our policies. I am happy to report that Shomrei continued to bring our community together throughout the year. We could not have done this without the dedication of our Moving Forward Task Force.

### **Synagogue Life**

Throughout the year there was continuity of services. While we only recently began meeting in the synagogue again, we enjoyed an amazing High Holiday experience with the participation of so many of our members. We partnered with other synagogues in the area and shared hearing the Shofar. We zoomed Kabbalat Shabbat and several themed Havdalah evenings and streamed our Sharing Shabbat so all could worship. We held an outdoor Sunday minyan most Sundays when it was not raining or too cold. We became proficient in drive by's handing out bags and Mahzors for the High Holidays, donuts for decorating and candles for Hannukah and Shalach Manot for Purim. In fact, this year was a record for Shalach Manot raising over \$18,000. We even held an outdoor Purim Carnival that was very well attended. We had a Summer Splash with a full day of events and built on that success with a Passover Splash where we shared Passover traditions, learned a bit and got to socialize with others virtually.

While we were unable to hold our usual honoree dinner event, we honored those that helped us through this historic year. We took a breath and thought about the relationships that we fostered and how we got through each and every day and we created a community directory dedicated to us, the Shomrei community as we moved forward and reflected back. The directory was a success meeting our budget expectations that were set when we thought we would have been together for a celebration.

We continued our work of Tikkun Olam. While we couldn't feed the homeless in our Shul, we continued to provide funds to MESH throughout the year. Our Social Action Committee held listening sessions to learn what was important to us and we also continued our work in battling food insecurity and other injustices. And the Mensch Squad was always there for those in our community that needed some help.

Education has always been a priority for our Shomrei Community and Rabbi Greenstein pivoted to online teaching and offered several classes including storytelling, Torah study, lessons on the Pirkei Avot, and Talmud Study, among others. We continued to experience an amazing number of speakers as part of our @Nourish and brought women together for learning and socializing for Rosh Chodesh. Education of our children continued with a hybrid model, and you can read about what has been happening in our Preschool and JLC below in Heather's report.

I hope that members reading this report feel that Shomrei has been there during a time of uncertainty for us and one of challenges for so many of us.

### **Reopening Our Building**

Last year, Sara Ann reported that the Synagogue Leadership was focused on how to bring us together during the pandemic and as I mentioned earlier, we all thought we would be in person after a few months. Well, the pandemic continued, and we were not able to do that until very recently. The Board is now focused on how we reopen fully and what that means. We plan to continue to offer virtual engagement for those that are unable to attend in person but look forward to being together once again. We continue to monitor the health advisories and are discussing the safest way to reopen. The Board of Trustees recently updated our COVID policy and is now permitting us to attend outdoor services without masks if you are vaccinated but for now, we continue to require masks indoors to protect those that are not eligible for vaccination. The Board has COVID policy updates on the agenda every meeting and we will continue to review and update based on advice from our Medical Advisory Group. And we are busy planning for the High Holidays, and while we are not expecting to be totally back to pre-pandemic practices, we do expect to have in person services, and we will continue to update you as our plans unfold.

### **Rabbi Greenstein Retirement and the 2022 Rabbi Search Committee**

In April, Rabbi Greenstein announced his intention to retire at the end of his contract in July 2022. We will have the benefit of his spiritual leadership for the next year and will continue to learn from him. I am deeply grateful for the partnership we have established and cannot thank him enough for helping us navigate this most challenging year. In the coming year we will celebrate Rabbi Greenstein and closer to his retirement we will wish him the best.

Earlier this week I announced the 2022 Rabbi Search committee that has already started their work and you will be hearing from them often. While the committee has only 11 members, I consider them to be representing our entire membership and it is so important that you participate with them as we embark on the journey of finding our next spiritual leader. This is a great responsibility and I know we as a community will come together to do the work we need to do to pursue a rabbinical candidate that we lead us next.

## **Membership**

I am pleased to report that we are ending the year with 217 member households – a net gain of 2 households compared to last year. This is a fabulous result in a year when we could not meet in person. We welcomed 8 new households into our community as members. 6 of our new members are Preschool or JLC families. The 6 households that left Shomrei were primarily resignations due to moves. Much thanks to Gail Stocks, our VP of Membership, who continues to do an outstanding job in this role.

As we look ahead to this upcoming year, we expect gaining new members will be a challenge. Prospective members generally check us out over the summer and attend our High Holiday services which we are still figuring out. In addition, they will want to know who the spiritual leader will be and we will not know that answer until the Spring. However, we are confident that our vibrant and close-knit community will continue to attract new members and have budgeted for a small increase.

## **Synagogue Financials**

Bela Schwartz, VP of Finance, and Pam Golden, Treasurer, will review the 2021-2022 budget in detail. I would like to offer a few observations about our synagogue finances.

- Regarding the 2020-2021 fiscal year ending on June 30<sup>th</sup>:
  - We are forecasting a loss of \$45,000 which is significantly better than the budget. Lower costs due to careful expense management helped us this year. As Bela will review, cash from PPP loans more than covers this loss.
  - In addition to the PPP loan we received last year, we received an additional amount in this fiscal year as well as grants for the school and COVID related expenses. We are taking advantage of grants to potentially fund some high holiday expenses as well. We also received forgiveness on the first PPP loan and expect to apply for the same forgiveness on the second tranche once we are permitted to do so.
  - These loans enabled us to continue paying our employees.
  - In addition, we completed a much-needed replacement of our entire HVAC system using money from our Capital Campaign. Our building has improved air filtration and air flow and enabled us to operate the preschool during COVID with confidence.
  - We also received donations that we are using to upgrade the sanctuary and are hopeful that these improvements will be completed when we are back in the sanctuary sometime later this year.
  
- Regarding the new fiscal year 2021-2-22 starting July 1<sup>st</sup>:
  - I am pleased to report the results of our current Sustaining Share Campaign (SSFC). Our pledge drive was extended by a week and ended on June 10<sup>th</sup>. While some pledges are still coming in, and those who don't pledge will receive a "provisional" invoice as usual, I am very gratified to report the following:
  - 78% of member households made their pledge as of June 16. As a point of reference, 83% pledged last year. While we are slightly behind in participation, the total amount pledged is \$35K higher than last year.
  - For the first time since moving to the SSFC model, the average pledge per person increased.

- Due to members continuing to embrace the match made available by a very generous Shomrei family, we maxed out and are able to use all of the \$39,930 made available to us.
- We used only a small portion of the Volunteer Security fund this past year so are rolling over the funds and we received another \$7,200 this year to add to that fund. This money will be used to pay for security guards during our services. In the current environment this is a necessary expense to ensure our safety.

I continue to be amazed by the generosity of the Shomrei community. We understand that the past 15 months has been extremely challenging, and this has impacted the ability to give by some. It is truly heartening to see our members embrace our voluntary dues model and give what they have the capacity to give. This pledge drive has shown the commitment of our members to Shomrei and the confidence they have in us an institution.

We continue to face uncertainty as we reenter our building and the lifting of many of the COVID-related restrictions. We are being cautiously optimistic about our ability to resume the in-person services and events that we all long for. We will continue to monitor the most current science and act accordingly.

### **Education (submitted by Heather Brown)**

We are so proud to have completed an entire school year during a pandemic. All our months of planning paid off when we opened the Preschool's doors for in-person learning in September.

Following stringent health and safety guidelines (including mask-wearing for all students and staff) allowed us to not only open for in-person learning, but to remain open throughout the entire year. We are now running summer camp as well.

Students, staff, and families felt comfortable with the guidelines and treated the gift of an open school with the utmost care, keeping children home with even the slightest of symptoms, in order to protect our community.

JLC was largely virtual, however, we did provide in-person classes in the fall and spring for our K-2 class. We quickly realized our youngest students were most in need of in-person learning in JLC, whereas as older students made strides learning virtually! Our 3-7<sup>th</sup> graders advanced in their Hebrew skills and enjoyed small group learning where they debated Jewish ethics and were exposed to Jewish history. Students were more focused online, without the usual trappings of classroom misbehavior after a long day of school. The students and parents were pleased with the virtual format this year!

#### School Statistics:

Preschool Enrollment 2020-21: 38 students

JLC Enrollment 2020-21: 43 students (including 4 STOM students)

Summer Camp 2021: 35 campers

Despite the pandemic, we were able to hold some wonderful community events for families! Our Shomrei Chanukah celebration, while virtual, was enjoyed by young and old. We decorated donuts on zoom, lit candles together, and enjoyed seeing familiar faces. We had a "Car-Nival" for Purim, where families drove to Shomrei and walked through a Purim Carnival, social-

distance style! We realized the highlight of the day was truly seeing so many happy faces in person. JLC ended the year with a sweet ice cream truck visit. Preschool families ended the year with an in-person (outdoor) family celebration.

All in all, we chose to “See the Good” in this year! We are looking forward to what comes next.

### **President Thank You’s**

- To Rabbi Greenstein for his leadership in so many ways.
- To the Shomrei Board of Trustees for their dedication with a special shout out to the following outgoing Board members
  - Dawn Berman
  - Marc Chalom
  - Shana Rubin
  - Allison Task
- To the Moving Forward Task Force that helped us through the pandemic and without who we would not have had so many creative ways to come together to worship and be a community
- To Sara Ann Erichson for her guidance and to Shirley Grill for her mentoring
- To the Shomrei Education team of Heather Brown, Lily Lucey and Aylah Winter who kept our school open and safe this year. If any of you had a chance to see the Preschool graduation you would be amazed at what our kids learned
- To Lisa Zelenetz for running this place during difficult times and who has decided to take a leave of absence. We wish her well. And to Carlos and Tracy who have helped to keep the building open.
- To the Rabbi Search committee that is just beginning its journey
- And to all the volunteers of Shomrei. It is just inspiring to have so many of us who dedicate their time and resources to this community and make Shomrei happen.

I look forward to guiding you in the coming year and to walking along side of you as we come back together.

Submitted June 24, 2021  
By: Miriam Korn Haimes, President

**Congregation Shomrei Emunah Slate of Officers and Nominations to  
the Board of Trustees 2021-2022**

President: Miriam Korn Haimes

Immediate Past President: Sara Ann Erichson

Executive Vice President: Pam Golden

VP, Buildings & Grounds: Michael Legman

VP, Education: Adrienne Shulman Lasiter

VP, Finance: Bela Schwartz

VP, Legal: Gordon Braverman

VP, Membership: Gail Stocks

VP, Programming: Liza Cohn

Treasurer: Pam Golden

Recording Secretary: Beryl Hiller

Corresponding Secretary: Jerilyn Margulies

Trustees (terms expiring in 2024)

**Michael Sag**

**Sarita Eisenberg**

John Lasiter

David Brooks

Trustees (terms expiring in 2023)

Romy Rost

Carol Katzman

Dan Winter

Eric Feldman

Trustees (terms expiring in 2022)

Geoff Sadow

Audrey Levitin

**Lynne Rubin**

**Adam Dembrow**

- Bold indicates new this year





## CONGREGATION SHOMREI EMUNAH CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

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### **2021 ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE**

THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION SHOMREI EMUNAH CEMETERY ASSOCIATION WILL BE HELD VIA ZOOM ON MONDAY EVENING, JUNE 28, 2021, IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE CONGREGATION SHOMREI EMUNAH ANNUAL MEETING.

PLEASE MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO ATTEND BOTH MEETINGS BEING HELD VIA ZOOM.

DR. WILLIAM BATKAY  
SECRETARY

Shomrei Emunah Cemetery Association

Annual Meeting – June 28, 2021

AGENDA

1. Approval of June 22, 2020, Annual Meeting Minutes
2. Election of Officers
  - President: Carol Katzman
  - Secretary: Dr. Bill Batkay
  - Trustee: Michael Legman
3. Any other business

Shomrei Emunah Cemetery Association

Annual Meeting Minutes – June 22, 2020

The Zoom Annual Meeting of the Shomrei Emunah Cemetery Association was called to order immediately after the Congregation Shomrei Emunah Annual Meeting.

President Carol Katzman presided.

A Motion was made and seconded to accept the Minutes of the previous 2019 Annual Meeting. It passed unanimously

She thanked Rabbi Greenstein, Bill Batkay and Michel Legman for their continued help and assistance.

A Motion was made and seconded to elect the following officers:

President	Carol Katzman
Secretary	Dr. Bill Batkay
Trustee	Michael Legman

The motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted

Carol Katzman for Dr. William Batkay, Secretary