



Jewish Federation of Ottawa Board of Directors Meeting

Summary of Discussion for
the community

Tuesday, May 13, 2025

In Attendance: Leila Ages, Kevin Barwin, Jeff Laks, Marina Milyavskaya, Karen Palayew, Gillian Presner, Tal Scher, Ian Sherman, Danya Vered, Gary Viner

Staff: Alysha Blakey Morduch, Pauline Colwin, Rena Garshowitz, Lindsay Newman, Anne Read, Michael Reznick, Adam Silver

I: Welcome – Karen Palayew

Karen Palayew thanked everyone for attending and called the meeting to order at 5:33 pm.

Karen acknowledged the announcement that Mark Gruner, Chief Financial Officer, has left Federation to pursue other opportunities. Karen expressed thanks to Mark for his work and wished him success in the future.

II: Approval of Board Meeting Minutes – Karen Palayew

Karen asked if there were any questions or corrections to the minutes from the April 15, 2025 board meeting.

Karen called for a motion to approve the minutes from the April 15, 2025 Board of Directors meeting.

Moved: Danya Vered

Second: Kevin Barwin

Motion carried

III: Microgrants Update – Alysha Blakey Morduch

Karen invited Alysha Blakey Morduch, Community Engagement Specialist, to provide information regarding Microgrants.

Alysha presented an update on Microgrants over the fiscal year to date. With a budget of \$100,000, of which \$81,296 has been allocated, 48 Microgrants were funded, serving 7,335 participants. There have been 16 participating agencies and 6 agency collaborations.

35% of Microgrants were initiated by individuals in the community, and 65% were spearheaded by local organizations and agencies. 97% of respondents indicated they were very likely or likely to participate in other Jewish events.

A discussion ensued and all questions were answered to the Board's satisfaction.

Karen thanked Alysha for her work.

IV: Terms of Reference for Microgrants Committee – Anne Read

Karen invited Anne Read to present terms of reference for the Microgrants Committee.

Anne expressed that as a point of due diligence it was recognized that Microgrants as a committee did not have its own point of reference, so the terms of reference were developed from the template of other Board committees.

A discussion ensued and it was suggested that the terms of reference be modified to indicate the committee would meet at least once per year, from two times per year. All questions were answered to the Board's satisfaction. Karen thanked Anne for her work.

Karen called for a motion to approve the terms of reference of the Microgrants Committee.

Moved: Tal Scher

Second: Gillian Presner

Motion carried

V: Terms of Reference for Development Committee – Michael Reznick

Karen invited Michael Reznick to present terms of reference for the Development Committee.

Michael explained that he is asking to establish the Development Committee as a new strategic macro committee to ensure Federation has financial stability for as long as possible. The committee's focus will be outside the Annual Campaign, and will include alternate sources of revenue such as sponsorship.

A discussion ensued and it was decided that the terms of reference will be revised to reflect that committee membership includes Annual Campaign representation. Karen thanked Michael for his initiative.

VI: Annual Legislative Compliance – Adam Silver

Karen invited Adam to provide an update to the Board regarding annual legislative compliance.

Adam explained this process involves verifying to the Board that Federation has fulfilled its obligations in respect of taxation, and maintains appropriate levels of liability insurance for Directors and Officers.

VII: Nomination Committee Report – Ian Sherman

Karen invited Ian Sherman to present the Nomination Committee Report. Ian thanked Rena for leading the nominating committee efforts.

Ian announced that Danya Vered will be the incoming Chair of the Federation Board, with Jessica Greenberg as Vice-Chair.

Kevin Barwin, Alice Retik, Tal Scher, Ian Sherman, and Marci Surkes will be concluding their terms in June 2025.

Brief bios were shared for each of the incoming Board members: SuYun Geithner, Josh Kardish, Jessica Greenberg, Evan Green, and Elissa Lieff.

A discussion ensued and all questions were answered to the Board's satisfaction.

Karen called for a motion to approve the Nomination Committee Report.

Moved: Ian Sherman

Second: Tal Scher

Motion carried

Karen thanked Ian, Rena, and the Nomination Committee for their work.

VIII: Annual Campaign Update – Leila Ages

Karen invited Leila Ages to present the Annual Campaign Update.

Leila shared that as of May 6, the campaign was at \$4,864,815, surpassing the goal of \$4.8M.

- Gifts have been received from 1,333 donors, of whom 106 are new donors
- Captains and canvassers are being recruited for the 2025/2026 campaign, with a particular focus on attracting canvassers from younger generations
- Appreciation was expressed to Michael for the success of the Dorot Legacy Reception, which generated a net profit, with wider reach and lower cost than previous Top Donor events

Karen thanked Leila, Gary, and Michael for their work.

VIII: Recommendations from Strategic Priorities Committee for the F26 Budget – Danya Vered

Karen invited Danya Vered to present recommendations from the Strategic Priorities Committee for the F26 budget.

Danya explained that every year the Strategic Priorities committee provides a recommendation for the overall envelope amounts including allocations to agencies and the amounts for Community Impact Grants. Anne Read shared the recommendation for FY26 is that the allocations remain flat for Operational Funding, Program Funding, and Supplementary School Funding.

The Strategic Priorities Committee recommends a total of \$435,000 be allocated to Community Impact Grants and other strategic initiatives in FY26.

A discussion ensued and all questions were answered to the Board's satisfaction.

Karen called for a motion to approve the recommendations from the Strategic Priorities Committee.

Moved: Danya Vered

Second: Kevin Barwin

Motion carried

Karen thanked Danya, Anne, and the Strategic Priorities Committee for their work.

X: President's Report – Adam Silver

Karen invited Adam to present the President's Report.

Adam acknowledged the limited time remaining to conduct the business of the meeting and chose to defer his presentation of the report, which had previously provided to the Board for review. There were no questions from the board regarding the report.

Adam expressed appreciation for the Board's leadership and the work of Federation staff. Karen thanked Adam for his report.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:53 PM.

XI: In-Camera Session – Karen Palayew

Karen invited the staff to leave and held an in-camera session with the Board of Directors.

The in-camera session commenced at 7:01 PM.

The in-camera session was adjourned at 7:22 PM.