

Board Meeting Minutes
United Jewish Federation July 23,2025
Dinner and socializing 6:30P-7:00pm
Art of the Ask 7:00P- 8:30pm
Board meeting 8:30P-9:10pm
UJF Office

Attendance: Beverly Stein, Diane Sloyer- CEO, Michael Schlessinger, Linda Hurwitz, Edith Samers, Chris Maroc, Leslie Heyison, Greg Waldstreicher, Ellen Weber, Lee Soffer, Wendy Siegel, Marty Donner, Stacy Ferber, Eric Ross- Deputy Director, Marguerite Felsenfeld, David Gordon, Tara Shapiro. Jessie Brand, Susan Kostin , Alan Barr, Amanda Sherman, Jeremy Weisser

Absent: Stella Cohen, Joshua Esses, Robert Hoff, Adam Rafalowicz, Robin Fischel

Beverly called the meeting to order at 7:00PM

Beverly and Diane introduced Serena Young from JFNA to lead a board interactive session on the Art of the Ask.

This is a great time for donations. There has been huge growth year after year since 2020. There has been 14.5% in every size federation. In asking for support there are several objectives to keep in mind.

- Get to know the donor
- Know your product
- Offer gratitude

First, we broke into groups and asked the following questions followed by rich discussions:

- What are we most proud of?
- What is the topic of concern that keeps you up at night?
- Why do I give?

When meeting with a prospective donor remember the 5Ps

- Be Prepared- know your audience
- Make it Personal – good eye contact and talk about them
- Positivity – be upbeat and positive
- Passionate – bring it with you
- Persistent – invite them to an event, connect with them, follow-up

Storytelling can be very powerful. We broke into groups and role played several scenarios then regrouped to share our take aways.

The Action Steps to follow are identified as:

- Invite 3-4 couples over for drinks to talk about UJF

- Host a parlor meeting in your home, with Diane or Eric as the presenter
- Email 10 people about the 9/7 Campaign Launch with Five For Fighting
- Invite 1-2 friend(s) to attend the 9/7 Campaign Launch as your guest
- Participate in a Call Night on 9/17, to reach out to Campaign Launch attendees and lapsed donors
- Volunteer to make Rosh Hashana calls and/or deliveries
- Participate in The Big Give on 10/19
- Participate in at least two Call Nights in Oct, Nov, or Dec
- Identify 10 people you are willing to write a personal note on (or to include with) their Rosh Hashanah appeal letter
- Send Eric the names of 5 contacts who work at businesses that might be interested in becoming Corporate Partners

The overall goal is to develop a culture of philanthropy.

We thanked Serena for a very positive, motivating, and interesting program.

Consent Agenda – Beverly Stein

Consent agenda comments

- Board meeting minutes of June 18, 2025
- Financial Resource Development Committee (FRD) – of July 1st.
- Israel Committee.
- Eric’s partnership model.

Linda asked that reports and minutes submitted for the consent agenda contain the names of the chairs and members who attended the meetings. This will help us get to know who is involved and engaged in different aspects of UJF.

Linda moved to accept the motion. It was seconded by Ellen W. It was approved unanimously.

CEO Report- Diane Sloyer

- Jillian Moore started July 14th as the Director of Programming and Engagement. Jillian will also support Women’s Philanthropy, Reading Partners, PJ Library, NextGen, and Shalom/Welcome visits.
- Federation was left a large legacy gift (\$400,000 plus) by Abraham Cogan. He had given \$100/yr. to UJF for 30yrs.
- The Big Idea is moving forward with December 12 &13 for Celebrate Shabbat Your Way.

Five for Fighting – Wendy. Siegel Co-chair

On September 7th we’ll be celebrating Superheroes Among Us with an evening of night unity with Grammy nominated John Ondrasik. The theme is “Celebrating our Heroes”. We will be

honoring Beverly and Diane and are welcome to nominate other heroes we feel are deserving of that honor. The event will be held Rippowam Middle School, 381 High Ridge Road, Stamford, CT

Co-working space update – Greg Waldstreicher

Greg explained the concept of co-working space. Co-working space is a community space that people can use to go to work or use as an office. As more and more professionals are working from home there is a desire among workers to have a place to go outside the house where they can conduct business and connect with others in the community. This is preliminary but there is a lot of enthusiasm in the community. UJF is listening to the needs of our community and being forward thinking. We are currently in an exploratory phase.

A pricing model would have 3 tiers of membership based on the access to space, the number of days utilized, and the possible access to office space.

A survey was sent out with 131 responses. There was interest in both co-working space and Jewish co-working space. There will be an in person meeting on August 5 to pursue further details. The space that we are currently looking at is 1351 Washington Blvd.

Wendy asked if the dues would be tax deductible. The answer was no because it is a for profit program and a purchase of a service, not a donation. Marty mentioned the staffing and management burden that this type of operation poses. Susan K mentioned that if this is UJF run there are tax implications to consider. Edith asked, Why are we doing this? Greg responded that it came out of NexGen group. Lee explained that as someone who works from home there is need for being around others and specifically Jews.

David asked if we would consider doing this project with a UJF grant? Other questions raised included what does federation do if someone misses a payment? Does it create antagonism? Jessie said the concept is great for the young professionals. We could also host affinity groups in that space. Tara agreed that is a great idea.

New Business

In the interest of the late hour, no new business was discussed.

Beverly adjourned the meeting at 9:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Hurwitz, Secretary

Upcoming Events

- Sept. 7: Campaign Launch/Five For Fighting (www.ujf.org/Superhero)
- Sept. 10: UJF Board Meeting
- Sept. 14: NextGen/PJ Library Apple Picking (www.ujf.org/Apples)
- Sept. 18: Lion of Judah Event (www.ujf.org/Lion)

- Oct. 5: Community Commemoration for Oct 7th
- Oct. 19: The Big Give

Board meeting dates for 2025

Wednesday, Oct 22

Wednesday, Nov 12

Wednesday, December 17, Annual Meeting