

United Jewish Federation Board Meeting Minutes

October 22, 2025

In-Person and Via Zoom

Attendance: Beverly Stein, Michael Schlessinger, Eric Ross, Leslie Heyison, Alan Barr, Jessie Brand, Stella Cohen, Marty Donner, Marguerite Felsenfeld, Stacy Ferber, Robin Fischel, David Gordon, Linda Hurwitz, Susan Kostin, Edith Samers, Wendy Siegel, Lee Soffer, Adam Rafalowicz, Jeremy Weisser, Chris Maroc

Absent: Diane Sloyer – CEO, Tara Shapiro, Robert Hoff, Ellen Weber, Greg Waldstreicher, Joshua Esses, Amanda Sherman

Beverly called the meeting to order at 7:33PM

Consent Agenda:

- Board minutes of September – Unanimously approved, with amendment of spelling of “Cogan”
- Israel Committee
- JCRC
- Reading Partners
- Community Programs and Engagement
- PJ Library

CEO Report – Diane Sloyer (read by Beverly Stein)

UJF received a \$450,000 gift from the settlement of Abraham Cogan’s estate.

Diane extended her deep appreciation to Robin and Toby for their incredible work organizing the Annual Campaign. There were more callers than ever thanks to Eric and over 30 people involved.

Jewish organizations and synagogues participating in One Shabbat, One CommUNITY have submitted their member lists directly to the printer. Postcards will be sent out Tuesday or Wednesday next week. There will also be an article about the event published in the New Jewish Voice.

Diane was asked to speak at the November Shlichim conference in Stamford on the importance of lay leadership.

President's Report - Beverly Stein

Linda Hurwitz has stepped down as UJF Secretary. We thank Linda for her years of excellent service in this role and wish her and Richard much happiness in their new home in Wisconsin.

Beverly nominated Leslie Heyison to assume the role of UJF Secretary. The nomination was unanimously approved by those attending the meeting.

UJF joined the community at the JCC to celebrate the return of the living hostages. There is a tree at the UJF office to hang dog tags, pins and ribbons.

JCRC organized an interfaith security training with clergy from non-Jewish houses of worship in the area. Jim will brief the Board about the session next month.

The October 7th remembrance event on October 5th at Temple Beth El was well-attended. The spirit that evening was cautiously hopeful for a quick end to a long, tragic period.

There were 50 attendees at the Reading Partners brunch.

The Big Give on October 19th was amazing. Heartfelt thanks to Robyn and Toby for their leadership and to everyone who came Sunday and tonight to make calls. All ages joined the festivities during the day. The author's event was almost standing room only and JCRC's event organized by David and Gary with Matt Blumenthal and Ryan Fazio as speakers was standing room only. Robin will provide more details in her update later this evening.

Q3 Financials – Adam Rafalowicz (see attached for details)

Adam reviewed the Q3 2025 and YTD September 2025 financials (see attached for details). Highlights of Adam's very thorough and detailed review follow:

- 2025 Q3 Revenue – large increase in campaign which is promising and before The Big Give. \$41K is for Israel disaster relief. Pass-throughs continue at a high level compared to prior year due to continuation of the "Israel Food Rescue" program, which UJF receives all charitable donations for and transfers them to Israel.
- 2025 YTD Revenues of \$1,491, 096 is \$258,000 higher than prior year due to the aforementioned pass-throughs.
- 2025 YTD Expenses of \$1,146,384 is in line with budget. Higher than expected Speaker performer expenses and professional fees were offset by the delay in the work flow assessment, timing of Shaliach payment, and lower security expenses.

Edith asked for a pledges aging/receivables report. She explained that she was about to ask someone for a big gift but saw they hadn't paid their previous pledge. What do we do about past unpaid pledges? Eric said that bills are sent out quarterly. Edith asked whether we should call and explained that there used to be a committee that made calls. Beverly asked the FRD committee to find out what the current number, research the history of pledges receivable. Adam thinks every quarter may be too frequent and suggested mid-year and year-end. Beverly liked the plan and thanked Edith.

Adam asked Susan to research endowments.

Several Board members thanked Adam for a great job.

Annual Campaign report – Eric Ross (see attached for details)

Through October 14th, 2025 and before The Big Give, there were 193 donors who contributed \$501 thousand. The 2024 donation total was \$1,641 thousand. Comparing donations through October, 2025's giving is ahead of the 2024 pace.

Co-chair of The Big Give – Robin Fischel

Robin thanked her co-chair, Toby Lazarus, Eric Ross and those affiliated with JFS Schoke, BCHA, Agudath Sholom, Chabad of Stamford, Young Israel of Stamford, and Chabad of New Canaan synagogues and others who came to make calls. There were activities for children. Janice Kaplan came to discuss her book. Senator Ryan Fazio and State Representative Matt Blumenthal spoke at the event with David Gordon and Gary Jones introducing and handling the Q&A's. 150 Dignity Grows bags were packed and will be delivered this week to Person to Person in Darien and the Domestic Violence Crisis Center in Stamford.

In the first 4 days of this year's Big Give, \$116 thousand was pledged compared to \$162 thousand in the first 6 weeks in 2024, suggesting that 2025's Big Give campaign will exceed 2024's. Beverly echoed the incredible accomplishment. Diane, Ellen, and Eric have also been meeting with big donors. Yasher Koach to all.

Wendy asked about the criteria to qualify for the match. Eric responded that all new donors (\$1,605 in 2025 so far) will have their donation matched, and all current and past donors who increase their donation will have the amount of their increase matched. Beverly and Michael were reasonably confident that we would get the full \$100,000 match.

Jesse Brand asked whether we employed a new strategy this year for the Annual Campaign to explain the increase in numbers and volunteers. Eric suggested that one possibility is that the Big Give event date of October 19th was earlier than previous years as well as pre-event call dates that supplemented the main event date. The proximity of the Big Give date to High Holiday fundraising campaigns was mentioned as a possible deterrent to giving. It

was noted that the 2026 High Holidays should pose less of a problem because they are in September.

Jesse asked about One Shabbat, One CommUNITY event. The ensuing discussion led to the idea to mention, in the registration, that a donation to the annual campaign could receive a matching gift. Eric will look into this idea.

Eric showed a calendar of development, engagement, and stewardship opportunities for the end-of-year campaign.

New Business

No new business was discussed.

Beverly adjourned the meeting at 8:33 pm.

Good and Welfare

Eighteen community members and spouses will meet in Greece for a Jewish Mission.

Rob Hoff's son got engaged.

Linda will join meetings by Zoom from Wisconsin.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Heyison, Secretary

Upcoming Events

- Women's Philanthropy Salon, Oct 28, www.ujf.org/joy
- Kuriansky Teen Leadership Initiative, beginning Oct 26 www.ujf.org/ktli
- Call nights www.ujf.org/BG25
- America Yiddish Theater
 - [Temple Beth El](#)
- Men's Whiskey and chocolate www.ujf.org/Whiskey25
- "Giving Tuesday" Call night – 12/1
- Chanukah calls to all donors – 12/8-12/12
- End of Year Call Night – 12/16

Registration coming soon...

One Shabbat: One CommUNITY, December 12-13

Board meeting dates for 2025

Wednesday, Nov 12

Wednesday, December 17, Annual Meeting