

United Jewish Federation  
September 11, 2024, 7:30PM  
UJF Office & Zoom  
Board Meeting Minutes

**Attendance:** Michael Schlessinger, Diane Sloyer- CEO, Edith Samers, Linda Hurwitz, Robin Fischel, Rhonda Schaffer-Maroon, Wendy Siegel, Alan Barr, Chris Maroc, Lee Soffer, Jill Kaplan, Bob Abrams, Marty Donner, Stacy Ferber, Cathy Satz, Jeremy Weissner, Stella Cohen, Ellen Weber, Eric Ross- Deputy Director,

**Absent:** David Gordon, Amanda Sherman, Adam Rafalowicz, Dinah Miller Marlowe, Joshua Esses, Jessie Brand, Susan Kostin, Robert Hoff, Beverly Stein

Michael Schlessinger called the meeting to order at 7:32PM

**Approval of Minutes of July 17, 2024 -** Linda Hurwitz

The minutes of the July 17 board meeting had not been posted in the board portal so they will be reviewed in the October meeting along with September's minutes.

**Security Update: Introducing Mitch Silber, Executive Director CSI (new security partner) via zoom**

Mitch shared his background in law enforcement and security with a special focus on Jewish security worldwide. Mitch is a founder of the Community Security Initiative (CSI). He will have a team of 21. He partners with many Jewish groups and covers NYC, Westchester, Rockland, and Albany. This puts us with our neighbors for security purposes. Mitch has good relationships with Mike Shanbrom and the folks are SCN so the transition should be seamless.

Hiring update:

Mitch updated the board on the interview process for the person who will serve UJF Stamford and the Stamford, Darien, New Canaan community. An offer has been made to a great applicant and we are waiting to hear from the candidate. We can all help by providing a warm introduction to members and groups in the community.

**Gary Jones: UJF JCRC Director –Full time**

Mike introduced Gary Jones to the board. Gary has a long history of involvement with Jewish organizations. Gary mentioned that the role of the director has expanded and the JCRC importance has been elevated. Gary is a lawyer with history with the ADL. There is a great article to read on Gary in the New Jewish News.

David Gordon has agreed to be the Chair of the JCRC council. The council will focus on advocacy and Interfaith relationships. David is interested in Latino outreach. Gary discussed what he and Diane accomplished with the recent antisemitic issues in Stamford. These include responding to the AITE school graffiti and the Stamford Rep issues. Various town hall meetings will be held, the first of which will be at the JCC on Sept 12 evening with the Mayor and police. Gary feels that law enforcement stands with us and against hate. That is positive for the future.

Rhonda emphasized that we need to show what federation is doing. There will be 2 ADL programs for high school students to help prepare them for school and college.

### **Big Ideas Committee Report – Rob Hoff**

The Big Idea committee will meet on Sept 19<sup>th</sup>. Diane reported for Rob. The Big Idea is planning to spend our money to do something to address Anti-Israel activity and Antisemitism. The committee is made up of board members and community members. The goal is to use our excess cash to keep the momentum of unity and education since Oct 7<sup>th</sup>. Some ideas are facilitating the ADL programs for the high school students. A trip to Israel for next summer is being talked about. It would be a community trip, not just a UJF trip. Michael Rappaport will be speaking on Sept 15<sup>th</sup> and that is open to the community in support of Israel. On Sept 29<sup>th</sup> we will have the first Jewish Festival of Fairfield County. It will be done with Greenwich UJF at the Loading Dock. It's a big venue with lots of room. There will be activities for all ages with kosher food and security. It is an indoor venue so we don't need contingency plans that we would need if the venue was outdoors.

### **Work Process Project- Stacy Ferber & Rhonda**

Under the leadership of Stacy and Rhonda, UJF is doing a deep dive into work processes of UJF. How can we improve our work flow and identify areas for improvement. The timeline for this deep dive and assessment is sooner rather than later but hopefully will be completed by year end.

### **Campaign and Holiday Stewardship – Ellen Weber**

JFNAs marketing slogan of “As One” has been adopted for our UJF. We find it very meaningful. Please use the tag line to socialize with donors so they can understand what we do. The items of ‘As One’ are listed in the board portal. Please read them and think about how they resonate with you. If any of the bullets are particularly meaningful to you, tell us what it means to you and hopefully with examples. Go into the portal, select a week for you to share your thoughts, and contact Eric who will arrange publication.

## **“As One” Weekly Marketing Campaign**

**Weeks 3-18 / Sept 16 – Dec 30, 2024**

- Week 3, 9/16 (Chris Maroc): As One... we are strong.
- As One... we safeguard our Jewish communal organizations and houses of worship.
- As One... we support Holocaust survivors.
- As One... we stand up to antisemitism and all forms of hate.
- As One... we navigate and respond to crises.
- As One... we ensure the viability of our Jewish institutions for generations to come.
- As One... we cultivate and train the next generation of Jewish leaders and philanthropists.
- As One... we connect and engage.
- As One... we are a source of hope and compassion for all.
- As One... we embrace Jewish values.
- As One... we foster a warm and vibrant community where Jewish life can flourish.
- As One... we honor the past and build for the future.
- As One... we gather together to share cherished traditions.
- As One... we touch lives.
- As One... we create inclusive and welcoming spaces where our differences can be celebrated.
- As One... we support Jewish learning.



**UJF Board of Directors Meeting – September 11, 2024**

Campaign- We are neck and neck with last year at this point in the year. Marty said that being flat this year is a win! Rosh Hashana letters are going out this week. The Big Give is November 3<sup>rd</sup> starting at 9:30am. Robin and Wendy are co-chairing. The day will have varying activities and will include other organizations, family events, etc. The event will be held at the UJF offices. Thank you to those who have signed up to make holiday calls and chocolate deliveries. Stewardship opportunities are available including New Year appeal and writing letters and hosting a Rosh Hashanah honey tasting table for an hour. The Jewish Festival will be held at the Loading Dock on Sept 29 from 3-6PM. Food, activities and dancing will be on the menu!

**UJF Upcoming Events and New Business** [Link to Calendar](#)

1. Edith mentioned that Life and Legacy should be talked about at every meeting. Edith will send out the form so the board members will know how to advise their contacts.
2. October 7<sup>th</sup> is the 1 year anniversary of the Hamas attack. There are 90 pages of activities we can do to commemorate the event. A commemorative event will be at the JCC for about 600 people. Betsy Stone will help to create an activity for people to do a meaningful gesture. It will be something like a memorial yahrzeit candle lighting service and it will be adult focused. A child/family event will be organized for later in the week. Updates to come. Speaker- Tal [Chokes](#), [Chaikes](#) will share raw testimonials from people.
3. Tapestry will be held 11/16/24. Rediscovering Joy in Judaism, the theme, will be held at Beth El. And Kudos to Rob who is now an ordained Rabbi! Mazel Tov

[Michael Schlessinger](#) adjourned the meeting at 9:15PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Linda Hurwitz, Secretary

**Board meetings for 2024:**

October 9, 2024  
November 13, 2024  
December 4, 2024  
Annual Meeting- December 18, 2024

**Commented [LH1]:** Check spelling

**Formatted:** Not Highlight

**Formatted:** Not Highlight

**Formatted:** Font color: Auto

**Formatted:** Font color: Auto