

MINUTES
ANNUAL MEETING OF CONGREGATION
KONA BETH SHALOM (KBS)
SEPTEMBER 11, 2022
ZOOM (ONLINE) MEETING

MEMBERS LOGGED INTO MEETING

Ruth Ader, Marilyn Anderson, Michael and Vivienne Aronowitz, Barry and Gloria Blum, Mike Bromberg and Ken Repp, Elaine Dobinson, Joel Gimpel and Jan Rae, Ruth Glatt, Una Greenaway and Leon Rosner, Vic Greenspan, Sarah Kramer, Sara Nealy, Eva and Ron Pierce, Aviva Plaut, Alan and Nella Silverman, Trina and Shai Yerlick.

CALL TO ORDER

Vic Greenspan, president of KBS, convened the meeting at 2:06 p.m. He led the shehechyanu prayer and mi shebeirach.

MINUTES

Minutes of last year's annual meeting were distributed to the membership prior to today's meeting for review. By voice vote, members accepted the minutes of the 2021 Annual Meeting. It was noted by Barry Blum that these minutes were reviewed by the Board last year just after the 2021 meeting to check them for accuracy.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Vic noted KBS went from all Zoom services to hybrid (in-person/Zoom) services over the course of the year. He noted some of the highlights of the year:

Going to Mauna Kea Beach Hotel to celebrate Chanukah with North Hawaii Chavurah (NHC) and Kona's Traveling Jewish Wedding Band

January 1 Bar Mitzvah led by Shari Berman for a visiting California family

February 26 Bat Mitzvah of Leah Hillert led by Trina Yerlick and attended by friends and family (a grandmother who came from as far away as Germany)

Member Goldie Lefkowitz's 100th birthday, April 12

April 16 Community seder led by Barry Blum and held at Hawaiian Queen Coffee Garden (HQCG)

April 23 Last day of Passover, special readings at KBS shabbat service and havdalah service at North Hawaii Chavurah

Vic thanked Rabbi Shari Berman for helping to lead services and Alan Silverman for making technical arrangements.

ELECTION OF TRUSTEES

Bylaws: Article 5 Meetings, Section 3: Twenty-five percent (25%) of the congregation shall constitute a quorum at meetings. As of September 11, 2022, there are 83 members of KBS. (25% of 83= 20.75) We have 24 members on Zoom, so we have a quorum in attendance.

According to the bylaws, eighteen (18) is the maximum number of trustees, excluding the immediate past-president. There are currently twelve (12) trustees. Una Greenaway is immediate past-president. Seven current trustees are up for reelection: Rabbi Shari Berman, Michael Bernstone, Barry Blum, Victor Greenspan, Alan Silverman, Nella Silverman and Trina Yerlick. Barry asked Eva Pierce if she would be willing to run for trustee on the Board. She accepted. No one else at the meeting wanted to run for trustee.

Using the Zoom Poll feature, ballots were sent to all who attended. Alan Silverman, as Zoom host, counted the ballots. All seven trustees up for reelection were reelected to 3-year terms. Eva Pierce was elected for a 3-year term.

The following are the Board of Trustees for KBS and the Hebrew and English years through which their terms run:

1. Vivienne Aronowitz 5783 (2023)
2. Rabbi Shari Berman 5785 (2025)
3. Michael Bernstone 5785 (2025)
4. Barry Blum 5785 (2025)
5. Elaine Dobinson 5784 (2024)
6. Joel Gimpel 5783 (2023)
7. Victor Greenspan 5785 (2025)
8. Sarah Kramer 5784 (2024)
9. Sara Nealy 5784 (2024)
10. Eva Pierce 5785 (2025)
11. Alan Silverman 5785 (2025)
12. Nella Silverman 5785 (2025)
13. Trina Yerlick 5785 (2025)

Congratulations to the Board.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Barry Blum was asked if he would be President for the coming year. He said he was not going out for the position but that he would let his name be nominated.

Vic Greenspan volunteered to run for First Vice-President (VP) if not elected President again.

Sarah Kramer, Michael Bernstone and Nella Silverman agreed to keep their positions. No others volunteered to serve as officers. Using the Zoom poll feature ballots were returned and Barry Blum was elected President. Using voice vote, Vic, Sarah, Michael and Nella were voted into their offices. These are the officers for the coming year 5783 (2022-2023):

Barry Blum, President

Vic Greenspan, 1st VP

Sarah Kramer, 2nd VP

Michael Bernstone, Treasurer

Nella Silverman, Secretary

Congratulations to the Board Officers. Vic Greenspan is now the immediate past-president of KBS.

Joel Gimpel brought up that Article VI Sect. 1 of the bylaws specifies that "officers shall assume office upon their election," Dr. Barry Blum stated he asked Vic to chair the meeting following his election as President.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Michael Bernstone, Treasurer, was unavailable to attend the annual meeting. No report or budget was submitted.

NITZAVIM REPORT

Una Greenaway has resigned as Chair of this committee after completing paperwork for the first year of our two year investment from Nitzavim. Yehudah Plaut will be the chairman for year two and Vic Greenspan will continue as a member of the committee. The Nitzavim focus for the coming year will be growing the size of small congregations, like ours, across Hawaii.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

FACILITIES

Alan Silverman reports that KBS services are being held at Hawaiian Queen Coffee Garden (HQCG) and on Zoom. A private elementary school, Kokua Academy, now rents out much of the space at HQCG during the week. They have been very

cooperative in scheduling vacation breaks while High Holiday services are scheduled this fall.

County facilities are now available to rent, changing policies from the lockdown during the COVID pandemic. Imin Center still restricts music events as neighbors have complained of noise.

Alan has contacted the Kona Community Policing Officer Aaron Tanaka. KBS will notify him of any scheduled events so that they will be included on the sergeant's daily report. A discussion ensued about how best to keep our events secure. A committee of Alan, Vic, Trina and Eva was formed to explore expenses and availability a security guard during the High Holidays.

EDUCATION

There is no KBS Hebrew school or Hebrew teacher. Trina Yerlick is privately tutoring Hebrew and prayers for two boys with upcoming bar mitzvahs and Aviva Plaut is preparing Torah portions for them and an upcoming bat mitzvah. The Education Committee consists of Barry Blum, Vic Greenspan, Trina Yerlick and Aviva Plaut.

WEBSITE

Alan Silverman reported that the website went dark last month for a couple of days. Larry Bernstone, son of Michael and Ruth Bernstone, got the website up and running again. Alan has begun periodic computer backups of the website. The website still needs a permanent web master and an upgrade to our web presence. These tasks will be taken up after High Holidays. There are a number of good leads from members to facilitate getting this changeover accomplished.

CEMETERY

Barry Blum's Report of the Cemetery Committee prepared for the KBS Annual Meeting, Sep. 11, 2022

"The History of Beit HaShamayim:

It started in 2005 as the result of a tragic accident when two long-time Kona residents, Jerry & Judy Rothstein, were killed in an automobile accident driving home from a celebration of Tu b'Shvat. The Rothsteins were among the founders of Kona Beth Shalom, and their car collided with the car of an elderly Jewish couple from Minneapolis. Everyone was killed.

Their son, Natan Rothstein, was the first Bar Mitzvah on Hawaii Island in 1971 and he later became Baal Tshuvah in Israel. His sister is Ann Rothstein who still lives here. Natan insisted on a kosher Jewish burial in a Jewish Cemetery, so Ann created that cemetery with the burial of her two parents in Hilo at Homelani Memorial Park, and surrounding it with a mechitsa. The burial was officiated by Rabbi Nathan Segal.

Later, KBS purchased more plots around the Rothsteins and enlarged the mechitza to enclose 20 plots. There are now 7 persons buried there and there is room for 13 more. Nine of the remaining plots are owned by Homelani, and only three are available to KBS members for purchase at \$1,596.00

KBS did sanctify an area of Kona Memorial Park many years ago when Rabbi and Cantor Leo Fettman of Nebraska was here for the High Holidays. We buried several holy books there but KBS never purchased any lots and that area of the grounds was later schmutzed up when the cemetery people used the area for trash and storage. Since then, we asked to buy a group of lots there for KBS but Kona Memorial Park quoted an impossibly high price.

KBS member Eva Pierce lives near Homelani Memorial park in Hilo and has consented to become our Beit HaShamayim Shomer. She has been visiting the cemetery on a regular basis to see that everything is in order.

Here is current information regarding Beit HaShamayim, Big Island mortuaries and Homelani Cemetery:

Anyone who has been a member of KBS for a year or longer may purchase a plot in Beit HaShamayim for \$1,596.00 but only 3 are still available at that price. Non-members pay \$4,695.00 (the current rate at Homelani). Nine of those are available.

Dodo Mortuary has an office in Kona and in Hilo. They can refrigerate bodies in Hilo where they also have a facility for tahara.

Ballard Family Mortuary has an office in Kona and in Hilo. They can refrigerate bodies in Hilo where I believe they also have a facility for tahara.

Homelani is not a mortuary. It is a cemetery. They can refrigerate bodies in Hilo prior to burial They can offer "direct burial" but they do not have a facility for tahara.

The mortuaries and Homelani do sell what they call plain wooden caskets. However they are not always so plain. They can order proper kosher caskets but delivery from the mainland can take time.

Rabbi Gerlitzky of Chabad on the Big Island has those caskets available, as well as tachrichim (garments for the deceased) when needed.

Homelani now requires that when the casket is put into the ground, a rigid plastic vault liner be applied over it. No plastic is required beneath, so the casket is still in direct contact with the earth. This is to prevent cave-ins, for instance when a backhoe drives over an occupied grave site. Not sure about cost.

Beit HaShamayim is open to all Jews who need burial on the Big Island. It's not just for Kona Beth Shalom. Chabad has buried several people there. Our information booklet about the cemetery is on our website. Also on the website for Board members only, are the documents needed when someone wants to purchase a plot.

I'm hoping that Rabbi Rachel Short of Ahava `Aina on the east side of the Big Island can participate in Beit HaShamayim. I would like to encourage her group to buy several Homelani-owned plots in Beit HaShamayim for their congregants.

A new organization led by Alice Lachman (on Oahu) called the "Hawaii Inter-Island Chevra Kadisha" has formed with the goal of informing and educating Jewish organizations and individuals about all aspects of providing care for dying, for death, burial including tahara and virtual tahara, and for mourning. Vivienne Aronowitz is our main liaison with Alice.

Needs for the Future:

Determining location(s) for tahara. We have used Kona Community Hospital's morgue when the patient died at the hospital. We will need to use Dodo's mortuary in Hilo if patient did not die in the hospital. It would be nice to find a location on the Kona side for anyone being buried in the West Hawaii Veteran's Cemetery.

Whom to call to assist with, and leading tahara? Until now, I have contacted local Chabad for leadership. Will the new statewide Chevra Kadisha be the new choice? Probably not.

Vivienne Aronowitz has volunteered to be a go-to person when there is a death on the Big Island as well as me. Who else is available?

How to proceed when burial is requested but the estate of the deceased or the family does not have the money?

How to effectively educate our Jewish community and our local mortuaries about Jewish traditions regarding hospice, end-of-life, death, tahara, burial, mourning, etc.?

Does KBS want to buy any of the available plots from Homelani (\$4,695 per plot) to hold for resale when that price will have risen even higher?"

There is a Chevra Kadisha Zoom event tonight (9/11/2022) at 5 - 6:30 pm, "Ethical Wills: Leaving a Spiritual Legacy." See Addenda 1 for details.

NORTH HAWAII CHAVURAH (NHC)

Vivienne Aronowitz reported that monthly second Friday night observances are again being held at Mauna Kea Beach Resort Restaurant #3.

There will be a havdalah service on Shabbat shuvah, October 1, 5:30 pm at Hapuna Beach, North Pavilion.

BIKUR CHOLIM

The Bikur Cholim committee tries to guide those in need to connect with appropriate community services. Resources within our community include Vivienne Aronowitz, in Waimea area, and Alice Bratton, a specialist in kupuna affairs in the Kona Office of Aging.

Oahu-based Jewish Community Services (JCS) helps provide social services statewide. At their website, jcs-hi.org, you can find out more information and sign up for their newsletters that are also relayed in KBS communications.

Our website has several ways that people can donate and make a difference. The newest donation site is Ukraine Jews Emergency Aid where there are 6 links to reputable organizations helping the Ukrainian Jewish community. We always have a link to the Hawaii Food Basket where food insecurity on our island has been a main focus.

Under "About" on the website, choose "Contact Us" if you know of someone needing assistance, have questions or ideas to share.

ENVISIONING SESSION

Barry Blum's notes: "A discussion process for all attendees to consider the values and roles of Congregation Kona Beth Shalom in our lives.

What are our desires? This discussion is "brainstorming." All ideas are welcome. No voting. Questions are for discussion only, as food for thought.

What are our needs? As a Congregation? As a Board? Are we meeting them? What are our goals?

Celebrating Shabbat together?

Celebrating Jewish Holidays (together)?

Educational?

Hebrew language study?

Torah study?

Book group?

Yiddish Club?

Other?

Here are the responses:

Desire for more music

Desire for more non-religious events, especially outdoors, perhaps at the beach

Desire that communications be generated by Board members and then sent to Alan for distribution

Reminder that the San Francisco Klezmer Ensemble will be presenting at a KBS public event at Kona Outdoor Circle on Feb. 8, 2023

Desire for more social, in-person events in general

Desire to bring more Renewal rabbis for events here like Marc Labowitz from Florida

Continue to offer Israeli dancing after Shabbat services"

NEW BUSINESS

THANK YOU, VIC GREENSPAN

Alan Silverman wanted to honor Vic for taking over the presidency of KBS at the beginning of the pandemic when no one wanted the position. He didn't seek the position but he took over and brought new ideas like Zoom Friday night candle lighting to bring another venue for Jewish life when we couldn't get together in person. He showed positive leadership by being supportive of the various KBS activities, such as, being a regular at Saturday torah studies, preparing our space at HCQG, chanting torah portions at shabbat and being involved with Nitzavim. Thank you, Vic, for your service.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:14 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Nella Silverman,
Secretary

Hawaii Inter-Island Chevrah Kadisha Series

The Chevrah Kadisha as Sukkah: Living Jewish Life as Community



Like a Sukkah sheltering the People of Israel in uncertain times, the Chevra Kadisha enfolds our island Jewish community. Come explore and learn with us how the Chevrah Kadisha supports the Jewish community, including rituals that guide us through the most challenging times, offering a pathway for embracing life fully, a companion through the process of integrating life's inevitable losses, and doing it as one community together.

September 11, 2022 5:00 – 6:30 pm Hawaii time

Ethical Wills: Leaving a Spiritual Legacy

Presented by Rabbi Janet Madden

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88149888060>

What are ethical and spiritual wills, why do they matter, and what is their Jewish connection? Regardless of your age, it is always valuable and meaningful to consider the hopes, ideals, values, and blessings that you want to leave as a legacy to your loved ones. Ethical and spiritual wills are the way you can do that. This session will get you started on creating yours.



Writer and ritualist, Rabbi Janet Madden serves at Providence Saint John's Health Center and Fountainview at Gonda Westside. A Palliative care chaplain, she earned Rabbinic Certificate in Gerontology and Palliative Care from Yeshiva University and completed her certification in Jewish End of Life Studies from the Gamliel Institute. In addition to providing Spiritual Direction to Hebrew Union College students, CA, she is certified in Jewish Sacred Chant and Mussar. She earned her PhD in 19th century literature. Rabbi Madden is on the faculty of Kavod V' Nichum and the Gamliel institute.

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