

Minutes
Kona Beth Shalom
Board of Trustees
November 6, 2022
Zoom (online) meeting

TRUSTEES LOGGED INTO MEETING

Alan Silverman, Nella Silverman, Elaine Dobinson, Joel Gimpel, Eva Pierce, Sara Nealy, Barry Blum, Mike Bernstone and Trina Yerlick

TRUSTEES ABSENT

Sarah Kramer, Vic Greenspan, Vivienne Aronowitz and R. Shari Berman

OTHERS

Yehudah and Aviva Plaut

CALL TO ORDER

The board meeting began at 8:04 a.m.

OPENING PRAYER

Mi shebeirach was said for those who are in need of healing. Ruth Glatt is in the hospital after falling and breaking her wrist. Shai Yerlick is recovering after two knee surgeries. Paul Dobinson will be going in for surgery the Monday after Thanksgiving. Sarah Kramer is back home from the hospital after a lung biopsy. Marilyn Anderson is going through a lot.

MINUTES

Upon motion made and seconded, the minutes of the October 9, 2022, board meeting were approved as amended.

Barry has been in touch with Una Greenaway and she requested not to be on the KBS board but would like to be kept informed by sending her a copy of the board meeting minutes.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mike emailed the financial report to the board before the meeting.

Five additional plots were paid for in Beit Hashamayim at Hilo Homelani Cemetery at \$4600 each.

Mike is still working out who sent money through Foodland's Give Aloha fund. Approximately \$1500 has come in, some without donor identification.

Upon motion made and seconded, the financial report was approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

FACILITIES

Last shabbat we had a minyan at Hawaiian Queen Coffee Garden (HQCG) but we had even more attending on Zoom. This duality of our congregation seems to be part of our future.

We have the Old Airport Maka'eo Pavilion booked for Chanukah, Tuesday, December 20, and for Seder, April 5, 2023. The February Klezmer event is booked at Kona Education Center (previously Outdoor Circle) on February 8, 2023.

We are not the sole renters at HQCG, so when we get a request, such as the bat mitzvah in July next year, if it's our event, we have to schedule it.

EDUCATION

Regarding the previous suggestion of social media outreach, Yehudah conferred with Bryn Wilcox, student at University of Hawaii (UH) Hilo and participant in our Torah studies. She was wary of that idea due to security concerns, e.g. hackers and bots. She does not recommend it. They came up with the idea to contact Jewish people that she knew. She identified at least three Jewish students and faculty that would be interested in attending shabbat gatherings.

Sara Nealy said that through her position at Kahilu Theater in Waimea they have reached out to advertise via <https://invideo.io/blog/instagram-reels>, which allows anyone with a smart phone to record short videos and share them, like a selfie but on video. Trina said the kids she is tutoring are aware and are interested in the videos on reels. Trina asked, "Are we attracting 14 year olds or 20 year olds?"

Joel asked, "Who are we trying to attract to KBS?" Sara thought that creating a marketing plan would be a way of answering that question. Barry asked Sara to lead a discussion of marketing at the next board meeting so that KBS could better envision where our resources and energies would yield the best results. Marketing could be another regular topic for our board meeting agenda.

Joel asked, "Do we have any idea of the number of Jewish families that have children who live in our area?" Barry asked Joel to get a census. Sara said there are government demographics on Hawaii Island that could help answer that question.

A discussion ensued about what Jews who move to the Big Island want and the scarcity of Jewish outlets here. Aviva thought KBS provides, for example, bar and bat mitzvah opportunities. Chabad is the only other choice for life cycle ceremonies.

CEMETERY

Mike and Barry negotiated a price for our plots in Beit Hashamayim at Homelani Cemetery in Hilo. KBS bought 5 plots that are available for our membership only at

\$4600 apiece. There are two plots left from the original purchase available for \$1500 apiece.

WEBSITE

KBS is in the process of transferring the website to a new web hosting service, Webmasters Services Hawaii. Alan discussed this with Mike Bernstone, giving him literature about the service and the contract. It's a Honolulu-based company that's been in business for over twenty years with good recommendations from customers ranging from big companies to small congregations, like ours. They are very economical, charging \$25/month for web hosting, \$6/month for an email account @konabethshalom.org, and approximately \$200 for migrating our data from our current website. The servers are located in San Francisco and maintained by a different company. Webmasters has a full range of services, but our agreement allows us to input data on our own. After the transfer, the website will look exactly like it was but with a lot more space available. They can redesign our website and add features, but that will come after the initial transfer that should be completed this week. There are any number of emails we can have for the president or any other office, which should allow for more rapid response to email questions received. Bernie Bernstone had us well secured and this site will do the same. If there are any login changes, Alan will keep us informed. Barry asked that, in addition to the online backups that Alan has started to do weekly, he also makes a physical backup copy.

BIKUR CHOLIM

Barry reported that Ruth Glatt is in Kona Community Hospital (KCH) and Aviva noted that KCH now allows visitors. Ruth fell and broke her wrist, so she will not be able to use her walker for a while. Myron, her husband, will need assistance at home and family is coming to care for him.

Shai Yerlick has recently fallen after knee replacement surgery and needed a second surgery. He is home now.

NORTH HAWAII CHAVURAH (NHC)

Per Vivienne's email:

On Wednesday, Dec 21st at 5:30- 6:30 pm at the Mauna Kea Beach Hotel #3, NHC will have a Chanukah celebration with lights, latkes and songs. Leslie Harlib will provide music and will be assisted by Marjorie Wade.

There will be a NHC gathering at the Mauna Kea beach hotel #3 this Friday at 6.

Upon motion made and seconded, the committee reports were approved.

UPCOMING JEWISH OBSERVANCES

SHABBAT TOLDOT November 26, 2022 10:30 a.m.
Location: HQCG and Zoom
Leader: Aviva Plaut
Torah: R. Shari Berman
Drash: Barry Blum
Challah: Silvermans

CHANUKAH December 20, 2022 (Tuesday)

Alan has reserved Old Airport's Maka'eo Pavilion for this event. Hale Halawai is not available during the week. Imin Center does not allow amplified music. The date is during public school winter holidays. Barry noted we can light candles any time we want so we can schedule the Chanukah party anytime during that day.

The usual big event cannot be done because we do not have enough help. A discussion ensued about what KBS should do. Sara Nealy thought just make a dreidle table and show the Israeli Rug Rats movie. Make it simple, plan for next year. Yehudah noted that he and Aviva led lighting of the menorah candles each night of Chanukah last year on Zoom. Elaine suggested that the Chanukah party be a free event with no tickets. New people with children who might attend could be approached informally at the event. Aviva thought we could have a smaller event that would include singing, dreidles with Chanukah gelt (Trina still has some gelt from previous parties). Trina and Aviva will contact families that have young children to see if they are interested. Barry thought a smaller venue, say HQCG, would lend itself better to this format. Alan will check to see if HQCG is available to rent. Joel said he would be there but Barry has no plans to bring together the band. Trina will find out when Chabad is planning their party so ours won't conflict. Barry requested that those involved get answers back to him by Thursday so we can see if this smaller party would occur.

SEDER

Barry suggested we plan a first night seder, Wednesday, April 5, 2023, at Maka'eo Pavilion with Chef Amelia making the meal which will cost approximately \$60-\$70 a plate. Joel made a motion and Mike seconded it to go with Barry's suggestion. The discussion noted that several board members would not be available first night and suggested second night would be better. The motion was amended to plan the seder for second night. Since the location and availability of Chef Amelia is not known, Barry tabled the motion until more information is available.

JANUARY SHABBAT

Priscilla Kostiner is planning a trip to Kona in January.

FEBRUARY KLEZMER EVENT

Alan has booked the Kona Education Center (formerly Outdoor Circle) for February 8, 2023, from 4 p.m. - 8 p.m.

JULY 2023 BAT MITZVAH REQUEST

Since this is a regularly scheduled shabbat, Liana Doppman's bat mitzvah would be included in our regular service but the family has requested an afternoon service outdoors. Barry is in touch with the family. Alan will contact HQCG about availability.

NITZAVIM

Yehudah provided a Nitzavim report which I include below:

Nitzavim November 7, 2022

Using social media to grow our base

During the October meeting Sara Nealy suggested that we research using social media to increase membership. I contacted Bryn Wilcox a young member of our Torah study group who is also a student at UH Hilo for help. In an hour conversation, we brainstormed how to achieve our goal. She ran down the various platforms in use by age group and talked about the difficulty of monitoring and protecting what we were trying to do. From her experience at Cambridge (in the UK) she did not recommend any of them. We then shifted our talk to how to reach out to Jews in her university setting and came up with the idea of hosting Shabbat gatherings amongst those interested in East Hawaii. She was in contact with me a week or so later and told me that she had talked to three people and all were interested. She has contact information for all of them.

Conversation with Rabbi David Freidenreich through Jewish Community Services

I arranged to have an interview with Rabbi David Freidenreich serving under the auspices of JCS. Rabbi Freidenreich is Associate Director, Center for Small Town Jewish Life based out of Colby College where he is a Professor of Jewish Studies at the college. A few months ago, I attended an online presentation he gave, also under the auspices of JCS. I contacted Josh Levinson, advisor to the project, after I became the KBS representative. I told him how impressed I was with Rabbi Freidenreich and he said they were bringing him in to work with the greater Jewish community of Hawaii.

Aviva joined me during the interview. Rabbi David asked us very penetrating questions about how KBS functioned, our goals, our strengths and weaknesses, our future plans. Each question was meant to reinforce our present community and open our eyes to future collaborations. He was very clear that we should consider that our three year Torah study showed that we had demonstrated legitimate success in both growing our community and in enlarging our view (and

membership) of KBS, using new tools that provided expanded new opportunities to connect with Jews (and thereby grow our base).

Our interview was the first he would be conducting throughout the whole Nitzavim group, an interview slot I chose by design. I wanted to make sure that the things we had learned and struggled with, were pieces of information that would help shape the greater approach/conversation to the unique problems of Jews in all of Hawaii. He used the conversation to ask us to consider out-of-the-box solutions to address issues of manpower and critical mass. However, the number of bodies on hand to do the work had no easy or ready solutions. He did suggest that we consider hosting a rotating four island shabbaton to create and strengthen inter island community. We loved that idea.

We were invited to reconnect with him, to further our thinking, at our convenience, after we had pondered the conversation. He will be coming to the state in January for a week and we might either go see him in Oahu, or, he might come and visit Big Island.

Respectfully submitted,
Yehudah Plaut

A discussion ensued about what our congregation could be like if we had a full time rabbi as Chabad has.

OLD BUSINESS

HIGH HOLIDAY (HH) RECAP

Barry noted the following from his discussions with KBS members: R. Daniel Pressman expectations were different than we have had in the past few years, to the delight for some and the annoyance of others. R. Shari had little to no time to be with Alice. Everyone got along but it was not a happy, smooth experience. Barry would like to start early to choose a rabbi for next year so that we can ask questions, get the groundwork started and give reports to the board.

Barry stopped further discussion, preferring to leave it for the rabbi search committee which will include: Barry, Aviva, Sara Nealy, Vivienne, Nella and Trina.

NEXT BOARD MEETING

The next board meeting will be held December 4 at 10 am on Zoom. Barry would like the board to consider hybrid (in-person and Zoom) meetings, but not for this next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Nella Silverman,
Secretary